**KISWAHILI LITERARY PORTRAYAL OF GENDER AND MIGRATION IN AFRICA: AN ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVE?**

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**Introduction**

Besides refugee movements, male labour migration seems to be the main form of relocation and exodus in Africa worth scholars’ and politicians’ pens and deliberations in most conferences and in policy formation. Because of this then, and since its “universal” reference seems to be mainly male, migration in general, and labour migration in particular, appears to be, ultimately, a masculinist concept. In this paper we propose to problematize this kind of outlook through the examination of the portrayal of gender and migration in Africa in selected Kiswahili literary works.

In trying to decipher our knowledge and understanding of the complex migratory experiences, the paper is going to first of all use examples from Kiswahili oral literature which, to a large extent, portray migration in the form of journey, adventure motif. This motif carries with it some social and political importance which would seem to us to represent the different types of migration and their meanings. Such migration, for example, shows the move from conflict to conflict management and resolution.

The second part of the paper uses such Kiswahili literary works like *Uhuru wa Watumwa* (The Freedom of Slaves), *Kimbia Helena, Kimbia!* (Run Helena, Run!), *Shida* (Hardships), *Hatia* (Guilt), *Chinga* (Street Vendor), *Kwaheri Iselemagazi* (Goodbye Iselemagazi), *Utenzi wa Nyakikuru Kibi* (The Epic of Nyakikuru Kibi), *Mzimu wa Watu wa Kale* (The Spirits of the Ancestors), *Utubora Mkulima* (Utubora the Farmer), *Vuta Nkuvute* (Conflicts), *Tendehogo* (Dates versus Cassava), *Safari ya Prospa* (Prospa’s Journey), *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (The World: An Arena of Troubles), *Janga Sugu la Wazawa* (The Chronic Misfortune of the Citizens), *Miradi Bubu ya Wazalendo* (The Fake Projects of Patriots) and *Maisha ya Tipu Tipp* (The Life of Tipu Tipp), among many others, that portray the uprooting and re-rooting of female and male characters for varying and various reasons, including slavery, and political, economic and social grounds, to challenge the masculinist concept of labour and other forms of migrations. The main thrust of the paper is to explore the alternative literary perspective of the convolution and contradictions that surface whenever migratory experience is gendered.

**Background**

Kiswahili language and its literature have become a cultural reality for many of its users in East Africa. The major rationale for this is in language effectiveness, for, this Bantu language has developed among East Africans from a language of mere expansive communication to that of broad and very sophisticated expression. There are still some complications and even divergences about the starting point of this language. The perplexity and even contending sides are, for our purposes, of no consequence. What matters to us is that Kiswahili is the conduit of communication, creative or otherwise, amongst the people of East and Central Africa, and that our interest in the present enterprise is to see how the artistic communication via literary outputs has over time and space, dealt with such social issues like that of migration – labor migration, for that matter. It is important to make a note of the fact that Kiswahili has assumed a supra-ethnic, nay, supra-national quality that is far from the coastal, Islamic frontiers that some academics had relegated it to. As we shall see, this fact has, at times, made the issue of migration as reflected in Kiswahili literary outputs, of supra-national dimensions.
Migration as Reflected in Kiswahili Oral Literature

There is an old literary truism that insists that the soul of every great work of literature is a journey. Indeed, the adventure motif is as old as literature itself. With the acquisition of speech, man's journey towards the world of fantasy started, and with the ability to walk began man's spatial movement within time. Inversely therefore, the soul of every great work of literature, be it oral or written, is migration – the movement of characters from one location to another. Migration in Kiswahili literature, especially as it appears in Zanzibar folktales, is, largely, in the form of an adventure motif – a motif that carries social and political import as shall be seen in the course of our discussion in this paper.

In this paper two major overlapping planes evident in the folktales from Zanzibar that utilise the adventure motif to portray migration are examined. The first is the external adventure. The second is the internal adventure, which does, at the same time, have some existential dimensions.

Although the external adventure precedes the internal one, most of the time the two overlap a lot; and the fact that there is no clear dividing line between the two in the folk tales from Zanzibar, makes this motif a complex literary phenomenon in relation to the hero and heroine and the world around them.

This part of the paper, first of all examines the nature of the motif by analysing its exemplification through the external adventure. After that it looks at the use of the internal adventure as a medium of instruction to the hero or heroine on the process of growing up. The main thrust here is to see the hero’s or heroine’s growing-up process as part of the creation of his or her early qualities through the use of the adventure motif in Zanzibari folk tales.

The External Adventure

The adventure motif is a literary device through which we can discover in a folk tale, a number of interconnected occurrence-patterns similar to some of those observed by scholars such as Daniel Kunene who has specifically looked at the theme in connection with African written literature in general and African epics in particular in his two major articles. 1

Joseph Campbell in The Hero with a Thousand Faces has divided his formula of the folktale hero's life into three parts: separation - initiation - return. As he himself puts it:

The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: separation-initiation-return: which might be named the nuclear of the monomyth. A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from the mysterious adventure with power to bestow boons on his fellow man. 2

Lord Raglan, who in The Hero has divided the basic pattern of the journey of a hero into twenty-two incidents, supports Campbell when he regroups the twenty-two incidents into three major groups. He says:

The incidents fall definitely into three groups: those connected with the hero's birth, those connected with his accession to the throne, and those connected with his death. They, thus correspond to the three principal rites de passage - that is to say, the rites at birth, at initiation, and at death. 3

Although the divisions made by Campbell and Lord Raglan do help in the elicitation of the journey motif in the Zanzibari folktale, some of the details, which the two theorists give, are not prominent in the tales from Zanzibar. For example, the details of the birth of the hero/heroine are treated very marginally in these tales. Indeed, most of the time such details are not shown at all. In most of these tales it is only when the hero or heroine has become of age, ready to go out into the world of adventure that the tales begin. A typical
formulac beginning of a tale will just mention that there was a man and his wife, or a king/sultan and his wife, who either did not have a child for a long time, or had such and such a number of children. Thus, to the Zanzibari folktale, the detailed description of the birth of such heroes and heroines is of no consequence. By doing do, it is as if the tales are urging the heroes and heroines to grow up fast and leave the world of children so as to prove their worth in society.

Kunene's Loci Theory

The external adventure in folktales from Zanzibar shows the spatial movement of a tale's character from one point to another. Kunene calls these locations loci that are joined by the journey's curves. Since Kunene has dealt at length with the physical adventure, that is, the spatial movement, it is worth testing his theories of the different loci. Kunene has stated the summary of his theory thus:

It goes without saying that most of the action in a "journey story" takes place during the journey, and can be plotted systematically along the journey curve which comprises two arcs, the going away arc A→B, and the coming-back arc, A←... .........B, which describe a circle... We see then that action can take place at four major points, namely, A, A>B, B, B<A.5

Our research into the use of the adventure motif and, thus, the theme of migration, in the Zanzibari folk tale has shown that the spatial movement of the heroes has complex patterns which do not always describe a full circle. The patterns fall mainly into four groups, which incidentally, Kunene too did acknowledge in his earlier writing on this motif. These are: First, narratives whose heroes travel and come back victorious, or whose return is implied. This kind of return forms a major phase during which the hero or heroine has to consolidate the powers gained during the quest. This is mainly in the outgoing loci. Second, tales whose heroes’ or heroine’s return is thwarted. Third, stories whose heroes or heroines have no intention to return, and fourth, pieces whose heroes and heroines have a false return.

It seems that in the Zanzibari folk tales even the three major parts/loci mentioned by Kunene do not necessarily follow the pattern of separation - initiation - return from point A to B and then back to A again. Point A of the adventure can be recreated and even combined with point B to form a new locus altogether. Here we can cite one Zanzibari tale as our example. In Kisa cha Mtu na Wanawe Watatu (The tale of a man and his three sons) we have the typical story of three sons who are called to the deathbed of their father. The father is not rich, and he tries to play a trick on the sons and their mother, so that they do not blame him for the meagre inheritance that he has reserved for them. He tells each one, separately, that he is dying, and that his money, to be inherited by the one he is presently talking to, must only be inherited after he has managed to inherit the wealth of the Sultan of Mauritius.7

While the dead father had instructed each of the sons not to tell the others about the inheritance, finally they all get to know the "secret" and decide in unison to go and do all they can to inherit the wealth of the Sultan of Mauritius. So, they set on a journey that takes them through a number of trials and tribulations. On the way they encounter three riddle-like incidents and episodes that they manage to unravel, with the youngest of them untangling the most obscure aspects. Finally they are able to outwit the Sultan of Mauritius and they inherit his kingdom, after which they also inherit their father's "wealth". The picture that one gets here is:

| POINT A-1: Home: Sanctuary at First, Then Source of Sibling Conflict and Reasons for the Journey. |
| TRANSITION POINT A>B: The |
Journey's Curve Full of Riddle-like Trials and Tribulations.

TO

POINT B1: Kingdom of Mauritius: Conflict, Confrontation and Final Victory.

TO

POINT BA-2: Double Inheritance, Harmony, Living Happily Ever After

From the above illustrations, it is clear that in effect, the sons move from point A-1 and point B-1 to a new point A and B which we can call point BA-2. So, while Kunene talks about the return of the hero to locus A2, in this tale what Kunene would term locus A2 is a combination of new loci A and B. It combines two "kingdoms" where the sons achieve double "inheritance". Unlike most tales, in this one not only the youngest, but all the sons, inherit the kingdom, and the initial sibling rivalry is smoothed out through compromise and understanding. This kind of victory is indicative of the attainment of heroic qualities that qualify these characters to inherit the kingdom. It is symbolic of the act of coming of age through the trials and tribulations of migration.

Key Points of the Zanzibari Adventure Tale

By far, a single return journey is the most common type of the external journey. In this journey, a character migrates away from home and then ultimately comes back home or to a replica of the old home (minus the initial conflicts), after long tests and ordeals and suffering. However, almost all the migration tales have similar departure points, although the social forces in operation in those loci can differ from one tale to another.

Locus A: Departure Point

Most of the time, the original point of departure is the home where the parents of the heroes or heroines live or lived; and so, by making a full circle through a return journey, the idea of the importance of the family unit is expressed.8 However, we must emphasize, as we mentioned earlier, that in the Zanzibari folk tales locus A treats the details of the birth of the heroes and heroines, if at all, very marginally. Indeed, even the details of the death of a hero or heroine are not given. Death is mentioned mostly at the beginning of a tale to show the passing away of one generation and the take-over by another, new generation.

Naturally Locus A prompts the question: Why does a character migrate? The answers to this question vary depending on the nature of the adventure. Although most of the heroes and heroines in Zanzibari adventure tales do seem to just go out there for mere adventure, it is actually through the adventures that the characters reveal, qualify or disqualify themselves as worthy of being called heroes or heroines.

Kunene has broadly classified two major types of heroes' or heroines' departure from home. The first is voluntary or unforced, and the second one is involuntary or forced departure. Kunene states the following concerning the latter form of departure, which mostly suggests some form of exile:

Where the protagonist is still too young to know what is going on, those who are responsible for fleeing with him to a place of safety act on his behalf and their intent to bring him back fulfills the same role in the final analysis as the protagonist's own declaration of such an intent... In oral narratives such child heroes are found in many stories, notably the ones where a father declares that any male child born to him should be destroyed.9

4
In spite of the presence of the flight and exile motif in a number of world oral traditions that Kunene is mentioning, involving such figures like Jesus Christ, Chaka the Zulu, and Sundiata, it is noteworthy that such motif is present in very rare cases in the Zanzibari folk tales. In fact, with the exception of one isolated tale, *Kumuua Baba na Kumuoa Mama* (*Killing One’s Father and Marrying One’s Mother*) that we deal with at some length in Paper 6 of the present work, it would be very strange indeed to find in Kiswahili oral literature, a father who declares that a male child born to him should be destroyed, for Swahili fathers are very proud of getting sons born to them.

In most of the few tales that have this motif it is the female characters that have to go to exile or to an adventure to far off lands. This appears, for example, in *Watoto Saba*, *Ndugu Wawili*, and in *Penzi Ugenini*. In the first tale, a sick father calls his six sons and one daughter by his deathbed and asks each of them to choose between inheriting his wealth or his blessings. Only the daughter who is, incidentally, the youngest, chooses her father's blessings. Later on, after the father is dead and the sons have inherited the wealth while the daughter inherits only the blessings, her two hands are cut off after she is caught ‘stealing’ her brother's sugarcane. She is consequently thrown out by her brothers and is forced to limblessly go into exile as the story states:

\[
\text{Yule msichana masikini ya Mungu, mikono ikakatwa ikakabakia mapigi matupu, na nyumba wakamfukuza. Yule msichana alifanya safari ya kuhama na alikwenda mbali...}(\text{my emphasis})
\]

(\text{The hands of that poor girl were chopped off and she was chased away from home. The girl then went on a journey to move away from home and go far away.})

In *Ndugu Wawili*, the travellers are a brother and his sister who finally part as the brother amputates all his sister's limbs, leaving only her head and stomach under an Mbungo tree. More will be discussed on this story later on when we look at the social significance of the migration motif in the Zanzibari folktale. In the third tale that calls for closer analysis of gender issues, a girl that has come of age defies her father’s and mother’s wishes and travels afar to meet the man of her dreams. She, however, is still forced by the customs in both her husband’s and also her parents’ lands to go back to collect all her belongings from her house. Predictably, the tale ends with the daughter’s parents refusing to give her neither any belongings nor their blessings. In a somewhat reproaching, moralistic, and judgemental ending of the tale we are told:

\[
\text{Yule bwana alikasirika na kumfukuza mtoto wake na kumtaka arudi kule alipotoka na asirudi tena na kuwa ye ye si mwana wao, na kama ni mwana wao basi asingefanya vile bila wao kujua. Basi yule mtoto akafukuzwa akawa huku hayuko wala kule hayuko; akawa anateseka kwa bure kwa upumbavu wake.}
\]

(\text{That man got so angry he chased away his daughter and commanded her to go back to wherever she came from, never to return home since she was no longer their child, for were she their child she would not have done all that without notifying them. So, that girl was chased away from home, and she became a child of no home for she was neither here nor there. She continued suffering due to her own foolishness})

It would be a very interesting exercise to see whether this ending is not a contrived one, especially when male narrators tell the folktale.

The above departures aside, the majority of the other departures are voluntary and unforced on the side of the heroes and heroines. A few examples will help illustrate this. The tale called *Mfalme na Wanawe Watatu* (*The King and His Three Sons*) serves this point well. Although in this tale the three sons are "forced" to travel to Egypt before they can inherit what their father who was a King, has left for them, this is not exactly an exile, but rather an adventure through which, besides showing their respect to their father's wish, the sons prove that they are worth and capable of inheriting and ruling the kingdom.
A typical departure point in the Zanzibari folk tale will involve the hero or heroine actually begging his or her parents to be allowed to travel. A departure of this type can have the sole aim of finding a bride as happens in one of the Makame wa Makame stories from Pemba island. A similar departure is that of the husband and the wife in Kitambi cha Pembemeuli and that of the wife in Pete. The first is a beautiful love tale, in which each of the two characters goes on a parallel journey in search of something that each one of them demands of the other. The husband has to get ‘kitambi cha pembemeuli’ for his wife. This is a dress made from a spider's web. The wife has to get ‘maji yasiyolia chura' for her husband. This is water fetched from a well in the bush, but there must be no frogs in the surroundings of the well. While it is impossible to get a dress made from a spider's web, and while in rural Zanzibar there will always be frogs near the wells, the love tale shows us how these two characters undergo so much trouble, even involving nerve-wrecking chases against trolls to prove their love to each other. Finally, they are able to get the impossible items, of course.

In Pete, the wife assumes the role of a man as she garbs herself with men’s clothes and goes out in search of her lost husband. It is very interesting to see how actually this woman dressed as a man is even given by a king of some far off land, a bride, who is the king’s daughter, to marry. As the story goes, finally the husband is located and is married off to the daughter of the king. The story does not tell us whether the first wife remained or not, but the assumption is that this turned into a polygamous marriage with her full consent. This tale of love calls for further gender analysis in relation to the polygamous marriage institution.

Unlike the above type of departure and adventure, most other departures will be motivated by a mere urge to go on an adventure as testified in, for example, Watoto wa Maajabu, and Ndugu Wawili.

Kunene has sub-divided Locus A into two major parts. The first is Locus A1 in which there is home as a sanctuary where happiness prevails. Life here is like that of paradise; and the story has not yet begun here. The second is Locus A2, which is the same home but with an element of dissatisfaction introduced. According to Kunene, this is what prompts the character’s departure. However, in most of the journey folk tales from Zanzibar, such sub-division does not really apply squarely. It is not always the element of dissatisfaction that will prompt the character to travel since, as we mentioned, the elements that prompt such departures will vary from mere adventure to the urge to find out what is happening out there in the world.

Finally, still on the departure point, Kunene has drawn up a very interesting list of motivations for the departures of the heroes and heroines of the travel tale, which we find equally quite relevant to our discussion on the Zanzibari folk tale. He has listed six types of motivation, namely The call for Adventure, Conflict in Familial Relationships, The Quest for Something of Value, In Search of Education, Cultural Alienation, and Involuntary Exile. Although Kunene has based his classification on written literature, it applies quite well to the Zanzibari oral tale. The call for adventure is the most common type of departure in which the hero or heroine, on his or her own volition asks for permission to travel and see what is happening out there in the world. The second type, conflict in familial relationships appears also in several tales from Zanzibar. The two tales, which we mentioned earlier, involving the female characters that have to travel away from home after quarrelling with their brothers, are typical examples of this type of departure. The departure that is prompted by a quest for something of value is sparingly present in the Zanzibari folk tales. One very good example of such a tale is narrated in Jan Knappert's Myths and Legends of the Swahili. The tale, titled "The Island of the Snake and the Land of Gold," tells the story of a young girl whose 'father' informs her on his deathbed that her family stems from a people who lived in a land where everything was gold, and that he is not his real father but.... And before he is through with the sentence he dies. After her "father’s death, the girl is lucky to catch the eye of the Sultan who marries her and she becomes queen. Now she is in the position to request for anything that she wants. So, one day she requests for permission to go and see that land. After many days of difficult travel, finally with the help of a snake, she reaches the golden land where she meets her real father who is, incidentally, a King. She stays for one year with her father and
her husband who has joined her, after which they are given a golden ship as a present. They return to their home via the island of the snake where the girl had promised to sacrifice to the snake whatever child she would get in exchange for the directions to the land of gold. The tale has a happy ending as the snake finally does not only hand the baby boy back to his mother, but also gives the mother many blessings so that "she had many more babies, as her husband was always good to her."

As for the search for education, if education is taken in its broad sense, then we can say that there are many Zanzibari tales with this kind of departure. Most of the tales dealing with pubertal initiation rites that we examine in the next part of this paper would fall under this category. The heroes and heroines in these tales have to undergo an educational process, which will then make them graduate from childhood to adulthood.

The type of departure, which is prompted by cultural alienation, is, indeed, alien in the Zanzibari folk tale although it is quite common in Swahili written literature.\textsuperscript{13} As we have already indicated, the last type of departure is also present in the Zanzibari folk tale, although not very glaringly.

Curve AB: Trials and Tribulations

The adventure's curve from Departure Point to point B in the Zanzibari folk tale is full of trials and tribulations. It is very interesting that most of the tales will talk of the difficult journey in the forest, very much unlike what one would expect from islands surrounded by a great mass of water.\textsuperscript{14} Thus, in such tales like \textit{Radhi Au Mali}, \textit{Watoto wa Maajabu}, \textit{Kitambi cha Pembemeuli}, and a host of other tales a statement like "Akenda msitu na nyika, msitu na nyika, msitu na nyika kwa siku sita." (He/She travelled a long way in the forests and the plains for six days…) is a very common expression.

Besides crossing thick forests, the hero or heroine has to face a number of tests in the AB Curve. One of the most common tests for young travelling characters is the request from very old, dirty women to lick the discharges from their dirty eyes. Narrators will sometimes describe such scenes to a nauseating extent such as in the following part again taken from \textit{Kitambi cha Pembemeuli}:

Hata siku ya sabaa akafikia pahala akakikuta kibibi kikongwe sana hata haoneshi kuwa yuwaona, kwa sababu aligubikwa na matongo mazito machoni mwake. Yule bwana akamshitua yule bibi kwa kumwita. Kile kibibi kikaitika na kumuuliza yule bwana, "Weye n'nani unyanjire kuwa ikiwa huku juu? Kila ajao juu, kwa sababu hapa ni pahala wakaapo mazimwali, na wakija wakikukuta hapa watakula, na miye hapa ni mpishi wao. Lakin hebu nirambe tongo nikuone."  

Basi yule bwana akaziramba ramba tongo zote kavu na akakiuliza kile kibibi, "Jee, niziteme au nizimeze?"

Kibibi kikajibu, "Zimeze!" Akazimeza.

Hayaa! Kibibi kikamwambia, "Nirambe tena mwanangu, sijakuona."

Yule bwana akawamo kuziramba. Mara hii akaramba zile mbichi mbichi, na akauliza tena, "Nimeze au niteme."

Kibibi kikajibu, "Tema mwanangu. Uchungu wa mwana naujua weee!" Yule bwana akatema na tayari kibibi kikawa chaona.

(And then, lo and behold! On the seventh day he reached a place where he found an old, old woman who, from all that he could discern, the woman actually must have been blind since her eyes were covered with piles and piles of rheum. He startled that old, old woman by touching and calling her.)
That old, old woman responded and asked the man, “Who are you, and why have you come here where no man ever comes? Anybody who comes here ends up in death, for this is the dwelling place of trolls, and if they come and find you here they will definitely eat you up. I am their cook! Anyway, could you please lick my eyes so that I may be able to see you?

Well then, that man licked over and over again the dirty discharges from the eyes of the old, old woman, beginning with the drier ones, and then he asked the old, old woman, “Should I spit or swallow the rheum?”

That man continued licking the piles of dirty discharge from the old, old woman’s eyes. This time he licked the wet rheum, and then he asked again, “Should I swallow or spit the rheum?”

That old, old woman replied, “Spit it out my son. I know well the pains of bath pang!” The young man spit the rheum and already the old, old woman could see.)

The moment the young man passes this test the old woman gives him some very important clues that will help him overcome all the obstacles and achieve his goals. Such helpers can also be old men. In some stories such as in Ndugu Wawili and in Dege the helpers are in the form of birds while in others the helpers can even be snakes, such as happens to the heroine in The Island of the Snake and the Land of Gold.

The other common types of tests in the adventure’s outgoing curve, which the heroes and heroines of the travel folk tale have to face, are riddle-like events and phenomena that they have to be able to interpret. The chases in Kitambi cha Pembemeuli and the tricks that the wife and the husband play to outwit the trolls are an example of the tests. In Mfalme na Wanawe Watatu we have typical riddle-like tests which the three sons have to pass before they can graduate to inherit the kingdoms of Egypt and that of their father. For example, they have to be able to tell so many facts from a mark left by someone who had sat somewhere along their way:


(They, thus, went on their journey. On their way they saw some marks of a person that had sat somewhere on the ground. There and then, they stopped, and the eldest said, “Whoever sat here was a woman.” The second eldest said, “In fact she had a child with her.” The third concluded, “And the child is a toddler.”)

This equally riddle-like explanation of a mere sitting mark left by a traveller manipulates the audience's feelings keeping them in suspense until finally when the three sons disentangle its web in front of the King of Egypt:

Yule mtu aliypotelewa na mkewe aakaanza, "Enhe! Nyie ndiye mulionichukulia mke wangu; kwa dalili mulizo-nipa."


Ha! Yule mtu aliyeshitaki akawaza kimoyomoyo na kukubali kuwa ni kweli maneno yao.

(The man whose wife had disappeared began by saying, “O.K. You guys are the ones who stole and took my wife away, judging from all the evidence that you have given.”)
The three brothers denied the accusations. Then they said, beginning with the first, “We know her not because we stole your wife, but it is due to these reasons. First, wherever a woman sits she is bound to cut little sticks into tiny pieces.” Then the second one said, “The little pieces of sticks were scraped and scratched.” The third added, “We saw the mark of a small bell usually tied to the legs of a toddler.”

Well, well! The man who had accused the three young men reflected on the words of the three young men and even found the explanations to be true.)

By being able to prove to the King of Egypt that they are innocent and, of course, very intelligent gentlemen, the three sons prove that they are worth of inheriting the Kingdom of Egypt.

Several qualities of the hero/heroine are, thus, put to task in this AB Arc. Intelligence and also humility are among the common qualities. For example, in trying to show one's humility, it is very common to have heroes or heroines giving the following answer when they encounter the helpers whom we mentioned above, who ask them who they are, where they are coming from and where they are going: "Sijui ninakotokea wala ninakokwendea. Lakini natumai nitapata msaada wako." (I do not know where I come from, or where I am going. However, I hope I will get your help”). By pleading ignorance the heroes and heroines are easily accepted and assisted by the helpers.

Sometimes, as we have seen, the hero or heroine has to prove his or her physical prowess, will power, and even wit and a sense of humour in order to be able to outwit the evil forces that are typically found in this outgoing curve of the journey.

Curiously enough, it is also in this outgoing AB Arc that the Zanzibari folk tale has some of its heroes either falling into deep sleep, or soaringly being carried by huge birds to far off lands, just like in a dream. Sometimes instead of a hero or heroine falling asleep he or she is entombed in a hole or cave. The act of the sister being left alone under a Mbungo tree in Ndugu Wawili is one of the many such acts which involve the travelling character falling into a state of unconsciousness or deep sleep. Finally, some little birds, like doctors of mercy, give her limbs back and thus, save the sister. She then lives happily ever after in a castle of her own, away from her original home.

It is thus in the AB Curve that the heroes or heroines are thrown to the world full of adventures and even dangerous encounters. It is mostly in this arc that these heroes and heroines have to prove their worth.

**Locus B: Consolidation Point**

In some tales, Locus B is the place where the above events in Arc AB will take place, in which case the arc becomes just a pathway leading to Locus B where the real action will happen. Many of the ogre tales where young men have to single-handedly fight some ogre in order to release the villagers who had been gobbled up fall under this category. This point then is not only a consolidation point for such heroes or heroines, but first the attainment point and then the place of consolidation. Indeed, in some tales this locus turns also to be the permanent home for the hero or heroine who is invariably turned into the king of the village that he has freed or into a queen. In this case then, such heroes and heroines do not return to their former points of departure. Such is the case in Nunda Mla Watu, Ndugu Wawili and Watoto Saba, for example. One can add, therefore, that in the tales where the heroes or heroines do not return to their points of departure, this point is a kind of a freedom locus.

Locus B is the middle point where the journey out more or less ends, and the journey back to the original point begins. Kunene refers to this point as the Place of Foreign Sojourn. After a long period of trials and initiation in which the traveller's courage and quality of temperament are put to test, whatever was gained is
consolidated in this locus. As we stated earlier, rather than just using this point for consolidation, some of the tales from Zanzibar have the heroes or heroines turn this place of ‘foreign sojourn’ into their permanent homes. Perhaps that explains why this point is most of the time marked by a building/castle, referred to as “mji” in the tales, to show the qualities of a new home that it represents.

The BA Return Curve

The Return Curve from Locus B back to A is used by most of the heroes and heroines for further consolidation of their victories. Most of the time this is an uneventful journey back, although sometimes it can have major events which will affect the hero's or heroine's future as happens in Kisa cha Hamadi na Babu Akili. This is a good example of a story with multiple patterns. Hamadi, an orphan, decides to leave home for far off lands in search of a better life. He travels for six days without meeting anyone; and then on the proverbial seventh day he arrives in a place where he meets an old man who then gives him some advise and some warning:


(Akili, the old intelligent man told Hamisi, “It is one thing to be advised and another to heed that advice, depending on the person receiving such an advice. Heed my words o my grandson: wherever in public do not ever draw your knife. Heed to my advice! Be careful!”)

Soon Hamadi fails the test as he forgets the advice and the warning, drawing his knife in public and thus catching the attention and envy of the king's son. The Prince orders Hamadi's arrest falsely accusing him of stealing his knife. Consequently Hamadi is arrested and sent in front of the King. It is Mzee Akili again who teaches Hamadi the way out of his problems. This time Hamadi heeds to the advice given to him by Mzee Akili and, as the story says, he is freed:


(Hamadi paid a lot of attention while eating. Then, when he day of the hearing arrived, Hamadi explained all that Mzee Akili had trained him to say through Mzee Akili’s words to his cat. Thus, the king’s court passed the verdict that the Prince was in the wrong, and the laws of the land stipulated that he must be hanged for stealing the knife.)

Somehow, this story comes to a dead end as we are not told what happened to Hamadi, although we might assume that as a result of his innocence he probably lived happily ever after in the King's castle.

The pattern of this story does not take Hamadi back to his original place of departure. It is more of a multiple adventure style, which looks as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home (A): Departure Point</th>
<th>to</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town 1: (B) Encounter with Mzee Akili</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town 2: (C) Hemedi is Arrested</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The pattern of this tale: from A to B to C, then back to B, and then C again makes its return curve different from the others in that it retraces the departure curve, only that it does not retrace it right to where the departure began; for that point is not an important one to this story. The most important locus is the dwelling of Mzee Akili who is, in effect, Hamadi's saviour.

**Locus A Again: Arrival and Further Consolidation**

Most of the Zanzibari folk tales do not give the details of this locus. The victory won by the hero or heroine in the AB Arc and also in Locus B seems to be enough since it fulfils the aim of the journey. That is why most tales from Zanzibar will end at locus B. However, some tales treat this locus as the concluding part of the story, in which the hero or heroine will consolidate whatever was won. It is in this locus where the ensuing results of the return will manifest themselves. Where the adventure has been a form of pubertal rites, the arrival locus will show the characters reasserting their positions; in which case the locus will imply the casting aside of the old world of childhood and the establishment of the new world of maturity and of adult life. This is the locus of the coronation of kings and queens who will then live happily ever after.

**The Social Significance of the Migration Motif**

The passage from childhood to adulthood is a big challenge and even a problem for most parents in all societies. The simultaneous combination of biological, physiological and hormonal changes and social obligations on the adolescents creates different moods that are not always compatible with what the parents and society at large wish for. This kind of crisis is dealt with in most African societies by means of initiation rites and ceremonies. This part of the paper analyses the way the migration motif dramatizes in a symbolic manner the different phases of transition from childhood to adulthood, the latter being considered as a requirement for one to become a hero or heroine in society.

Folktales show the child how he or she can relinquish his infantile dependence wishes and attain a more independent existence. Talking about the same issue, Bruno Bettelheim has this to say:

> Today, children no longer grow up in the security of an extended family or of a well-integrated community. Therefore, even more than at the times when fairy tales were invented, it is important to provide the modern child with images of heroes who have to go out into the world all by themselves and who, though originally ignorant of ultimate things, find secure places in the world by following their right way with deep inner confidence.17

Folk tales carry a very strongly felt need by the child and young adult to find answers about life in general, and childhood experience in particular. At the same time the adventures narrated in the tales fulfil the child's wishes to be able to fly and do other such-like wondrous feats. The narratives take the child through different stages of development, step by step, so that initiation into adult life is, most of the time, gradual and very rarely sudden. Talking about the same issue, Eliade writes:

> It is impossible to deny that the ordeals and adventures of the heroes and heroines of fairy tales are almost always translated into initiatory terms. Now, this to me seems of the utmost importance: from the time - which is so difficult to determine - when fairy tales took shape as such, men have listened to them with a pleasure susceptible of indefinite repetition. This amounts to saying that initiatory scenarios -even camouflaged, as they are in fairy tales - are the expression of a psychodrama that answers a deep need in the human being. Every man wants to experience certain
perilous situations, to confront exceptional ordeals, to make his way into the Other World - and he experiences all this, on the level of his imaginative life, by hearing or reading fairy tales.  

The "initiatory terms" of the Zanzibari folktales can be determined by looking at the role of their use of the adventure motif as puberty rites of passage. In dealing with the subject, the folk tale from Zanzibar has also incorporated different outlooks and philosophies of the people of Zanzibar regarding life in general, death in particular, and also about different roles played by different people in the community at different stages of their growing-up process. The physical adventure of a hero or heroine in the Zanzibari fairy and folk tale represents an intellectual and emotional initiation to maturity. The traveller's goal is to achieve or acquire the knowledge and/or power that will allow him or her to rejoin the community and enjoy the heightened status in it. Thus, it is clear that the adventure motif in the Zanzibari folk tale does, at the same time, represent the socialization process, which is very necessary for young members of the community to undergo. This socialization process can be traced from Point A of the journey to the arrival point as summarily indicated below.

**Departure Point: Death as the Beginning of New Life**

Quite a number of the adventure tales from Zanzibar begin with the deathbed scene of one or even both parents. The deathbed scene signifies the passing away of the older generation and the new duties and responsibilities to be shouldered by the new generation. Already it indicates to the child that the rites de passage it is about to embark on imply taking over all the custodianship of the homestead which was, up till then, in the hands of the parents. The first step on the road to one's initiation into maturity is the death of an older generation, which symbolizes the necessity to relinquish one's dependency on one's parents.

Death then, in the Zanzibari folk tales, is taken for granted as a fact of life that must be borne and even accepted by all from the very beginning. Thus, in making most of the Zanzibari tales which utilize the migration motif start with the death of one or both parents, the child is, in this way, instructed that his or her life's adventure to heroism must, from the start, be prepared for the inevitable to come: death.

Death in these tales, however, must be seen from an African cultural context. Although, in effect, the deathbed scene at the start of a tale implies the end of an old life and the beginning of a new one, this new life, however, does not signify the cutting off of the umbilical cord that joins it to the old one. That accounts for the name-giving ceremonies in most of African societies. Quite often, the names given to children are those of the foreparents. This indicates that the old and dead are still very much alive in the young ones. This is where the world of the unborn can even be older than that of the living, to borrow Soyinka's statement; and the cyclic reality of traditional African thought must be related to this outlook. Death, in this case, is actually the beginning of life.

Touching on the same issue of death in fairy tales, and giving it metaphoric dimensions, Bettelheim has stated as follows:

> Fairy tales were derived from, or give symbolic expression to, initiation rites or other rites de passage - such as the metaphoric death of an old, inadequate self in order to be reborn on a higher plane of existence.

While Bettelheim is referring to the hero or heroine who emerges as a newborn at the end of the adventure, it is interesting that the Zanzibari fairy and folk tale begins with an actual physical death of the parents and only ends with the metaphoric death of those who have just completed the feats of dangerous journeys. The cyclic reality of traditional African thought here means that the physical death is the beginning of the metaphoric life, and the metaphoric death turns into the beginning of a new physical life. The beginning of migratory adventure is, therefore, the start of the struggle for self-realization. This is so because migration in folk tales can be both an adventure and also a search for self-identity and recognition by others around the one who is undertaking the journey. In the Zanzibari tales, those who migrate set on their adventurous and
even dangerous undertakings willingly though with uncertainty and anxiety. In fact, as we have mentioned already, in most of the tales the initiates beg their parents for permission to travel and see the world. This urge and even request indicates the anxiety to leave childhood and grow up. The adventure's cyclic nature is, essentially, a rite of passage which leads, via trials and purification, to a new life, and ends more or less where it began: home.

In *Watoto Saba*, which we mentioned above, it is very interesting to note that the sister's hands are cut off after she steals the sugarcane. While this punishment can be related to the Muslim system of retribution, in this case it is very likely that this was meant to be symbolic of a warning against not only relying too much on the warmth and comforts of the idyllic life of the homestead when one is already supposed to shed off his/her infantile dependencies; but also it signifies another equally important warning; it is an admonition against incestuous desire, an admonition against sibling incest.

**Curve AB: Difficulties in the Wilderness**

The stages of development of a young member of family are depicted very well in a short but very interesting folk tale from Zanzibar known simply as *Umoja*. Here there is an old couple with two children: a son and a daughter. The father dies after a short illness: and soon, the ailing mother calls the children by her deathbed bidding them goodbye with these final words:

> Siponi, ila ninachowaomba ni kuwa muwe pamoja kwa hali na mali. Musisikitike kwani kila chenyeye mwanzo hakikosi kuwa na mwisho.

(I am not going to survive this illness. What I request of you is that you should, by all means, be united. Do not grieve, for, whatever has a beginning must also have an end.)

A few days after the passing away of their mother, the brother embarks on a journey in search of food. This is obviously the first test of adulthood: to be able to fend for one's family. After a long journey through the forest, the young man comes across the proverbial, very dirty, old woman:

> Akamkuta bibi mmoja alie na hali mbaya.

> Yule bibi akamwambia, "Ewe mjukuu wangu, nirambe tongo nikuone."

> Yule mtoto akafanya kama alivyoambiwa. Akamwuliza, "Sasa mjukuu wangu umekuja huku kufanya nini?"

> Akamwambia, "Nimekuja kutafuta chakula ili nikale na ndugu yangu. Hivi sasa nimeona nyumba ile kubwa nakwenda kuomba."

> Yule bibi akamwambia, "Ile ni nyumba ya zimwi. Mle ndani kimo chakula kingi sana, lakini ukenda tu atakuua."

(The he met an old, old sickly woman.

That old, old sickly woman said to him, “My dear grandson, please lick the discharges on my eyes so I may see you.”

That child did as he was told. Then the old, old sickly woman asked, “Now my grandson, what have you come to do here?”

The young man said, “I have come in search for food so that I go and share it with my sister. I can
see that house over there. I will go there to beg for some food.”

The old woman said to him, “That is the house of an ogre. In there, there is plenty of food. However, the moment you attempt to get in there you will be gobbled up.”

Although in this case the helper is actually a positive character, in some cases as shall be seen later, the helpers themselves are meant to misguide the hero or heroine so that he or she may discover on his or her own, the trick that has been set up to test his or her maturity. In the case of Umoja, the trial of the hero begins with the request from the old, dirty woman. Again, the moment the boy agrees to lick the mucus-like, dirty discharge from the eyes of the old woman, his maturity is strengthened. The licking of this puss-like rheum from the eyes of the dirty old woman carries a moral that celebrates humility. By being able to lick the nauseating discharge he has given the respect required of him to old age. His second trial is how to deal with the troll that inhabits the castle in which there is the food he needs so much for his and his sister's survival. Luckily, even here his respect pays off:

Yule bibi akamwambia, "Sikiliza mjukuu wangu; nenda ikiwa saa kumi na mbili wakati zimwi huwa anakwenda kuchunga. Panda mpaka orofo ya juu, utapata hicho unachotaka.

(Then that old woman said to him, “Listen, my grandchild; when it reaches six o’clock go visit the troll’s place. At that time the troll will be out hunting. Go up to the top floor, you will get what you want.”)

After the troll has gone off, the boy goes to its house, eats all the cooked food and collects the rest for use at home. The troll comes back when the boy is still in the house, which forces the boy to quickly hide in the attic of the house. On finding no food in the house, and on seeing a grain of rice on its fat tail, the troll foolishly suspects that its tail is to blame. It, thus, burns its own tail, and the fire catches on so that the whole troll is destroyed. The boy, who has witnessed all this while hiding in the attic, dances happily and goes to collect his sister and also the old woman who had helped him. They live in that house happily and enjoy the wealth that had belonged to the troll for a very long time. After some time the old woman passes away.

There is quite a big number of folktales from Zanzibar in which there are trolls and giant snakes or dragons that swallow whole villages. These are finally defeated by, usually, young men who have to travel from other far off villages. These tales suggest a ritual of purification and the rebirth of a community. This is, for example, very well-illustrated in a folktale known as Tovu in which a very prosperous and fertile village which has farmers and herders who are doing very well, is invaded by an ogre that keeps on claiming one of the villagers every year. Finally the ogre has swallowed all the villagers who, incidentally, belonged to one same clan. It inherits all the wealth that had belonged to the villagers and, for a time lives very happily. However, in another village, there are people who are of the same clan as the ones who have been swallowed. Among them is a boy child who insists to his parents that he wants to visit the scene of the fatal events. The parents are against the idea, for they are sure that if their son goes he will be swallowed too. The boy persists in his demands, and so, finally the parents give their half-hearted consent. So, he sets on a journey. By doing this, the boy is ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of his kith and kin. This readiness is finally rewarded as he manages to outwit the ogre that, in the same manner as happens to the troll in Umoja, foolishly kills itself by burning its navel when it accidentally discovers a grain of rice on it and accuses its own navel of stealing the food. The self-sacrifice transferred from the young boys to the zimwi and troll is indicative of the maturity of the boys. The initiates must be able to conquer their animal part and become conscious of their other responsibilities in their societies. As is usual in folk tales, the boy in Tovu cuts open the stomach of the ogre and releases all his clan mates. As a reward for his adventurous migration, he is crowned and made king of that community.
Some Further Observations

So far, in trying to describe the Zanzibari adventure folk tale, this paper has shown how, in spite of a number of theories which would divide the folk tale into even more than thirty functions as propounded by Structuralists like Propp, or into a number of subsections as mentioned by Lord Raglan and Levi Strauss, for our purposes, the most appropriate division of the Zanzibari travel tale is into four major parts whose terms have been borrowed from Kunene, namely, Locus A, Curve AB, Locus B and Curve BA. These loci and curves have helped us in decoding the journey in the Zanzibari folk tale by deliberating on the reasons for a character's departure, the Arc AB trials and tribulations faced by such a character before reaching the foreign land contained in Locus B, the consolidation of power and victory by the hero or heroine in that locus and also in the returning Arc BA. We have indicated that most of the heroes and heroines in the tales do not return to their original points of departure. However, when they do so, these and those who remain in Locus B turn those loci into new homes as they start life afresh.

It has also been shown that the adventurous migration motif in the folk and fairy tale from Zanzibar is, essentially, ritualistic. The rites of passage in the motif are, at the same time, a codified idiom that, through creative excursions tend to reveal social processes that sustain and modify the conduct and behaviour of individuals of the community. This is done through manipulation of various symbols. The paper has also indicated that the initiation rites represented by the adventures undertaken by heroes and heroines are cosmogonist not only in structure but also in their very nature. Migration, then, represents the birth of a new world with new hopes. It ends with the most reassuring manner to the child, similar to what Bettelheim has stated:

At the story's end the hero returns to reality - a happy reality, but one devoid of magic.....As we awake refreshed from our dreams, better able to meet the tasks of reality, so the fairy tale ends with the hero returning, or being returned, to the real world, much better able to master life.22

The Adventurous Migration Folk Tale as a Metaphor of Conflict Management and Resolution

Earlier on we mentioned the central place of conflict in folk tales and in all literary productions. The significance of this aspect to our present study cannot be overemphasized. Conflict is used both as a premise for a folk tale, and also as a way to advance the migration story or plot.

Here we focus on conflict and its resolution through the migration motif. We consider the motif in Zanzibari folk tales as a series of metaphors of conflict resolution. Our focus on this aspect has its significance in that it gives children and adults alike, the chance to develop an understanding of the workings of conflict and of its resolution.

Conflict is inherent to life, and certainly it is central to all literature, oral and written. Human beings learn from experience, and human experience is fraught with conflict. Therefore, a conflict can be a learning tool when we view it as a process that is more than a thing to be surmounted and conquered. Since conflict seems to be the starting and driving force in most of the folk tales examined so far, the main thrust of the present paper, then, is to try and revisit some of the tales that have already been examined and to relate the motif to conflict management and resolutions as portrayed in the tales.

Conflict Management and Resolution Styles

Essentially, the structure of a migration folktale tallies with the "moves" contained in the adventure itself. These loci and curves are a metaphor of conflict management and resolution. The moves from conflict to resolution comprise different conflict management styles. These are ways in which, through experience and reinforcement, an individual learns to cope with conflict. In connection with the heroes and heroines who migrate in the folk tale from Zanzibari, we have identified five major styles: The first is Withdrawal or Avoidance where one or more parties avoid the conflict or will not even realize that a conflict exists.
The second is Forcing. Here, one side takes it all while the other side submits willingly or is forced to. The third is Smoothing. In this style, emphasis is on ways to make a situation easy rather than to work upon conflict. Smoothers are often taken advantage of. In most of the tales from Zanzibar that have dealt with sibling rivalry, one can easily confuse the youngest child as being a smoother especially at the beginning when, for example, he or she is forced by his or her elder brother/s, and almost foolishly agrees, to give up all his or her share of their inheritance. In some tales the youngest child is actually wholly deprived of his share of the inheritance. However, finally, in most of these tales, it is the fool who wins it all. This is clearly illustrated in such tales like *Kisa cha Binti Matlai Shamsi* and *Makame wa Makame*. The fourth conflict management style involves Compromising. Here, bargains are made with the intended goal of each side getting something they want, while losing a bit also. Compromising can break down to a smoother/forcer interaction, or become problem-solving depending on the parties and the contested area or matter. The last style that we have identified can be termed Problem Solving in which agreement is reached that satisfies the needs of all parties well enough to avoid feelings of loss on anyone's part. There seems to be very, very few of this kind of style in the collected tales so far. The tale known as *Kisa cha Mtu na Wanawe Watatu*, which was introduced earlier, is among the few which have used this style by narrating one of the most common motifs in folk tales the world over: sibling rivalry. This is finally peacefully resolved as every one of the brothers gets an equal share of the inheritance and they live happily ever after.

In an adventure folk tale there is action that has some contributing factors that give rise to it. At first these factors are more important than the action itself. It is in them that we get the source and type of a conflict. Almost all conflict is traceable to the environment and the social conditions surrounding the hero or heroine of a journey tale. Since the paper has indicated that the journey in the folk tale from Zanzibar is essentially divided into some major loci and curves of action, we shall here see how each locus and its accompanying curve/s have related to the issue of conflict management and resolution.

**Conflict in Locus A**

As we did mention already, Locus A consists of a home and a family. This unit is, at first, a place of peace and harmony. It comprises a setting that is most akin to our everyday, ordinary existence. However, soon the members of the younger generation get the urge to leave and explore the world. This urge does constitute some kind of conflict. It is a psychological conflict whose source is the desire to grow up and leave one's "nuclear" family. It is a conflict which has to do with the pull between two sides: that of the family among which one was born and has been raised on the one hand, and on the other, the world out there which will turn one into an adult, ready to face life himself or herself. However, as shown in earlier, and quite unlike the heroes and heroines in the epics that Kunene examines, this point does not involve the familial tensions whereby "the young person departs against the wishes of his/her parents," to use Kunene's words. While the initial part of the story in the epics that Kunene examines concentrates on that dislocation of family relations, the corresponding part in most of the Zanzibari folk tales does not show that kind of conflict. There is hardly anywhere in these tales where the children would depart against their parents' wishes. Part of the training that these children have to get as a hero or heroine’s quality is in the art of persuasion. That is the reason why any child or young adult who wishes to travel has to persuade his or her parents until, finally, they do agree and the mother even prepares some food for the one who is going to travel. So, only a minor conflict occurs at this initial stage; and it is resolved through smoothing and persuasion. In which case, even what Kunene refers to as "the physical dislocation" as the hero departs from home is not a dislocation as such but an assertion of one's right and duty to grow up.

Inevitably, as we saw earlier on, this departure point is also the beginning of the search for oneself. As the question "Who am I?" is persistently asked by the hero or heroine, it becomes a very potent catalyst for the hero's or heroine's journey. At this instance then, the physical adventure is meant to be a metaphorical
disguise, representing the process of growing up and maturing which is, in a way, a conflict between childhood and adulthood.

Daniel Kunene has mentioned that the reasons for the hero or heroine's journey can also be due to a conflicting situation between the character's flaws and a place of authority that has been set for that character. As such, the conflict has to be resolved through purification, which involves undergoing a tedious and dangerous journey. Kunene has gone on to say:

It is legitimate to ask: Why a journey? Why must the hero undergo this ritual of test, trials and purification before he can take the place appointed for him by destiny? Of all the possible answers, the one that seems to make the most sense is that the hero is born with character flaws and must be purified before he can accede to the place reserved for him by destiny. The process of purification necessitates withdrawal from society leading to suffering and redemption. If something goes wrong, for which the hero is morally responsible...then redemption is replaced by retributive justice.27

In spite of the fact that the above type of conflict is abundant in the area that Kunene is dealing with, namely, the African epic, and although Kunene seems to generalize that the above is the case even in African non-epic narratives, it hardly appears in folk tales from Zanzibar. Perhaps the only example which we can cite and which seems to support Kunene's viewpoint is the tale called *Kisa cha Fikirini na Hemedi*. Fikirini starts out with some sort of character flaw as he plans to cheat his way to a false princehood. Whether he is "born with" such character flaws is a very debatable issue. However, the conflict between Fikirini and Hemedi and its gradual resolution can be said to represent Fikirini's purification. There is, of course, another way of interpreting the Fikirini-Hemedi conflict. This conflict can be a political one, in which poor, lower class people (represented by Fikirini) use all means to try to fight the rich, upper class people (represented by Hemedi) in order to better their lives. Since the tale of *Kisa cha Fikirini na Hemedi* could be a product of a feudal system, naturally its ending must maintain the status quo by showing how Fikirini has been wrong in vying for princehood.28 If the conflict between Hemedi and Fikirini can, thus, be said to be a political one, then its resolution through smoothing does not sound to be very permanent.

Other than in very few tales similar to *Kisa cha Fikirini na Hemedi*, in effect, the traveling character in the majority of tales from Zanzibar is most of the time the righteous one who must help in purifying the other characters. The *kijana* in *Tovu* and the *mtoto* in *Nunda Mla Watu* are two cases in point. There is no flaw mentioned regarding their characters. They are humbly begging their parents to give them permission to travel. They patiently wait for their parents' answers for two days, and on the proverbial third they get the affirmative answer. Then, and only then, do they leave.

Again, as we saw earlier, deaths occur at Locus A. Through such deaths the old generation gives way to the new generation, and in this way the above kind of conflict is reduced. The remaining characters will then travel on their own volition. However, although most of the departures in the Zanzibari folk tales are voluntary, still, we must insist again, some sort of conflict causes most of the voluntary actions. While familial conflict is hardly present in the Zanzibari folk tale, most other types are. We have shown how in our current collection of folk tales from Zanzibar, in only two tales of *Watoto Saba* and *Ndugu Wawili*, are there real familial conflicts which, by using the flight and exile motif, make the two sisters leave their families. May be we can add here that all the tales in which the elder sons wish to travel alone and therefore refuse to go along with the "useless" youngest child, have this affair as some kind of familial conflict. However, in most cases the point is not to look at the conflict as a familial one, but rather to consider the significance of its message that even the youngest can outwit the eldest, and that the urge to grow up can make one perform wonders.
Most other departures are sparked by conflicts that consist of social obligations such as the need to find ways of getting a child or a bride as evidenced in *Makame wa Makame na Mwamize*. In this tale we see the hero going on a journey in search of a bride. Besides the adventure whose physical details are not provided by the narrator, it is the intellectual journey that matters in this story. By being able to reveal the riddle regarding the material from which the chair is made of, Makame wa Makame proves his worth and is, thus, given a bride. While the above kind of departure is similar to the one necessitated by the search of one's lost husband as happens in *Pete*, in others there is mere adventure which consists of the conflict between the confined self and the freed self as in *Hekaya za Pangoni*; or just looking for a better life as in *Kisa cha Hamadi na Babu Akili*. The type of social obligation which forces *kijana* in *Tovu* and *mtoto mmoja* in *Nunda Mla Watu* to leave their villages and travel to try to free their relatives in another village can be classified as a conflict between the self and the community, where the self is overpowered by the community so that the former sacrifices itself to the latter. At first, the parents of the young men are adamantly against their going away to face the devastating ogres, and this is the source of the self-versus-community conflict. We shall take two quotations from the stories to illustrate this point. The first one is taken from *Tovu*:

> Mtoto aliwaambia wazee wake, "Baba, nimesikia kuwa hakuna mtu hata mmoja katika kijiji cha mbali na hapa, tena kijiji chenyewe mna ndugu zetu. Kwa hivyo mimi nataka niende ili tujue watu hao wamekwendea wapi."

> Wazee wakamjibu, "Ewe mwenetu mpenzi, wee unataka na wewe ufe bure! Watu kweli wamekufa, jee, wewe ambae hata kibaba hufiki? Usiende mwanangu."

> Mtoto alishikwa na ari kubwa na kuingia na uchungu kwani eti aliambiwa hawezi kufanya chochote. Lakini mtoto huyo hakuvunjika moyo. Alijaribu kwenda kwa wazee wake tena, bahati nzuri mara hii, baada ya siku mbili, ya tatu aliambwisha na mama yake alibadisha chakula cha kutumia katika safari yake.

(The child told his parents, “Father, I have heard the news that in a village far from here all people have become extinct. In fact in that village there are our relatives. Therefore I want to go there to know where they have disappeared to.”)

> The parents answered him, “Our dearest child, you desire to go over there so that you also may die foolishly? Many brave and strong people have died over there, how do you think you, tiny one, can survive? Do not go my child.”

Now, more than ever, the child had a very strong urge and was so sad to be told that he was not capable of doing anything. He tried to approach his parents again on the matter. Luckily enough this time, after the second day, on the third day his parents agreed to let him go. His mother prepared for him some food to use on his journey.)

And the second one is from *Nunda Mla Watu*:

> Alipokuwa mkubwa alimwuliza mama yake, "Mama, hawa watu wengine wako wapi?" Mama yake alimjibu kuwa watu wa mtaa ule wote wameliwa na nunda. Mtoto huyo alimwambia mama yake kuwa lazima amwewe nunda huyo. Mama yake alimsihi na kumwambia, "Utawezaje kumwua nunda huyo na watu wote wa mtaa huu wamekufa walipojaribu kufanya hivyo?"

> Siku moja alitoka mtoto yule na kwenda kuchonga mishale yake saba. Baada ya matayarisho yake yote, na baada ya kumshii sana mamaake mpaka akakubaliwa, alifanya safari ya kwenda kumtafuta huyo nunda mla watu.
“When he was already a grown up he asked his mother, “Mother, where are the other people?” His mother responded that *nunda*, a troll, had eaten up all the people in that neighborhood. That child told his mother that it was imperative that he kills that troll. His mother beseeched and pleaded with him saying, “How will you be able to kill the troll while, in fact, all the people in this neighborhood have died trying to do exactly that?”

One day, that child went out to make seven arrows. After all his preparations, and after beseeching and pleading with his mother over and over again until his mother agreed, he set on a journey to search for *nunda*, the man-eater."

Within this major conflict is the minor conflict between generations or the conflict of the generation gap. While the parents in *Tovu* feel that their child is still a very young person “ambae hata kibaba hufiki,” this feeling creates a challenge to the young man who has to prove his worth by going out there to face the ogre. The same happens with the *mtoto* in *Nunda Mla Watu* who has to prove to his mother that he can do it in spite of the mother's doubts and even fear. This then is a conflict between infantile dependency, which this time is perpetuated by the parents, and growing up by disentangling oneself from one's parents represented by the urge to go and fight the troll. The ogre and the *nunda* at these instances are a representation of that which the young adults are fighting to rid themselves.

As already seen, some departures are sparked off by a test given to one or more characters left behind. Some of the commonest tests are: to open all the rooms in the house with the exception of one; not to open a box entrusted to one by one's friend; to slaughter any of the animals at home except one type as in *Kanga* where a husband travels and allows his wife to slaughter any of the animals except the guinea-fowl or the *kanga*. In these cases then, the importance of the motif is not on the side of the one taking on the adventure but on those left behind, those whose faithfulness is put to test. This Adam-Eve-Apple metaphor is inevitably a big source of conflict; and in all the tales where this beginning is employed, the characters do fail the test, and thus, one side taking it all resolves the conflict, as the failed side gets punished. In other words, the conflict is resolved through a moral on the importance of trust and faithfulness.

Other than the above, the departure point is in most cases just the beginning of a certain type of conflict which will, inevitably, be heightened and resolved at a different locus other than Locus A.

The Zanzibari adventure folk tales manifest the reaction and responses of the hero or heroine to the physical, psychological and intellectual forces surrounding him/her. As we stated earlier on, Curve AB and Locus B are all full of hardships for the traveling character. It is in these points of the adventure that most conflicts will arise and reveal the strength or weakness of the hero or heroine.

Let us take *Mfalme na Wanawe Watatu* as our starting point in discussing the way conflict is managed in Curve A-B and in Locus B. It is in the riddle-like events that the three sons are put to test. To quote further from the tale:


(They went on with their journey. A little later they saw a beheaded body of a person, and the sons started interpreting what had happened to the beheaded man. The first was the eldest brother as was usual with them. He said, “This is an old man.” The second said, “He smokes…” The third concluded, “And he has a lot of beards.”)
This explanation of events and occurrences which would normally not be so easy to give, creates conflicts when someone who has lost a wife, and another who has lost a friend come along and accuse the three brothers of abducting the wife and killing the friend. As the audience is drawn to the conflict, it is only logical to travel along with the three brothers and their accusers to the next point of action, Locus B, where the conflict is resolved at the King's court.

An interesting conflict that happens in at the end of Nunda Mla Watu is the fight between mtoto and his uncle. While the uncle argues that the young man should have been careful not to touch any part of his (the uncle's) body with the knife while cutting open the nunda, and argues that his finger was cut intentionally by the young man, the fight that ensues is, to all purposes and intents, a replica of the fight between the young man and the ogre. The uncle is some kind of a usurper who does not like the young man to rule those he has freed from the nunda. In other words, the uncle would like to see the young man keep the status quo. The young man is keen to get his dues, and the conflict at this instance is resolved through force.

While Kunene terms this locus a place of foreign sojourn, and states that this is the point where the journey cycle begins to correct itself, that is to say the outward movement (A-->B) ends and the return movement (B-->A) begins, in most of the Zanzibari folk tales this is the point where the major conflict facing the hero or heroine will be conclusively resolved. The kijana will fight and outwit the troll, the mtoto will win the fight against the ogre and his uncle, the limbless sister will get her limbs back while the cruel brother will be punished, and the three brothers will get their double inheritance while proving that the wife of the king is a wicked woman. This will no longer be a place of foreign sojourn, but will be turned into a home, a replica of the old home and family where the heroes or heroines with their wives and husbands respectively will play the role of their parents so that while they live happily ever after they will, at the same time, have children who will one day ask them for permission to travel. So, the cycle will reactivate itself again, so that the ending will be yet another beginning.

Conflict in Curve BA
This study has indicated that Curve BA which has been termed by Kunene as the return curve is of no consequence to most of the Zanzibari folk tales. Indeed, except for very few folk tales such as in Kitambi cha Pembemeuli and in Mfalme na Watoto Wake, this curve hardly exists in the Zanzibari tales, and where it exists it carries no significant conflict or action. After transforming into a home what would have otherwise been a place of foreign sojourn, the heroes and heroines of the Zanzibari adventure folk tale do not find any need to follow curve BA back to point A. Thus, what we termed as a cyclic nature of the Zanzibari journey folk tale is, in effect, a semi-circle in the physical sense, and only a full circle when given a metaphoric interpretation. This metaphoric sense will give the audience the chance to draw a dotted line in the imagined Curve BA, so that the transformation of Locus B into a home turns into an implied return to Point A.

Here we must point out again that unlike the epic heroes analyzed by Kunene, the no-return hero or heroine in the Zanzibari folk tale chooses to stay in Locus B not as a way of showing a "total rejection of the old world that rejected the hero."xxix There is no serious conflict between the world that the hero or heroine left behind and the newly-attained world. What is shown here is that in most cases that "old world" has passed away and has given way to the new one that is created in this locus.

Tentative Conclusions on Migration as Portrayed in Kiswahili Oral literature
The part of the paper has, hopefully, shown that contrary to John M. Whiting's (1962: 391-394) contentions that initiation ceremonies are social instruments through which older, especially male, generation dramatizes its disciplinary power and control over the younger generation or even their
power to destroy any inclination of rebellion by those in the initiates group; the Zanzibari case, both in the actual initiation rites and also as portrayed in folk tales does not support this viewpoint. Fatherhood and motherhood in Zanzibar, as in many other African societies, does not generate any feeling of insecurity or any excessive rebellion among children. Children do belong to more than the immediate family. This explains why the character that travels or migrates in the folk tales from Zanzibar is not forced out of the homestead, and this is why the hero or heroine, ultimately returns to the family or starts a new family that replicates the old one.

Initiation rites in the actual lives of the Zanzibaris, and as portrayed in the Zanzibari fairy and folk tales are neither aggressive nor hostile in intent to the initiates as such. The method of disciplining the initiates, such as excluding them from the comforts of the homestead as represented by the adventure into the wilderness, does not indicate aggressiveness or hostility. Rather it symbolizes the shared struggle to grow up and take responsibilities in one's community. Thus, the sister in *Watoto Saba*, the boy in *Dege*, and all others who undergo this struggle do not regret having undergone through it. On the contrary, they are thankful that they passed through it and that it finally brought them to a happy ending.

This part of the paper has tried to show how each locus and curve of a migration tale contributes in the move from conflict to conflict management and resolution. The locus and curve system has been shown to correspond to the handling of various types of conflicts. The paper has examined a number of conflicts, which include psychological predicaments as a character has to choose between staying or leaving his or her family. This constitutes a conflict between childhood and adulthood. This kind of conflict has also been categorized as the conflict of the generation gap. There is also a conflict between the self and the community. In this conflict, the self is duty bound to sacrifice itself for the sake of the community.

The paper has also identified the Adam-Eve-Apple metaphor, which culminates into a moral conflict. Besides these types of conflicts, this part has also shown how the Zanzibari folk tale is full of actual physical conflict between human characters and non-human characters such as beasts, ogres, and djinns. In other words, these are conflicts between social forces and natural phenomena. These conflicts are, at the same time, a representation of real struggles in the Zanzibari society.

This paper does not pretend to have exhausted the examination of all the qualities of heroes and heroines in Zanzibari folk tales for that is, indeed, an impossible task within the confines of a single paper. We are sure that there are still many divergent patterns and qualities of such heroes and heroines that can be explored by other literary critics and scholars. However, it is hoped that the paper has, at least, introduced the student and scholar of Zanzibari folk tales to some patterns of the migration tales that correspond to some qualities of the tales’ heroes and heroines.

In this part of the paper there are indications that to have heroes and heroines sent out to encounter the dangerous forces out there in the world is to mark the end of infancy. This is the initiation into another kind of life whose process the child or young adult has to begin in the long march towards full adulthood, towards becoming a hero or heroine of his or her society. One can, thus, say that the migration motif as utilized in the folk tale from Zanzibar is, at the same time, *the story of manhood and womanhood achieved.*

**Migration in Kiswahili Written Literature**

Migration in written Kiswahili literature is multifaceted. While in James Mbotela’s *Uhuru wa Watumwa* (The Freedom of Slaves) the characters are forced to migrate from their homes of origin into slavery, in *Maisha ya Tipu Tipp* (The Life of Tipu Tipp), a slave trader and invader migrates from his home country in search for slaves and ivory. In both instances, both male and female characters are affected as the former are turned into commodities and shipped away from their
original homes, and the latter does exactly the same to his victims, killing those who oppose him. Migration in these works shows the rise of the capitalist market that commodifies human beings. While the two novels are also on cross-border migration for different reasons, one other, novel *Kimbia Helena, Kimbia* (Run Helena, Run) portrays the same cross-border migration, but for a very diverse reason – that of a refugee running away from the war-torn Rwanda. The main character here is Helena, who undergoes all the hardships which culminate into a triumph of finding a better, peaceful country in which to live – albeit away from her original home. The trials and tribulations through which Helena runs are, in a way, reminiscent of the paths followed by the heroes and heroines in the Kiswahili folktales. As we follow Helena we discover how she outsmarts male chauvinists and finds her way to freedom.

The link between Oral and Written Kiswahili literature can be seen in migratory adventures as first narrated by oral artists and then re-enacted in written literature. A good example here is in the accounts of Mugasha – a deity king from the folklore of East and Central Africa, who harnesses natural elements and uses them to recapture the usurped kingdom of his father, sometimes migrating and exiling himself. In an epic play of the same name as his, Mugasha, the character of this formidable hero, and even the migratory experience that he undergoes, form a symbol of the unrelenting and unfaltering human energy in search for freedom and fairness. Although the hero goes beyond the borders, unlike the adventures of Tipu Tipp, his is the quest for fairness and righteousness.

By far, the most common type of migration in written Kiswahili literature is the rural-urban migration. At times, this kind of migration reflects the remnants of the theme of migration as portrayed in Kiswahili oral literature. One sees different characters, such as Matika and Chonya in Ndyanao Balisiya’s novel, *Shida* (Hardships) moving from their poor village environment, and hoping for a better urban life. It is Matika, a female character, who moves first, attracting her childhood friend, Chonya. The same happens in Penina Muhando’s play, *Hatia* (Guilt) where Cheja, a girl, is lured into the “glitter” of the city, hoping to get better life compared to the life of poverty that she left behind in her village. While the first is able to gain momentary success in life, and that “success” entices her childhood boyfriend, the latter meets treachery from her city boyfriend who impregnates her and runs away. Such novels show big shifts of the characters from place to place with the aim of becoming part of, and gaining from the glitter; and individual migration works add up to one whole corpus of migration that is multifaceted. In this case, soon the female characters discover that the glitter that had enticed them is false. They fall prey to the money nexus that connects people in the capitalist set-up. They turn into commodities that are for sale in the open market. They are forced to sell their bodies as the only way out. Invariably, even the male characters follow a similar pattern as they are forced to turn into “thieves” and “thugs” after they fail to get what they had expected from the “glitter” of the city.

**Counter Migration**

In Tanzania, the Arusha Declaration of 1967 set the development goals of the country. This important blueprint for Tanzania was wildly popular when it was adopted by the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), generating spontaneous marches of support all over the country and turning Nyerere into a national hero. The document, originally published in Swahili, envisioned a classless society based on cooperative economics and the positive values of *ujamaa*, a Swahili word signifying familyhood. It was a historic statement of African determination to find an alternative to capitalism as a path to economic development, basing itself on the importance of people as a resource, good leadership, agriculture, land and other major means of production that were systematically nationalized. It is no wonder, then, although that vision was never realized, most of the Kiswahili literary works that portrayed the migration of characters from the rural areas to cities, ultimately countered the migratory tendency by sending such characters back to the village as the way out. Thematically, largely due to the Declaration, Tanzanian literature was now overloaded with the call to
go back to the village, especially the *Ujamaa* village. A theme that had been initiated antedatedly in Shaaban Robert’s novel, *Utubora Mkulima* (Utubora the Farmer) got new blood in such works as in Mathias Mnyampala’s *Ngonjera* poems and in hundreds of poems written in Tanzania’s dailies and weeklies and others broadcast on Radio Tanzania. Different music bands (curiously known as Jazz bands in Tanzania), choir groups such as Mzee Makongoro’s group that served very faithfully in spreading whatever politicians said on platform, and such prominent fine artists as Sam Ntiro whose murals in public places in Tanzania, such as at the main market in Dar es Salaam, the Kariakoo market, do portray mostly farmers and peasants with their hand hoes trying hard to till the unyielding land – all these increased the impetus of the call to go back to the village.

Such a return to the village was, thus, considered to be a heroic deed, as, for example, portrayed in Chonya’s return:

Hii ilikuwa asubuhi mpya. Miali ya jua ikampa Chonya mandhari ya mawanda mazuri ya kijani kibichi… Chonya alishangilia kiangazi kipya…


Ngoma za vita na uwindaji zilimkaribisha mwana aliyeishi kati ya simba na nduli wa dunia akarudi salama kwao

(This was a new morning. Sun rays gave Chonya the scenery of a carpet of greenery… Chonya lauded the new summer.

“All our houses with have iron-sheet roofs,” his father explained. “Can you see the changes?”

Chonya, saw, liked and was amazed by the changes.

War and hunting drums welcomed the son of the land who had lived in the midst of lions and other wild animals of the world, and who returned safely)

A return to the village was viewed in Tanzania Kiswahili literature as a heroic deed, especially when it is done by the male characters. Counter migration by female characters in these works seems to be of no major consequence.

**Conclusions**

The literature of a people enables us to observe and behold, as though through telescopic eyes, such people’s patterns of beliefs and their customs. In this way, a people’s philosophy of life is revealed by way of their folkloric and literary wisdom. The eyes of literary characters can make one discern how people react to social pressures in their environment. The voices of the story characters in a folktale, for example, provide the means for us to share the moral precepts and principles guiding a people’s social interaction. Moreover, the literature of a people enables us also to enjoy a good story and, in the process, satisfy our aesthetic sensibilities while satiating our artistic thirsts. For example, the humor and witticism, buffoonery and amusement so typically found in folktales make us chortle and smile inwardly and even embarrassingly, as we sometimes see ourselves and our own follies, foibles and whims mirrored and reflected in the antics of the literary characters.

Further, through different literary genres, a person’s socialisation process in his or her society/community is not only metaphorically depicted but also put in effect. This is done through manipulation of various
symbols that may even represent the *rites de passage* that imprint all the necessary qualities that a person is supposed to attain in order to graduate into adulthood in his or her community.¹ Such and other qualities have been shown to be represented through different migration stories in Kiswahili oral and written literature, thereby indicating different or similar gender roles in the growing up process and in conflict management and resolution, among other themes, portrayed in the actual migration and counter-migration of the literary characters.


² Joseph Campbell, op. cit., p.30


⁴ Curiously enough, unlike in the Zanzibari folktale, childhood is one of the recurrent themes in African written literature where African writers, like their counterparts in other continents, remember and recreate childhood in an attempt to recapture a lost world. In the Zanzibari folktale, the presence of that "lost" world is taken for granted and, thus, not described in details. For an interesting paper of visions of childhood in African literature see Burness, Donald, "Three Visions of Childhood in African Literature: Camara Laye, Luandino Vieira, Gerald Bessa Victor," Paper presented at the African Literature Association Meeting, University of Indiana, March 21-24, 1979. Available in ALA Archives, Department of Comparative Literature, University of Alberta, Canada.


⁶ See his earlier article, "Journey as Metaphor in African Literature," as mentioned above.

⁷ My informers tell me that the island of Mauritius is used just as a metaphor that indicates long distance. In fact, as we mention later in the paper, some other versions of the same story use Egypt and even Arabia instead of Mauritius.

⁸ Kunene has expressed a similar idea in his "Journey as Metaphor in African Literature, op. cit., p. 188, as he says:

> The wide prevalence of the traveling hero, or hero who ventures forth away from home must be seen in the light of African's attitude to home, family and communal cohesion. Out there is a jungle. The hero who turns his back on the courtyard and cattle-folds and grazing fields of his home is entering this jungle with all its beasts and monsters. If he comes back alive and unscathed he will have learned some lessons of life. If he comes back scarred in body and soul, he will have tasted the hazards of being away from home, and will appreciate all the more the advantages of maintaining his links with his family and his society.


10. At a glance this type of punishment might lead one to conclude that it is based on the Muslim system of sin and retribution where stealing/theft is punishable by having the thief’s hands cut off. However, its use in Ndugu Wawili where the sister agrees with her brother's demands that her hands be amputated in payment for loaves of bread does not exactly tally with the Muslim influence for there is no theft involved here. Although my informants tell me that this was just used to emphasize the cruelty of the brother, the coincidence of the limb-cutting incidents in a number of other tales calls for more research for it might have some further symbolic significance.

11. This is one of the many tales from Zanzibar, which uses the motif of the 'quest for the absurd' that is widespread the world over. Stith Thomson (1946:341) mentions how the motif appears quite often in the tales from North Pacific coasts and even in Europe where, for example, the hero is told to look for berries in midst of winter; which goes to show how folktales cut across different continents and cultures.


13. Most of the literatures that tackle the question of the conflict between the culture of the countryside life and that of the city does, invariably, deal with this theme.

14. Incidentally, in our current collection of more than three hundred and fifty folk tales only seven utilize the journey motif through sailing, confirming the fact that most of the story tellers/narrators must have come from Tanzania mainland without having undergone the experience of being seafarers.

15. See Kunene's article, "Journey as Metaphor.." (p.193), which talks about Chaka who is in the wilderness after several days of wandering. Due to fatigue and hunger, Chaka succumbs to a deep sleep under a tree by a fountain. Waking up in the late afternoon, he finds a tall "doctor-man" standing near him. This "doctor-man" helps Chaka in the process of cleansing and strengthening himself, similar to the girl’s strengthening, which is done by the little birds.

16. Ibid., p.190.


19. In trying to show how the naming African system can make a child's father refer to him as "my father," and how the father's conduct towards the child might be so differential that he might never call him by his real name, Wole Soyinka adds the following regarding this issue in his Myth, Literature and the African World (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1976), p.10:
   Thus, the world of the unborn is older than the world of the living, and the world of the living is older than the world of the ancestors, and the same is true if put the other way round.

20. See Bruno Bettelheim, op. cit., p.16.

21. Curiously, this parallels a lot with the role given to Kijana (Mtu) in E.N. Hussein's Jogoo Kijijini (Dar
es Salaam & Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1976) in which a young boy, trying to save a village from the dangerous Joka, a dragon which is threatening to devastate the whole village unless each year a virgin is sacrificed to it. This young boy is called by the author, "ng'ombe wa kafara", a sacrificial cow, as he states:

Kiitikio:
Masikini kijana masikini
Masikini lahaula masikini
Haya yote yanajia nini?
Hata ye kujifanya ng'ombe alia

Ng'ombe wa surat al-bakari
Ambae aso na dosari
Au wa Keats mshairi
Endae machinjoni huku alia

Maisha yake hivi hivi
Kuyapoteza
Ndivyo hivi?

Au tabu 'lizozipata
Mashaka yalomkuta
Dhiki zilizomkamata
Kuja kuwang’ombe wa kafara? (p.28)


23 Again, we must emphasize here that the "rivalry" is only symbolic and not actual. It insists that even the youngest of all the children is not so foolish as his or her elder brothers and sisters think. That is why normally the latter are outwitted and outsmarted by the former. This happens in the Kiswahili animal folk tales too where, for example, Sungura the Hare cheats great uncles Kifaru the Rhino and Tembo the Elephant into a tug of war, and they pull against each other thinking that each is actually contesting against the negligibly tiny hare. In papers 6 and 7 of the present work we examine this kind of tales in more details.

24 Lajos Egri in his book The Art of Dramatic Writing has divided conflict into four major divisions, which could be interesting in relation to the conflicts in the Zanzibari tales. These are: Static, Jumping, Slowly rising, and Foreshadowing. The first will always remain static whatever one does, while the second jumps while "defying reality and common sense." The third type rises slowly and grows naturally without any obvious efforts from the narrator. The fourth one is foreshadowing, and this is sparsely present in the Zanzibari adventure tale.

25 I am using this term very cautiously since in a strict African sense there is no real nuclear family. In fact there is not even an extended family as such, for that would assume a nuclear family to start with. Perhaps then there is a need to re-define the African family using terminologies that befit the reality of the term other than the inherited Euro-American anthropological prescriptions.


This tale does not differ much from the outlook contained in some Swahili proverbs such as "Wambili havai moja," "Hewala si utumwa," and "Ada ya mja kunena, kwa mwungwana ni vitendo." All these proverbs tried to justify the status quo in Feudalistic Zanzibar.