

TANGAZAUNIVERSITY COLLEGE
URBANIANA PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

STEPHEN ODUOR OKOTH

ADM NO: 20/00350

Ubuntu and the Kenyan Renaissance: A Reading of Going Down River Road and Kill Me

Quick by Meja Mwangi

**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF A BACHELORS DEGREE IN PHILOSOPHY.**

Nairobi – Kenya

DECEMBER 2022

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this paper is a product of my personal efforts achieved through personal reading, scientific research and personal reflections from available books, past papers, journals, novels and other written materials. This paper has never been submitted to any institution for an academic award in any discipline. All sources have been duly cited and accorded acknowledgement they deserve.

Student's name: Okoth Oduor Stephen

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Submitted with an approval of;

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Denis Odinga Okiya.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Head of Philosophy Department:

Name: Rev. Fr. Dr. Munguci D. Etriga. (AJ)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this work to all Kenyan socialists, humanists and to all the citizens who believe that if we embrace the ‘Utu lifestyle’ in Kenya, political hygiene will be in place and a higher-level of political engagement will prevail, thus aiding sustainable development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The completion of this work could not have been possible without the participation and help of many individuals who journeyed with me as I was undertaking my research. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the relentless work of my beloved lecturer, Dr. Gerface Ojwang, Tangaza University, who tirelessly took his time explaining the concepts and the format on how I could come up with a good paper.

I also want to acknowledge my supervisor, Dr. Denis Okiya, who journeyed with me throughout my research. He really rendered me the duly needed support throughout my work period. I also acknowledge my beloved community members, my friends and family members whose insights were also applicable to me through this period. The same also extends to my superior Dr. Joseph, for proof-reading my work before submission. Their great contributions cannot go unrecognized.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BBI:	Building Bridges Initiative
IPOA:	Independent Policing Oversight Authority
NARA:	National Accord and Reconciliation Act
UN:	United Nations
BEAC:	British East African Company:
OP:	Office of the President
KANU:	The Kenya African National Union
ODM:	Orange Democratic Movement.
PNU:	The Party of National Unity
GDRR:	Going Down River Road
KMQ:	Kill Me Quick.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Ubuntu:	It is an African based ideology which places emphasis on being human through others.
Ubuntu philosophy:	A collection of values and principles that people of Africa view as making people authentic human beings.
Humanism:	It is a way of living that is based on the idea that we are all human and that moral principles should be legitimately rooted in human experience and nature.
Humaneness:	The quality of compassion or consideration for other people.
Egoism:	An ethical theory that treats self-interest as the foundation of morality.
Capitalism:	An economic and political system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the state.
Ujamaa:	A communalistic system of cooperation based on equality of opportunity and self-help, established by Nyerere, in the 1960s in Tanzania.
Egalitarianism:	The doctrine that all people are equal and deserve equal rights and Opportunities.
Lingua Franca:	a language that is adopted as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different.
Coup:	A sudden, violent, and illegal seizure of power from a government
Xenophobia:	Dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries
Bicameral	A body having two chambers i.e. Parliament and Senate.
Disillusionment:	A feeling of disappointment resulting from the discovery that something is not as good as one believed it to be.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the status of Ubuntu in Kenya as a means for a rebirth of state governance and societal development. It explores the possibility of adopting Ubuntu as a way of tackling the challenge of political tensions which have taken shape in Kenyan politics before and after independence. This paper considers the works of a Kenyan popular writer Meja Mwangi, in his celebrated writings entitled *Going Down River Road and Kill Me Quick*. He examines the value of humanism in the society and tries to explain how society has lost the concept of humanism that was very essential in the indigenous African society. It places centrality on the dignity of human person, and hence the community having a great role in the development of the person from childhood to adulthood. This research therefore employs critical reflections as a philosophical research method in the collection and analysis of data. It considers various insights and contributions of many writers and philosophers, particularly in the modern error. Data collection was from both primary and secondary sources, unearthed, through personal readings and critical reflections on the philosophical realm, rather, laying foundation on Meja Mwangi's findings on Ubuntu philosophy. Through the study, it is established that in Mwangi's novels, societal stratification based on classes, gender, wealth, socio economic factors and occupation greatly influences the humaneness nature in the society. This kind of cohesion could only have ceased when Members embrace moral values as core pillars in life, thus improving the human dignity and respect for human life. These will greatly contribute to the reduction of political unrests and social stratification in Kenya.

Table of Contents

STUDENT’S DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	iv
DEFINITION OF TERMS	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE	1
1.0 GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Brief analysis of the author and the area of focus.....	1
1.2 The Nexus between Literature and philosophy.....	2
1.3The concept of humanism	3
1.4 The forms of humanism	6
1.5 Meja Mwangi’s conception of Ubuntu	7
1.6 Relevance of Ubuntu to state leadership.....	7
1.7 Background of the study	8
1.7.1 Brief overview of the political situation in Kenya.....	8
1.8Statement of the problem	10
1.9Literature review	12
1.10 The objectives of study	18
1.11Research questions.....	18
1.12 Research hypothesis.....	19
1.13 Scope and limitation	19
1.14 Justification of study	19
1.15 Methodology of study	20
1.16 Conclusion	20
CHAPTER TWO	22
UBUNTU IN MEJA MWANGI’S GOING DOWN RIVER ROAD AND KILL ME QUICK.....	22
2.0. INTRODUCTION	22
2.1 BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE AUTHOR.....	22
2.1.1 Birth history	22
2.1.2Mwangi’s most celebrated works	23
2.1.3 Mwangi’s professional Awards	24
2.2THE CONCEPT OF AFRICAN HUMANISM OUTLINED.....	25

2.2.1 What is African – Humanism?.....	25
2.2.3Significance of Humanism in the society	26
2.3 THE CRITICISM OF THE LEVEL OF HUMANISM AS DEPICTED IN THE TWO NOVELS OF MEJA MWANGI.....	28
2.3.1 KILL ME QUICK.....	28
2.3.2 GOING DOWN RIVER ROAD	30
2.3.3The Ubuntu concepts explained within the novel	31
2.4 CONCLUSION	35
CHAPTER THREE	37
3.0 Introduction.....	37
3.1THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA	37
3.1.1 A Brief Background and its geographical position	37
3.2 KENYAN POLITICS BEFORE AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE	38
3.2.1 The Stone Age Kenya	38
3.2.2 A road to colonialism in Kenya	39
3.3 KENYA AT THE CROSSROADS TO FREEDOM.....	39
3.3.1The Mau Mau rebellion against colonialism.....	39
3.3.2 Kenya achieves self-rule	41
3.4. THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AFTER INDEPENDENCE	41
3.4.1 Political system in Kenya: Structural analysis	41
3.4.2 On the transfer of powers.....	42
3.5 THE HISTORICALBACKGROUND OF THE MORAL DEGRADATION BY POLITICAL LEADERS SINCE INDEPENDENCE.....	43
3.6 THE IMPACT OF UBUNTU VALUES ON THE LIBERATION OF KENYA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM THROUGH MEJA MWANGI NOVELS	45
3.7 Conclusion	49
CHAPTER FOUR.....	50
UBUNTU AND THE PERSONHOOD.....	50
4.0 The role of community in the understanding of personhood	50
4.0.1 The ontological progression of personhood in the community	51
4.1 Entrenching Ubuntu spirit in the current society	53
4.2FINDINGS	54
4.3 RECCOMNDATION	55
4.4GENERAL CONCLUSION	58
BIBLIOGRAPHY	61

Primary sources..... 61

Secondary sources..... 63

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief analysis of the author and the area of focus

This essay focuses on the state of humanism in the current Kenyan society. The paper is written with view of proposing humanism for political realm in Kenya as a way to improve morals and Ethos of each individual in the society. It particularly focuses on the improvement of governance system in Kenya, to aid liberation from the vices that are currently witnessed. The thesis is based on a literary analysis of Meja Mwangi's writings, a committed Kenyan author and novelist who has contributed a lot towards the renovation of African's modern style of living through his adventure on literatures. He approaches this through the windows of Humanism, based upon the notion of returning to the indigenous and native African way of life. This in an African philosophical point of view summarized within the spirit of Ubuntu philosophy. The term Ubuntu finds its foundation from the Bantus of South Africa, among the Zulu and Xhosa tribes. It was used to refer to the moral attributes of a person¹. Though the term has a wider philosophical understanding in its strive to achieve its main objective, of creating a common ground for all human beings. It brings an understanding of a presence of a bond which exists among individuals. Similarly, *Ubuntu* conveys the idea that no one can be healthy when the community is sick, thus justifies the fact that it is through our bond that we make the community a responsible place for all. *Ubuntu* says I am human only because you are human. If I undermine your humanity, I dehumanize myself².

¹Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Accessed on 28th November, 2022 at 2:43AM

²Yamamoto, E. Kholmurodov. "Race Apologies." *Journal of Gender, Race and Justice*, Vol. 1, 1997, p. 47-88, (A critical reflection on the nexus of Ubuntu, race, gender and justice)

The researcher has been privileged to go through some of Meja Mwangi's writings, which touch this particular theme of research, some of these writings include, the most known novels, *The Cockroach Dance* and *The Crossroads*. However, the essay is an analysis focussing on two novels; *Going Down River Road* and *Kill me quick*. This is because the two books vividly bring out the entire notion of humanism as manifested in Kenya which then becomes our case study.

The researcher understands Meja Mwangi as a person whose foundation and groundwork are based upon the conservation and protection of indigenous African cultures and ethos. He felt the need to have a humane society of persons who uphold the dignity of an individual person as an important aspect and embrace communalistic approach, interconnectedness among people in the society as suggested in the Ubuntu philosophy, where a person is not I but WE. In other words, a person is well defined in relation to the community where he belongs. That each member of the Society must have qualities that are relevant to the establishment of a peaceful society, this primarily includes, mutual respect for one another and upholding the dignity of every person. This holds every person an equal being without considering other dehumanizing factors based on ethnicity, colour, race, gender and classism etc.

1.2 The Nexus between Literature and philosophy

Since this work focuses on the literary works of Meja Mwangi and Ubuntu philosophy, it is important therefore, to mention the relationship between literature and philosophy. You find that the focus on literature was not dominantly strong within the errors of ancient philosophical schools, taking the case of the Pre-Socratics, Socratic periods and the Sophists, to Plato and Aristotle times, down to modern error of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, till Hegel, there was nothing like written literature, not until Fredrick Nietzsche in his famous book, *Thus Spoke*

Zarathustra, published in 1885, saw the Western philosophy retrieving its *Sui Generis* character on literature.

Stephen David Ross an American philosopher through a critical question, how can: “a work of literature at once be of artistic value and yet also and in the same respect contain philosophic ideas of importance?” Ross further states that. “Certain philosophers have maintained that literature *cannot* be at once philosophical and successful in literary terms”. However, he holds the position that it is possible to set out philosophical ideas in a literary work. At the same time, he is aware, as philosophers are, that “literary and philosophical forms of expression are very different and cannot be combined without detriment to both of them.” He states, in conclusion, that “the methods employed by writers to express philosophical convictions, how they preserve and even enhance the literary values of their work, and also set forth philosophical theses of great significance, though often is rather implicit and indirect fashion. Most important is the way in which the devices of literature permit the building of a case for a philosophic position without the characteristic forms of argument³.”

Therefore, Philosophy makes use of literature in the sense that philosophical ideas are often brought to the readers through literature. Hence, Philosophical discourse and literary discourse are closely connected.

1.3 The concept of humanism

The concept of humanism seen from the viewpoint of Ubuntu philosophy refers to a collection of values and practices centered on indigenous African perspective. It is what the people of Africa hold as to make them authentic human beings full of moral values and lessons;

³Stephen D. Ross, *Literature & Philosophy: An analysis of the philosophical novel*, Vol 1, p. 47. 1969, Appleton-century-crofts.

it then serves as an African based philosophy having been deeply rooted in the person's development both physically and morally. Humanism therefore holds within its boundary, the humanness of a person, this is directed towards the spirit of sharing and caring in its entirety, it also stresses on the importance of embracing values such as community solidarity, compassion, respect, cooperation among individuals in the society. Ubuntu is therefore held as an enemy to self – centeredness, egoistic characters and selfish alienations.

A Pan Africanist, by the name John Mbiti, understands humanism through his statement *“I am because we are, because we are I am,”* This definition expresses the inter-connectedness that exists among every human person in the society. That this bond should be realized to the fact that one cannot survive without the thought of the other. The same can be viewed within the lenses of a South African human rights activist, Desmond Tutu, in his quote, “A person is a person through other persons.” which he adopted from the *Ngumi* maxim of South Africa, *imuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*. He mentions that;

*“None of us comes into the world fully formed. We would not know how to think, or walk, or speak, or behave as human beings unless we learned it from other human beings. We need other human beings in order to be human. I am because other people are. A person is entitled to a stable community life, and the first of these communities is the family.”*⁴

The above depiction of Ubuntu spirit summarizes the entire notion, since Ubuntu develops within the verge of realizing a common humanity, compassion, dignity, harmony and reciprocity, with the interest of building and maintaining a society that stands on a stable moral ground, unshaken by the turbulence of immorality, poverty, greed etc. It becomes a society

⁴Michael Battle. Desmond Tutu. Becoming fully human in community: A critical theology of Ubuntu. University of Birmingham: [https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/132842-a-person-is-a-person-through-other-persons-none-of#:~:text=Learn%20more\)-.%E2%80%9CA%20person%20is%20a%20person%20through%20other%20persons.,in%20order%20to%20be%20human.](https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/132842-a-person-is-a-person-through-other-persons-none-of#:~:text=Learn%20more)-.%E2%80%9CA%20person%20is%20a%20person%20through%20other%20persons.,in%20order%20to%20be%20human.)

concerned with the wellbeing of its members. This is particularly what Ubuntu calls for within the socio - political realm, since Ubuntu provides values that would intern accelerate service delivery and promote good governance among people themselves and the state at large, for it helps us to go beyond our differences based upon our religions, cultures and nationality, and to re – educate ourselves to be able to go back to our former attitude that one becomes a complete human only if he is part of the community.

The community and the individual person are one. This then justifies the point by James Ogude, a Kenyan literary scholar who believes in the same that; Ubuntu might serve as a counterweight to the rampant individualism that is so pervasive in the contemporary world, hence he states;

*"Ubuntu is rooted in what I call a relational form of personhood, basically meaning that you are because of the others," as a human being, you - your humanity, your personhood - you are fostered in relation to other people."*⁵

Ubuntuism thus, holds that the journey to the fulfilment of human person is the role of community to impact moral teachings to the life of the individual, from childhood to adulthood; hence African humanism is interpreted as being more of communalistic approach than individualistic. Therefore, this paper examines the depiction of Ubuntu philosophy in the modern Kenya, with a view of showing that embracing Ubuntu and its values, can be an essential tool towards the solutions to the problems that leads to Political instability in Kenya especially during post-election periods.

⁵Steve Paulson', Shannon Henry Kleiber and Anne Strain champs. *I Am Because We Are': The African Philosophy of Ubuntu* <https://www.ttbook.org/interview/i-am-because-we-are-african-philosophy-ubuntu>

The solution to these problems thus proposes going back to Utu or Ubuntu way of life, which aims to foster, togetherness, sharing and promotion of human dignity among other moral values that promote the Utu life in the society.

1.4 The forms of humanism

Humanism being a broad concept cannot be pinned down to a particular definition. This shows that there are various forms in which one can come to understand the whole concept of humanism. These are discussed below.

Renaissance Humanism These were mainly the humanists who were concerned with the restoration of the dignity of man. Aimed at restoring, the dignity of human person, which was lost in the middle age.

Enlightenment Humanism These are the humanists who distanced themselves from the mystical bent of the Renaissance and relied on reasoning as the best guide to knowledge. They could not hold any belief on experiences; everything was accepted under the urge of reasoning since rationality is a faculty for all human beings.

Romantic Humanism laid much emphasis on human emotions and were against reasoning, since for them reasoning is deceivable and corruptible⁶.

Democratic Humanism. These are groups of humanists who through their inspirations rejected the doctrine of supernaturalism while relying mainly on reason and science, democracy and human compassion⁷.

Secular humanism these are modern humanist who calls for religion morality without divine allegiances or religion. It is mainly based upon the Atheistic doctrines.

⁶William Anderson. *Humanism: Types & Philosophy*:<https://schoolworkhelper.net/humanism-types-philosophy/>

⁷ ibid

1.5 Meja Mwangi's conception of Ubuntu

From the two novels that this thesis is based upon, that is *Going Down River Road* and *Kill Me Quick*, Mwangi has a common points of view, he perceives the current society to have declined in mutual respect among its members, loss of dignity of human person, degradation of morals, and the feeling of compassion to one another, hence referring to such a society as a habitat occupied by individuals whose personalities are not morally upright. Meja Mwangi acknowledges that the prevalent inhumane behaviours, such as classicism, crimes, hostility, individualism, and corruption, are contributing to the current society's moral deterioration. For him, the above kind of society has lost the essence of Ubuntuism. Therefore, the notion of return to humanism by Meja Mwangi has triggered this research based on the topic; *Ubuntu and Kenyan Renaissance: A Reading of Going Down River Road and Kill Me Quick by Meja Mwangi.*

1.6 Relevance of Ubuntu to state leadership

In relation to politics and governance, Ubuntu and leadership must go hand in hand, in other words, they must be compatible and complementary to one other. This is because the two extremes have entirely placed the human person at the central place, that Ubuntu outlays values and norms suitable to the promotion of good governance and improvement of morality among other values which intern creates harmony among members.

Many political leaders have developed the tendency to use human beings as a means to meet their ends. This happens because the society is now not united as before, and individualism has become the cultural practice of the times. Leaders chosen in positions do not mind the common interest and solidarity of others but for their own personal gains and fulfilment. In fact, they consider other human being to belonging to the level of brutes and hence are just objects to

be used as means of achieving a certain end. Some of these leaders also coordinate unethical ethnic conflicts among different communities leading to a great loss of life and the destruction of Infrastructure. All these serves as agents of degradation of humanism in the society and the state at large.

This paper aims as proposing ways of reducing such tensions in society. It is the view in this paper that a return to African way of life, the Ubuntu life, where each individual member belongs to the community and focuses on the role of community to impact, nurture or to teach the individual member and to make them fit completely in the society, and to be able to realize the dignity of human person and to develop moral codes that are very essential in the growth of an individual and the society at large.

1.7 Background of the study

1.7.1 Brief overview of the political situation in Kenya

Taking a deep look at the political situations in Kenya, especially since 2007, general elections that were held on 27th, December 2007, that declared, Hon. Mwai Kibaki the 3rd President of Kenya, the level of humanism as a virtue inclined in any rational being has really declined in many political leaders. During this period, Kenya happened to face for the first time, a great conflict that was ethnically based. It was observed that this conflict was facilitated by great political leaders of the state who were facing political differences.⁸ However, this condition was later settled through the efforts deployed by the National Accord and Reconciliation Act 2008, with an intervention of United Nation Agencies, who sent Kofi Anan, the former secretary

⁸Human Rights Commission. Kenya Events of 2020: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/kenya>

general of UN, to lead the reconciliation process. As a result of the talk the opposition leader, Hon. Raila Odinga became prime minister.

The same trend was experienced in 2013 general election though the situation was not very intense as compared to the previous election. The same was experienced in the 2017 General election where again, many lives were lost, infrastructures destroyed, which was brought about by the protest that emerged between supporters of the elected president and the supporters of the opposition leader Raila Odinga. This situation was in a dire need that it had to take to account, Supreme Court of Kenya intervention, to make the conflict resolution. This later considered the elections that were conducted as null and void because of irregularities. The Supreme Court ruled that the presidential elections will be done again within a span of 60 days.

Kenya as a state has also experienced a lot of major problems which are sometimes imposed by many political leaders. This includes occurrences such as extra - judicial killings where those in power use their positions deliberately to kill other people and grab their belongings without any legal framework just because of political differences and ambitions and lack of accountability for serious abuses from the authorities concerned. Reports also show that between December to February 2020-2021, Kenyan police have shot dead at least eight people in Nairobi streets of Majengo, Madhara and Kasarani settlements. Not forgetting the killing of an innocent girl, at very tender age at the slums of Kisumu, Pendo who was killed in 2017 during the post-election violence. The Police officers had also been reported to have killed six more people during the dusk - Dawn curfew imposed by government to curb COVID-19 spread in Kenya⁹. In this scenario it becomes unfortunate that the defenders of democracy have become the predators of their own subjects, thus these really demands need for Ubuntu.

⁹Human rights commission. Kenya: Police Brutality During Curfew <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/22/kenya-police-brutality-during-curfew>

Kenya as a State is leading to nowhere in this kind of environment, where killing is never a big deal as long as I receive my pay after the deal or operation, where individual harassment is a normal day notion, where egoism and individualism are the only ways to achieve a happy life and where the thirst of power becomes the motivation of many. Therefore, unless we embark on Utu or Ubuntu way of living where one accounts and ensures the wellbeing of the neighbour, life in Kenya will not improve.

Indeed, with reference to the above statistics and findings, it becomes distinctively evident that this aspect of humanism as expressed in Ubuntu philosophy has lost its value in the minds of many individuals and a directly opposite tenet is being enriched within the society. Point to note in this case is that, Ubuntu entails within itself, the moral principle which contradicts the manner in which people behave in the society and its practice is always inclined to the knowledge of a supernatural being, who is always good and deserves all that is good and who illumines the minds of every person to behave according to his teachings. Therefore, one can agree with me that without Ubuntu, there is no morality.

1.8Statement of the problem

In consideration of Utu' life in the society today, there has been an increase in levels of dehumanization of the dignity of human beings and violation of human rights. This is common in the current societies, for instance, on account of the society that the author tries to bring across in the novels, we find some characters for instance, in the novel, *Going Down River Road*, and the author describes a story of man by the name Ocholla who mercilessly cuts short the life of his

fellow work mate Onesmas¹⁰. The author uses this to relate exactly what is going on in the current society, where you find people being slaughtered like animals.

It is a society where the lives of other people languish within the hands of some few individuals who are free to kill at any time.¹¹ This is one of the many dehumanized happenings in the current society. The value of human being in the society has been considered worthless by many individuals who consider themselves superior. Speaking about this, we cannot forget to mention the shocking dismissal of the life of Chris Musando, an Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission official who was tortured and strangled to death during the 2017 general election. This and many more happenings have been recorded.

Secondly, the interconnectedness among members of the society has been lost totally, there is no longer a realization of the bond that exists among human beings, and the aspect of sharing of resources and needs is no longer respected. The tune of '*I am because we are*,' no longer prevails. Capitalism has taken shape thereby changing the whole ideology of "We to I". The self being important than the 'We'. This is what the author tries to elaborate within the entire novel of *Kill Me Quick*, in which the two friends Meja and Maina find themselves on the wrong side of the society, wherever they could go in search for a job, the answer is, '*Hakuna kazi*', that is to say no job or sometimes they find themselves falling on the wrong hands of the security men who beat them up and chase them away.

Nothing in this kind of set up is done communally, everything is individualized or if need be, we must be related leading to vices like tribalism, nepotism and favouritisms within the leadership arena. This sounds contrary to the socialist approach, which dictates that all should be treated equally.

¹⁰Mwangi Meja, *Going Down River Road*, (edited by Chinua Achebe 1962-1990 Adewale Maja-Pearce 1990 94) pg. 290

¹¹The standard nation magazine dated 15th September 2022, pg. 3

The experience of post-election violence in Kenya since 2007 general election revealed, the lack of communal transformation which has promoted degradation of the values of humanism. Through these related aspects as a result of loss of humanism, Kenya as a state, has experienced slow development, since the political system is invaded by fools whose concern is for personal gain but not the wellbeing of the community at large.

1.9 Literature review

We would like to analyse some of the authors, especially humanist philosophers who have contributed to the discussion about the whole discourse on the spirit of Ubuntuism. It is with great realization that, many African statesmen and women, scholars and founders have greatly contributed to this sort of discussion as a way of adopting African self-civilization, different from western civilization. Most of these Pan Africanists are considered to have had one aim in place, which is the liberation of Africans. The need to promote equality and justice and to promote a clear environment that will ensure the elimination of western humanism which has negatively influenced many states. Most of them have urged Africans to embrace Ubuntu culture as a renaissance approach to promote a unified state.

Thus, this review will make us to condone by the assertions made by Priscilla Jana, that; “the expansive African Renaissance vision is an all-embracing concept that draws its inspiration from the rich and diverse history and cultures of Africa”. This is because, it acknowledges Africa as the cradle of humanity, which at the same time provide a framework for the modern Africa to re-emerge as a significant partner in the New Global enhancement¹². This framework touches on all areas of human endeavour; political, economic, social, technological, environmental and cultural.

¹²Priscilla Jana, *African renaissance and the millennium action plan*, in Quest Vol. XV No. 1-2, 2001 pp. 37-41

Firstly, let us consider Kwame Nkrumah a Ghanaian politician, philosopher and a political theorist who also served as the first president of Ghana, he is a great icon of African humanism. In his book entitled, *Consciencism: Philosophy and ideology for De-colonization*. He embraced on Consciencism as a form of scientific socialism in which he calls for the re-structuring of the spirit of communalism in the hypothetical manner. It does not mean going back to the real life in the tradition African society (the state of nature), but just having the conscious of it and embracing the values in the modern error. Hence he writes;

“.... What Socialists throughout in Africa must recapture is not the structure of the traditional African society but its spirit, for the spirit of communalism is crystallised in its humanism and in its reconciliation of individual advancements with group welfare. Even if there is incomplete anthropological evidence to reconstruct the traditional African society with accuracy we can still recapture the rich human values of that society”¹³.

Nkrumah focuses on re-structuring of the African societies away from colonialism and towards economic and political success. His ideology is capable of processing the old metropolitan ideologies of capitalism and European socialism. Thus according to him “Consciencism” is the intellectual tool which will enable African societies to digest the Western, the Islamic and the Euro-Christian elements and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality.

He was convinced that this would help Africa at large aim at developing a new society that will re-establish the former Egalitarianism and Humanistic relationships that were found in the traditional African society. Nkrumah made a resolution that the union between African states

¹³ Kwame Nkrumah, *African socialism Revisited*, published by peace and socialism publishers, translated by Dominic Tweedie. 1967.

was the best way to foster this Consciencism ideology and would help Africans as a continent to rise up from the dogmatic slumber brought about by western humanism.

The second book under review is by the former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda, “*A Humanist in Africa*,” Kenneth Kaunda had a similar stand as Nkrumah. For him, humanism is based on African values of mutual aid, which embraces sharing, trust and loyalty to the community. His main interest was to provide a moral basis for all human activities both in political, social and economic realm. The Zambian humanism championed by Kaunda is Christian-like, in the sense that Christian principles are basic in them, such as the concept of God the creator, embracing the dignity of man in general, promoting equality of each human beings regardless of the position or rank and also it embraces the respect of God’s creation which is quite basic in the nature of Ubuntuism. He considers his philosophy as a solution to the Capitalism, Imperialism, Colonialism, Neo – Colonialism, Fascism, and Racism. This will also be solution to contemporary problems of poverty, hunger, diseases, crimes and exploitation of human nature. All these were to be achieved through humanism.

Kaunda emphasises this in his basic principles as follows.

- The human person to be at the centre hence is respected.
- The dignity of human person has to be embraced.
- Equality
- Principle of Hard work and self-reliance
- Strive for communalism in order to promote unity and efficiency in terms of development.

- Extended family (No old person is thrown to the dogs or left to suffer neither should there be institution for the old, since all humanity is inclined to participate together in the community are moulded with the same community).¹⁴

Therefore, according to Kaunda, if the nation is taking care of you, then the individual person has the responsibility of taking care of the neighbour as a response to the generosity of the nation.

Thirdly, Nelson Mandela, a South African leader. Despite spending years in prison for opposing apartheid, he still stood firm with the spirit of Ubuntu. He fought against apartheid after his release from the prison and it was during his tenure as the first black president of south Africa that apartheid was officially disbanded. All his achievements against Apartheid could be conceptualized within the spirit of Ubuntuism, 'I am because we are,' hence this led to his declaration as a freedom fighter for the blacks. This is expressed in the article '*Nelson Mandela and the Power of Ubuntu*'; by Claire E. Oppenheim¹⁵. In his response against apartheid, he echoed the Liberation of the oppressors, which was with the view that the individual belongs to the whole hence no room for the demoralization of others nor oppression of other¹⁶. We are one and there should be no discriminations.

Lastly, Julius Nyerere, the founder of the Republic of Tanzania, in his book, *Ujamaa*, Nyerere referred to his ideology of Ujamaa as a community building tool. Ujamaa which means family hood, a call to togetherness, participation and sharing in the community matters, for instance the Ujamaa villages. These served as the basis of Nyerere's social, economic and political renewal in Tanzania. He also emphasized this in his Arusha declaration in 1967 which

¹⁴ Kenneth Kaunda, *A Humanist in Africa*, published by Longmans, (United States 1966 1st edition) pg.371

¹⁵ John Segar. Nelson Mandela, *The power of Ubuntu: We are Africa*. print magazine, (Cape Town 2018).

¹⁶ Sabelo J. Ndlovu and Busani Ngcaweni. *Celebrating the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth and his nationalist humanist vision* :<https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajcr/article/view/182084> Visited in 22nd July, 2022.

gave a notch eye to his ideology of socialism. As he could say, “The foundation and the objective of African socialism is based on extended family, this extended family consisting of a wide range of relatives who work in cooperation with one another and share all family resources”. As a result all members of the village are fed, clothed and housed; the aged and sick are supported¹⁷.

He had a belief that this kind of consideration will enable us to fully trust that Ubuntu philosophy is not just a mere theoretical concept but has within itself, the practical cash value that are basic for the development of any state. Hence, if Kenya as a state can recognize the role of Ubuntu within its political system, through the government officials and private institutions then a great liberation can be felt which can cause regeneration in terms of developments and unity. This was very much evident in Tanzania since the pre-colonialism errors till now; the fruits are still enjoyed by the locals. Ujamaa idealistically promoted a strong brotherhood and familyhood criteria, which was opposed to vices like, capitalism, selfishness, injustices, anti-human behaviours and individualism in the community.

Nyerere explained the entire doctrine based upon some essential conditions. For instance, he argued that the concept of Ujamaa was a way meant to bring together all tracts of land provided by the government to farmers, poultry breeders and cottage industries such as leather works, sugarcane mills, blacksmiths and wood works which were inclined within specific communities called the Ujamaa villages. His vision was to the extent that, each village was to be self-reliant, democratic and self-contained, governed by an elected manager, treasurer and work supervisors. The most common and encouraging thing was that all the duties within the Ujamaa villages were to be done communally and nothing like individual perspective was allowed. The main task of

¹⁷Julius. K. Nyerere, *Ujamaa, Essays in socialism*, published by Oxford University Press. (New York city 1968) pg.186

these villages was first to increase the level of agricultural production to boost the economic condition of the state and that all people must be well fed. Moreover, each village must have its own school and a health clinic.¹⁸

After all these efforts, the following are some of the significance outcomes that were witnessed in the state of Tanzania and are still being experienced as a result of the philosophy of Ujamaa championed by Nyerere. First and foremost, we must agree that always any ideology employed in a state, despite its positive influences, it must also reveal some cons. Nonetheless, in the case of Tanzania, the pros of Ujamaa tended to outweigh the cons, hence, it evident that Ujamaa ideology really aided development of Tanzania. Below are some of the pros as illustrated in the ideology: Embracing Ujamaa resulted to;

- The promotion of high literacy rate within the state since many could know how to read and write under the Ujamaa village schools' provisions.
- The reduction of the infant mortality through easy access to medical facilities and promotion of education within the Ujamaa villages.
- The spirit of brotherhood or familyhood which had United Tanzanians across ethnic line and tribes as a result of communal participations.
- It also Left Tanzania untouched by the tribal and political tensions as it unified the state.
- It redistributed income from haves to haves not. Hence eliminating classism.
- It also gave out chance to common citizens to control major means of production.
- It strengthened industrialization process. Many key factories were constructed during this era.

Below are some of the cons that also accrued as a result;

¹⁸Shirley Graham, Julius. Nyerere: *Teacher of Africa*, (published by Julian Messner, New York 1975). Pg 150

- It killed spirit of entrepreneurship among Tanzanian due to high taxes and low incentive to own property.
- It weakened democratic process by imposing one party policy.¹⁹

1.10 The objectives of study

- a) To analyse the concept of humanism as elaborated within the Ubuntu philosophy.
- b) To explore importance of embracing Ubuntu life in the current society of Kenya, as a method to reduce political tensions particularly related to post-election violence.
- c) To evaluate the relevance of embracing Ubuntu life as a strategy to promote good governance.
- d) To promote the idea of brotherhood among the individual Kenyans, with an orientation towards a realization of a unified and a peaceful state.

1.11 Research questions

- a) What do we understand by the term Ubuntu philosophy?
- b) How the concept of humanism explicated within the Ubuntu life?
- c) What are some of the forms of humanism?
- d) Why is it that there is need to return to Ubuntuism in relation to Kenyan Politics?
- e) How convincing is it to believe that Ubuntu can resolve the current problems to arrive at a unified state?

¹⁹Alistair Boddy-Evans. Nyerere's Social and Economic Policy in 1960s and 1970s Tanzania Updated on August 02, 2019: <https://www.quora.com/What-were-the-successes-and-failures-of-the-Ujamaa-policy-adopted-by-Nyerere-in-Tanzania.S>

1.12 Research hypothesis

If the spirit of Ubuntu as articulated by Meja Mwangi is embraced in Kenya, the political space in Kenya will be liberated from the current ills being experienced. This will of course be a solution to the current devastating political environment being experienced.

The spirit of Ubuntuism eliminates vices such as dehumanisation, disrespect of dignity of others, classicism, corruption etc. and promotes fairness and equality.

1.13 Scope and limitation

This research paper is based on analysis of some selected historical library books and information from internet sources with some supplements from journal articles and newsletters.

1.14 Justification of study

This study is to show that if the Ubuntu philosophy as elaborated by many African thinkers, is approached in a very significant way, and then there will be no political indifferences, that might lead to violence which can trigger loss of human life. Ubuntu in this case serves under the demand that each and every person must consider his fellow human being as equal to himself and share the same dignity and respect as he ought to. Hence no one would ever decide to cause chaos or destroy properties or even take life of another person.

African humanism through Ubuntu philosophy brings back to the African World, which Western civilization had eroded from. It carries with it the humane-nature and inclines it to each individual. This is the fellow – feeling of interconnectedness. It is based upon the principle of morality hence can be summarised as; “doing to the other person what yourself would feel better if done unto you.” That helps facilitate a harmonious Society merging from the political leaders in governance to the citizens in the entire community.

Therefore, with the inclusion of the Ubuntu spirit in leadership or Governance systems, the leader will be required to model leadership style on Ubuntu. Hence the leader must be a role model and a practitioner of ethics and laws, who carries out his duties with a lot of commitment to African values of Honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, compassion, empathy, dignity and respect.

1.15 Methodology of study

In this research, argumentative and analytical method of doing philosophy are used based on analysing different insights from many philosophers and authors who have in one way seen the need to embrace Ubuntu philosophy within the entire system of social or communal, political and economic realm to foster a sustainable state development where need for human dignity is at the central point.

This research is therefore built upon information from various sources. The primary sources of information are the two main books of concern that is *Going Down River Road and Kill Me Quick*. The other sources are books, written articles, journals, publications, past papers, internet, government records, and websites etc. These are backed up by my own personal reflection regarding the topic.

1.16 Conclusion

African humanism is simultaneously depicted in Meja Mwangi's works through the characters and characterisation model. The characters are depicted as being products of the society in which they inhabit. He points out the fact that the current society has suffered as a result of rising vices such as capitalism, classism, individualism, colonial and neo-colonial effects, and pressures from globalization and urbanization. Thus demonstrates how Kenyan culture is swiftly eroding from its native African principles, which are rooted in African

humanism. These have created a great rift among members of the society. Therefore, to reduce this lacuna, there is need to embark on the Ubuntu spirit to aid our thoughts, actions, reasoning and plans for the betterment of our future.

CHAPTER TWO

UBUNTU IN MEJA MWANGI'S GOING DOWN RIVER ROAD AND KILL ME QUICK

2.0. INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks at the background of Meja Mwangi, the author whose contribution to Ubuntu is the core of this thesis. We are going to consider his two core works, to be able to draw some of the instances which he uses to critique the level of humanism in Kenya and then draw some inferences from them to aid our research. Mwangi is one of the individuals who have really expressed the urge to embrace African Humanism in the periphery of Kenyan societies as a way to rejuvenate the common link or bond that existed between humanity as it was in the traditional African way of living.

2.1 BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE AUTHOR

2.1.1 Birth history

Meja Mwangi is a Kenyan National, Nyeri County. He was born in December 1948. He is from the Gikuyu ethnic community, who are members of the Central Bantu speaking community, situated along Mount Kenya regions, central Kenya²⁰. Meja Mwangi started his education in his homeland, where he went through his primary education and later landed at Nanyuki Secondary School where he finished his O level studies and later joined Kenyatta College for A level. He then proceeded to Leeds University in England, where he studied Literature. As a result of this he developed a great urge to start writing and publishing articles,

²⁰Revised and updated by Kathleen Kuiper. History of film: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Meja-Mwangi>

which became his main hobby. He is recognized as a leading African novelist, writer and author of many books and a film industry professional among other professions.

Meja Mwangi has made a lot of contributions in various fields, most especially on the socio - economic status and history of Kenya, gearing all his energy towards the spirit of Ubuntu, with the view that Ubuntu can bring about the liberation of Kenya. For years now, the efforts deployed by Mwangi have been recognized both internally and internationally by many scholars. The reason behind this has been, the fact that many of his stories are full of hilarity, moral lessons and always addresses the gaps created in the society as a result of low level of Humanism, hence calling the society to embrace the traditional African values.

Recent Sources show that, Mwangi was influenced in writing as a carrier at a very early stage after reading *Weep Not Child* by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, the first Kenyan Novelist, who had interest on the Mau Mau war experienced for a long time in the Mau Mau Forest, during the struggle for independence from the British colonizers. He took Ngugi as his mentor, thereby concentrating initially on the Mau Mau rebellion, and telling stories of Mau forest freedom fighters, who fought often unsuccessfully against the Britain Army. Mwangi's interest on the Mau Mau war, made him to come up with his early narratives both, *Taste of Death* and *Carcase for Hounds*²¹. Hence it was clear that Mwangi's aim was to preserve a record of the recent past in these quasi-historical novels following the footsteps of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o his mentor.

2.1.2Mwangi's most celebrated works

Mwangi manifested a lively interest in Kenya's contemporary social problems. In his third book, *Kill Me Quick*, Mwangi focuses on the plight of young men who, though educated, are unable to find honest employment, since the society is biased - based and corrupted hence

²¹ Ibid.

they find it difficult to fit in such a society. In Going down River Road he deals with the rough-and-tumble life of construction workers in Nairobi, who struggle to make ends meet but after the successful search, the passions and desires of the world draws near and the character (Ben) is fired from work as a Lieutenant.

Among his later works include, *The Cockroach Dance*. The thriller *Bread of Sorrow*, *Weapon of Hunger*, *The Return of Shaka*, *The Striving for the Wind*, *The Last Plague*, and *The Big Chiefs*. He also wrote stories for children, including *The Hunter's Dream*, *The Mzungu Boy*, and *The Boy Gift*²². In these narratives, Mwangi never loses his sense of comics and his concern for *Utu* life. He frequently depicts the majority of his characters as trying to adapt to the rapid changes occurring in the modern world, especially in Kenya since independence.

2.1.3 Mwangi's professional Awards

Mwangi's efforts were rewarded after the acceptance of the publication of his first novel, *Kill me Quick* in 1973, by the London publishing house of Heinemann, which was eager to promote up-coming African writers through publication of their works. The book later won the Jomo Kenyatta Prize for literature award in 1974. This opened the door for many awards, both internally and externally, for instance, The Lotus Prize for Literature in 1978, Le Prix Lire au Collage for the book, *Kariuki*, in 1992, English winner, for *The Last Plague*, English Youth, third place, for *Boy Gift*²³, English Adult, third place, for *Big Chief*, in years, 1974, 2001, 2007 and 2009 consecutively²⁴, all these further enhanced Mwangi's literary reputation and offered him a universal recognition.

²²Ibid.

²³Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Meja Mwangi." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, November 27, 2022. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Meja-Mwangi>.

²⁴Meja Mwangi's Biography: Homekazi.com. <https://www.homekazi.co.ke/celebs/bio/mejamwangi>.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF AFRICAN HUMANISM OUTLINED

2.2.1 What is African – Humanism?

First and foremost, Africa is the second largest continent within the globe. It borders Europe to the North, Asia to the East, South America to the West and Antarctica to the South. Currently 54 countries form part of Africa as a continent. It is well known as the cradle of the Black people. Humanism on the other hand adopts its etymological origin from Latin, '*Humanitas*' which means education that befits a civilized man²⁵. This was not just a mere education but education instilled in the life of people in the community. In this apex, one can conclude that African humanism is a belief reinstated within the African cultures and doctrines that help to promote unity and to regenerate the dignity of human person which had been lost during colonialism.

African Humanism is therefore the understanding of a human person in relation to the other. It also addresses the interconnected forces or bond that relates us as human beings, hence showing our richness as one community. The spirit being directed towards the notion that; 'my success is your success; your pain is my pain and my wealth is your wealth'. This stands for our shared humanity and obligation to one another.

Therefore, an African person must be recognized to have inner sense of love, empathy and sympathy; hence should not be involved in the practices like; extreme individualism, greed, egoism, unnecessary competition and personal interest motivations. In this case, an African leader must be considered to have gained caution against such practices and be well equipped with the values such as solidarity, compassion, responsibility, respect for the dignity of human person and humanity, which are well defined within the 'Utu' life. Similarly, the leader should

²⁵Vocabulary.com

yearn towards a reformation of a community-based society which amplifies the virtues of social well-being and solidarity in the society, such as the virtues of cooperation or synergy, togetherness, interdependence and reciprocal obligation which promote an environment for the realization of social justice in the state. In this case the poor and the rich shall not experience a great rift between them. The following are ways in which we can understand the concept 'Humanism'.

2.2.3Significance of Humanism in the society

The entire concept of humanism can be well defined within the Ubuntu philosophy. Ubuntu relates the act of bonding with others or being self because of others. Similarly, Ubuntu can also be expressed as the saying goes, "*I am because we are and because we are I am*",²⁶(John Mbiti conception of Ubuntu). This can be summarized therefore as the respect for the self and for others because we belong to the same human family hence the brotherhood inclination must be held paramount. In this case, a person can only be well defined in relation to the community where he belongs.

The community plays a very important role in the growth and development of her peoples, for instance, in traditional set up, when a child was born; As a result, it is the community's responsibility to make sure the child develops the knowledge, abilities, and morality necessary to successfully integrate into society. Therefore, it was the role of all members of the community to ensure that all this is inclined to the child. These extended also to other basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter etc. For a person to belong fully in the community, he had to undergo certain cultural practices and rituals including the naming ceremonies, initiation ceremonies, marriages, offering sacrifices to the ancestors, looking after

²⁶John.S. Mbiti. *African religion and philosophy*. (Published by EAEP, Nairobi: 1969). pg.21

the animals, and moral lessons being taught at specific stages of growth, which without, you were considered an outcast.

Humanism instils its values to the leadership system hence forming a value based leadership (V.B.L) which is based upon the humanitarian foundation with the ability to offer equal distribution of the available resources and services to all members of the state, thereby promoting equality, Equity and the spirit of sharing. Primarily, V.B.L aims towards the achievement of the common good for all.

Ubuntu in this case promotes to the individual, concrete values such as;

Survival: This is the ability to thrive in the face of challenges. An African man learnt how to sail through difficulties in life via brotherly love, not through personal independence. This allowed pooling of resources together and to create an African community based upon togetherness.

Solidarity: Where a combined effort is realized among members of the community towards accomplishment of a task. This was under a conviction that different goals and tasks in the community can only be achieved successfully under collective mutual support from all members of the community.

Compassion: the human spirit of understanding the difficulties others undergo and being ready to help them. Leaders in various institutions of the government must have this feeling of compassion to their subjects, to be able to distribute their resources evenly and equally among members. A leader who does not feel the pain of his subjects whenever they suffer, is no longer acting in correspondence to the spirit of Ubuntu.

Respect and dignity: An African moral teaches that Respect of elders should be very paramount, and not only must this, also respect to creatures, created by God particularly human

being is upheld. The dignity of every human person also must be accorded the respect that it deserves.

All these values explained above and many other values as inclined into the Ubuntu life helped the traditional African society to grow and realize themselves both economic and political wise. Since they inclined to human the natural moral norms that enable one to make critical decisions that favour himself and the community at large.

2.3 THE CRITICISM OF THE LEVEL OF HUMANISM AS DEPICTED IN THE TWO NOVELS OF MEJA MWANGI

2.3.1 KILL ME QUICK

In *Kill Me Quick*, the author narrates a story of two boyhood friends in the Kenyan countryside who after finishing school, life becomes difficult for them to balance despite having the papers. They then realize that their education has been useless, everywhere they could go in search for a job, the response was, “*Hakuna Kazi*”, a Kiswahili word, which means, there is No vacancy²⁷, this makes them wonder whether the promise of education which was instilled in their minds since childhood, has become a false prophesy, that ‘Education Is the key’.

They find the society as a very tight and narrow place to survive in and a society who does not recognize his own people. These depicts the picture of man eat man society²⁸ as elaborated by Nelson Mandela, in which the poor are financially suppressed through huge taxations to pay for the lofty lives of the rich in the society, a profit motivated society. It is a society full of bad ideologies of corruption, classicism, egoisms and elitisms preached within all the corners of the streets not minding the wellbeing of the neighbour. Harassments and struggles are still the ideologies of the day. The society had really lost the gist of humanity within her

²⁷Meja Mwangi, *Kill me quick*, published by HM Books, 1st edition 2017.pg 7

²⁸ Nelson Mandela speech on international celebration day in Tanzania: <https://youtu.be/IDCeYfHKVHY>.

boundaries. The two friends could walk from morning to evening, from dawn to dusk in search for job opportunities in order to earn a living, but the responses and the reactions they could receive from the so called “Middle class black men”, was quite miserable.

The author mentions in the novel, some of the instances when the two characters find themselves languishing in an unfavourable society. For instance, when Meja goes to an Hotel in search for job, he meets an arrogant boss who engages the gatekeeper of the Hotel to kick him out from the premise, a times they also work tirelessly as the Author states, but no wages, sometimes the wages they receive cannot even sustain them in a day, they end up loitering within the streets competing for survival with the aid of the available scarce resources together with the young street boys around. The street Askaris, performing their normal duty of ensuring peace and security along the streets are also against them since they perceive them as robbers planning to break into a shop, they could then escape to hide in fear of these men in Uniform. Despite walking from office to office with their certificates, the rewards and treatments are unbearable.

The kind of experience they underwent, justifies intrinsically how the current society has lost its values of Utu. Their life experience portrays another kind of philosophy, where A person is no longer defined as ‘WE’ but ‘I’, which is contrary to the traditional conception of a person. “A person to belong to the whole community and it was the role of the community to inculcate moral values and ensure that the person’s future is well settled”. Ubuntu can therefore be defined as an expression of African tradition, which means the mutual support and the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity²⁹.

With reference to the society where the two characters finds themselves, we can re-affirm that the modern society has really lost the kind of mutual support that was there in the traditional

²⁹New People, *Africa interprets “FratelliTutti”*, *As sweet as Ubuntu*, No.190, dated January – February 2021.pg 20

African society and thus egoistic and self-centeredness projection has become the songs of the day. No more, 'We' consideration but 'I', and that is why the two suffered to an extent of even risking their lives in search for a living and to fully fit in the society. This is the scenario whenever a society loses the spirit of Ubuntu within her ends.

The same is also experience today within the angles of leadership in Kenya, where thousands of graduates loiter around the streets hawking goods and rendering cheap services despite possessing many academic certificates. Reason being there is no job opportunities created or other forms of Corruption such as favouritism, nepotism and tribalism has engulfed in the minds of our leaders holding higher position in the government.

2.3.2 GOING DOWN RIVER ROAD

Going Down River Road became the fourth novel Mwangi published after his tremendous work in *Kill me quick*. It is this same book which earned him the Kenyatta award for the second time³⁰.

The author draws our attention to two friends, Ben and Ocholla, and their life story throughout the novel. Ben, who has been a Lieutenant in the army, loses his job of being a Lieutenant and the one in charge of the Mortar unit, after he was approached by a man who persuaded him to steal a mortar and some shells for him. He finds himself locked in a difficult situation when the man offers him a huge amount of money worth five thousand pounds as a bribe; he accepts and let's go the mortar (gun business). Therefore, with the help of his small troop members, they pretended to have lost the mortar and then offer the guns to Mbugua the Business partner. Their plan later comes to be known by the manager and they are all fired from

³⁰Edited by Dr. Pongsak Dos. International Organization of Scientific Research. Vol 5 Poland
<https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol.%2024%20Issue8/Series-5/G2408055160.pdf> pg.52

the work premises together with his companions, Bens decision creates a rivalry between him and his fellow co-workers whom he was fired together with.

Ben then finds himself in another environment again, and he meets Wini, a prostitute lady who accepts to stay together with him and offers to take care of him despite his jobless situation. Given that Ben is unemployed; Wini could manage all home expenses and provide him with pocket money as the narrator claims. Ben then meets his luck as he qualifies for a job in an insurance company. Later on, Wini abandons him with the Baby and elopes with her manager at the company where she works as a secretary as Ben elaborates³¹. He meets Ocholla there, who had also left his two wife and several children in the hamlet to seek employment in the city. Ben and the Baby moves to stay with Ocholla at a hotel near the shantytown of Nairobi Valley after being forced out of their rented house by their landlord. There, they could do some casual works to earn a living and to sustain themselves. Whenever they could receive their daily wages, they could wonder around at night in the clubs and hotels in search of their satisfactory needs.

2. 3.3The Ubuntu concepts explained within the novel

African humanism/Ubuntu philosophy has been elaborated within the novel, *Going Down River Road* through characters and characterizations method. The text reveals individuals whose Utu is fading day after day. Characters like Ben, Wini, Ocholla, Susan, and others are shown throughout the book as victims whose human behaviours are demoralizing as they engage in cruel social activities either subconsciously or consciously. The entire work describes the vices that have led to superhuman personalities and the demoralization of individual behaviours

³¹Mwangi Meja, *Going Down River Road*, edited by Chinua Achebe 1962-1990 Adewale Maja-Pearce 1990 - 1994.pg. 90

within the state, resulting in vices like classism, cynicism, alienation, brutalization, famine, poverty, and hunger.

The author first and mainly presents two types of people in society: the destitute, unemployed masses and the wealthy, middle-class men. The gap that exists between these two parties' increases day by day as the poor become more impoverished and the rich continue to accumulate wealth for themselves. This becomes the first depiction of the loss of the brotherhood system in the society, and this can be explained to the fact that, a human person who share common humanity, are always called upon through the spirit of Brotherhood, which aims at the additional support towards one another, in which the stronger (rich) help the weak (poor) members to realize their goals and positions in the society, since they recognize that their always exist a bond that unites all human being which should discourage the emergence of capitalism in the society.

Second, Ben, the novel's main character, is portrayed to be isolated and disheartened figure in the novel as he encounters extremely challenging circumstances in life. Despite being educated, he ends up jobless. His inhumane character in response to Ubuntu is revealed when he happens to accept bribery which causes him to be fired from his former job as the First Lieutenant. In addition, he embraces Wini, a prostitute, as a friend, and he has no problem sharing a filthy room together with Wini, the commercial sex worker. From an African cultural standpoint, it is degrading for a man to share a bed that is covered in infant urine and smells unpleasantly. He is also unable to pay his house rent thus parts ways with his boss as the author narrates. His hard life experience causes him to forego his dignity, decency and integrity in order to get shelter, and accommodation from Wini. The actions that Ben portrays do not relate to the respect to the dignity accorded to human person, he has really lost this, just as Pope John Paul

the II could express this, that what matters is intrinsic nature of the person, how the person could be defined in terms of characters and behaviours in the society: He quotes;

*“Human persons are willed by God; they are imprinted with God's image. Their dignity does not come from the work they do, but from the persons they are.”*³²

Thirdly, Wini is initially revealed to be the embodiment of humanity. In reality, by accommodating Ben in her little room and sharing everything she had with him, she exemplifies the Ubuntu dictum of "I am because we are." She also makes sure that Ben finds work to support himself and a place to live. Wini has however, brought to light some nasty characters. She deserts Ben and her son without Ben's knowledge. The writer narrates on how Susan stealthily leaves the room: "The house is locked from the outside. There is no light in the room, though the Baby is in there and making a racket. Ben fetches his key, opens up and switches on the light. Baby ceases crying and gets up on the bed, all washed up in urine and rinsed in tears. Ben pats him on the head and lifts him to the floor"³³. In this case, Wini's thirst for wealth has robbed her of her dignity hence elopes to her manager, this is against the Utu life because despite the baby being sick and Ben experiencing hard times in his life, she still decides to add more burden to Ben.

In the novel *Going Down River Road* portrays the female characters as being willing to violate their sense of honour, and self-dignity. Many of the female characters in the text are engaged in commercial sex work; Susan, for instance, is a young lady who is breastfeeding her three-month baby but still engages in commercial sex work for money. This degrades her dignity

³²Pope Francis. *The Life and Dignity of the Human Person*.

https://www.stpaulcatholicparish.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=839534&type=d&pREC_ID=1212850

³³Mwangi Meja, *Going Down River Road*, edited by Chinua Achebe 1962-1990 Adewale Maja-Pearce 1990 94.pg 136

in the eyes of her clients to an extent of even frustrates them, making Wini's situation comparable.

Mbugua is another figure that appears in the book. Mbugua is shown to be a brutal, merciless person who has no regard for the rights of others. When he initially meets Ben, he reveals his cruel characteristics to the gullible Ben by telling him, for example, what he does whenever he feels the need for money: "When we want money, me and the boys, we just go out and get it"³⁴. This simply shows that he is not a morally upright man despite his old age. Traditionally the old were considered full of wisdom and morals and hence, the young could look upon the old since it is where they could attain the morals and other skills. In this case, Mbugua contradicts this belief; He lures Ben into the act which later costs him as he lost his highly rated job.

Ocholla violates the Utu principle of "I am because we are" when he kills Onesmus on purpose, as is revealed in the narrative. Onesmus, who shares Ocholla's humanity and is battling for the right to live and enjoy the benefits of nature, is not acknowledged by Ocholla as a fellow human being. He takes Onesmus's life prematurely, putting an end to all of his hopes. Both of them work as construction labourers for Development House. to imply that they are connected via their place of employment. Since there has been a connection that has brought the two together in this way, Ocholla's ruthless killing of his co-worker seems regressive. In this case, Ocholla is represented as a heartless, and a dehumanized with fully no respect to humanity. Additionally, it is against both society's norms and human rights to eradicate rather than kill another individual. Ocholla misses the point of Africanacity, which emphasizes the relationship that all people share with one another on a universal level. As John Mbiti argues, "in the African

³⁴ Ibid. Pg. 72

point of view, people owe their existence to others because a person is part of the whole totality and whatever happens to an individual affects immediately all members of the community”³⁵.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The two novels mentioned above, *Kill Me Quick* and *Going Down River Road*, express the author's protest and social criticism on the deteriorating conditions of the average Kenyan. Mwangi's criticism of the corruption, exploitation, and degradation of moral standards committed in autonomous African countries by Black imperialist leaders is illuminated by the artistic and effective manipulation of the topics and characters in these works. Mwangi makes his readers aware of the wrongdoings and problems in their surroundings by exposing the enduring evil of society. He then exhorts them to fight for socio-economic justice and freedom.

Therefore, from the two articles explained above, we have come to realized that Ubuntu is a philosophy that is relevant in addressing many major political, social and economic problems experienced in many states, particularly in Kenya. We have managed to explore the role of Ubuntu to holistic growth of individuals in the society, since the society and the person are one in accordance to the traditional perspective, the role of the society is therefore, to ensure that the person grows fully upright in terms of morals and achievements; self-awareness and social responsibility, generosity, sharing, and teamwork; social justice ,human rights; food security; spirituality; environmental health and personal hygiene; health promotion among others.

We therefore opt for the adoption of Ubuntu philosophy in Kenyan political arena for each and every person to be able to acknowledge his fellows as to share same humanity with him and deserve the full dignity as him. Thus, this is what Mbeki regards as being an African, which holds an unequivocal statement that we refuse to accept that our Africanness shall be defined by

³⁵ IOSR Jour Fhakunanal IOSR Jour Fhakunanal of humanity and Social science, Vol 24. (August 2019) 57

our race, colour, gender or historical origins³⁶. Rather we live as black and white together belonging to the same pot.

³⁶Hensbroek, Pieter Boele van, *African Renaissance and Ubuntu* (published by Hensbroek, P. B. V. (2002). pg. 11

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will lay out the summation of the central reasons why Ubuntu is of importance in the enlightenment of the corridors of the political environment and governance in Kenya. We shall come to realize that the spirit of Ubuntu philosophy holds within itself some very important moral values and norms suitable for the good governance of a state.

We shall start by analyzing the historical background of the Republic of Kenya and its political environment before and after independence, since this will give us an outlook on the political condition in Kenya as it serves as our main case study in this paper.

3.1 THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA

3.1.1 A Brief Background and its geographical position

Kenya is one of the 54 countries that find their borders on the second- largest continent in the world, Africa. It lies across the equator on the East Coast of Africa. Among her bordering states include: Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, and the Indian Ocean on the coast. The capital city of Kenya is Nairobi, which has a population of approximately 5.9M. Thus, the whole country's population, according to the 2019 census, stands at approximately 47,564,296 individuals³⁷. However, by the beginning of 2022, the country's population had risen to approximately 54 million people, according to United Nation estimates³⁸. The area covers a total

³⁷ Global health data exchange 2019.

³⁸ Abdelaziz Marhoum, & David A. Samper. East Africa Living Encyclopedia.

<https://www.africa.upenn.edu/NEH/kgeography.htm#:~:text=Kenya%20shares%20borders%20with%20five,neighbors%20are%20Somalia%20and%20Ethiopia>

of 224,960 square miles³⁹; this has been divided into specific counties amounting to a total of 47 counties, distributed among all 8 Provinces in Kenya.

Most of the produce in Kenya is consumed locally; however, Kenya only exports a few agricultural commodities like tea, cut flowers, crude petroleum, gold, and coffee, which are shipped to between countries like the Netherlands, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and Tanzania. She then imports products like refined petroleum, palm oil, broadcasting equipment, packaged medicaments, and cars from between happening between countries like China, India, the United Arab Emirates, Japan, and Saudi Arabia.⁴⁰

3.2 KENYAN POLITICS BEFORE AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE

3.2.1 The Stone Age Kenya

At the beginning of 2000 BC, Cushitic-speaking people from northern Africa settled in the part of East Africa that is now known as the Republic of Kenya. By the 1st century AD, the Kenyan coast was frequented by Arab traders who, due to Kenya's proximity to the Arabian Peninsula, established Arab and Persian colonies there, which were later followed by the immigration of other language groups, including the Nilotes and Bantu language groups, to settle in the region during the first millennium AD⁴¹.

Evolving from a mixture of Bantus and Arabs along the coast. The Swahili language was developed as a lingua franca for trade between different peoples. Then, with the Portuguese's late arrival in 1498, the Arab hegemony over the coast ended as the Port of Mombasa emerged as a key port for ships traveling over the Indian Ocean from countries in the Far East. This was

³⁹Kaplan, Irving & et.al. 1976. Area Handbook for Kenya, Second Ed., U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C. pp. 50-64.

⁴⁰Gilberto Garcia. Economics and global trade from the OEC: [https://oec.world/en/profile/country/ken#:~:text=Imports%20The%20top%20imports%20of,and%20Saudi%20Arabia%20\(%24632M](https://oec.world/en/profile/country/ken#:~:text=Imports%20The%20top%20imports%20of,and%20Saudi%20Arabia%20(%24632M)

⁴¹Gen. Samuel N. Thuita. Tel Aviv Embassy of the republic of Kenya in Israel. <https://kenyaembassyisrael.com/brief-history-of-kenya/#:~:text=By%20the%201st%20Century%20AD,and%20settled%20inland.>

followed by the coming of the Portuguese explorers and missionaries into Kenya, including Vasco Da Gama and Johannes Rebmann, who was together with his German counterpart Johann Ludwig Krapf, who brought a lot of developments and discoveries to region.

3.2.2 A road to colonialism in Kenya

The roots of the colonial history of Kenya go back to the Berlin Conference held in 1885, when East Africa was first divided into territories of influence by the European powers⁴². Later, the British East African Company was granted a charter in 1888 to conquer the region currently known as the Republic of Kenya, which led to its colonization.

Later the British East African Company became bankrupt, the British government took over the administration of the colony which led to the creation of the gateway to Uganda, Buganda, and Bunyoro through the construction of the Kenya – Uganda Railway Line with the help of the Indians. This happened because there were no minerals to be exploited in Kenya⁴³. To subdue and to take control of the region, the British authorities forcefully took large amount of land for the cultivation of cash crops, later introduced forced labour, and passed strong legislations that ensured natives became subjects of the British inhabitants within the region. For instance, they adopted the English language to be able to listen to the coup plans of the local natives since they could not understand the language of the natives.

3.3 KENYA AT THE CROSSROADS TO FREEDOM

3.3.1 The Mau Mau rebellion against colonialism

In 1942, members of the Kikuyu, Embu, Meru, Maasai, and Kamba tribes took an oath of unity and secrecy to fight for freedom from British rule. They were members of the Kenya Land and

⁴² ibid

⁴³ ibid

Freedom Army, also known as the Mau Mau fighters. This movement began with the oath of service and sacrifice for the state of Kenya toward the attainment of internal national sovereignty⁴⁴. Jomo Kenyatta was convicted of leading the Mau Mau in 1953 and sentenced a 7-year term of imprisonment. Dedan Kimathi was another freedom fighter who was imprisoned in 1956 for his part in the Mau Mau revolt as a leader of the independence movement and was later hanged by the colonialists. Not only were these, but thousands of Kenyans confined in detention camps for influencing the rebellion.

The Mau Mau military strategy was mainly guerrilla attacks launched mostly at night. Women also played an important role in this war, as they were able to steal weapons from the British Army, such as guns, ammunition, machetes, bows, and arrows, and supply them to the Mau Mau fighters, along with food, medical care, and primarily information⁴⁵. The role played by the freedom fighters in ensuring that Kenya attains its self-rule can be positioned through a statement made by Thabo Mbeki former, President of South Africa, that the call for Africa's Renaissance is a call to rebellion. We must rebel against the tyrants and the dictators, those who seek to corrupt our societies and steal the wealth that belongs to the people. To be a true African is to be a rebel in the cause of the African Renaissance⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ The Colonization of Kenya.

⁴⁶Hensbroek, Pieter Boele van, *African Renaissance and Ubuntu*, (published by Hensbroek, P. B. V. (2002). pg. 46

3.3.2 Kenya achieves self-rule

On December 12, 1963, Kenya declared independence from British colonial rule⁴⁷. Just a year after Kenyatta's release from prison following his arrest for supporting the Mau Mau freedom fighters. He was chosen to serve as Kenya's first Prime Minister before being inaugurated as the country's first President the following year.

3.4. THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AFTER INDEPENDENCE

3.4.1 Political system in Kenya: Structural analysis

Since independence, the Republic of Kenya has been a centralized governmental state, led by a sitting president and his appointed cabinet. Kenya has had a multi-party political system since 1992, which was not initially conceivable during Kenyatta's reign, because his leadership was perceived as a type of bureaucratic-executive state, rather than democracy. For instance, he could not allow for the sharing of executive authority. He rose above both the law and the opposition's challenges. He then increasingly centralized power in Nairobi and in the Office of the President; through constitutional changes, detention legislation, the practice of emergency powers, and the subordination of elements of the legal system to political imperatives and laws⁴⁸, he managed to rule the state as a single party system, despite the opposite influence from the opposition. This was against what the constitution states, that “All sovereign power belongs to the people of Kenya and shall be exercised only in accordance with this Constitution.”⁴⁹ In this case, power was in his hands and his cabinet. It happened that it was during this period that Kenya began to experience an intense reduction in the consideration of the values of humanism.

⁴⁷History.com Editors Kenya. *Kenya declares independence from Britain*:<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/kenya-declares-independence-from-britain>

⁴⁸ Hornsby Charles, *Kenya: A history since independence*, (published by I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, London) 2012. Pg. 165

⁴⁹*The constitution of Kenya* 2010, (art. 166, sec. 1).

Currently, Kenya is a parliamentary-based democratic state. The Parliament of Kenya is a bicameral house consisting of the National Assembly and the Senate. The National Assembly has a total of 349 members plus the Speaker for both houses who is ex-officio appointed under the interest of the majority. The Senate thus holds a totality of 67 members including the Speaker.⁵⁰

The president, his deputy, and the cabinet secretaries make up the executive. The President, with the approval of the National Assembly, shall then appoint cabinet secretaries. The President is elected directly for a 5-year term. And to win any position, a candidate must garner 50% plus 1 vote and 25% in half of the 47 counties⁵¹.

3.4.2 On the transfer of powers

The Kenya African National Union (KANU) won the first election in Kenya, which was conducted in May 1964. As a result, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta became the country's first President and the nation's founding father. Up until October 1978, when Mzee Jomo Kenyatta was succeeded by Daniel Arap Moi as the second President of Kenya. Moi became the Kenya's longest-serving president with 24 years in office. Mwai Kibaki took over from him in December 2002 as the third president of the Republic until March 2013, when Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta was elected as the Country's fourth president alongside William Samoei Ruto as His Deputy. They were later re-elected 2017 general election for their second term in office. Currently the sitting president of the republic is Hon. William Samoei Ruto who is in his first term in office together with his deputy, Hon. Rigathi Gachagua.

⁵⁰ Ibid, (art. 106, sec. 1).

⁵¹ Ibid, (art. 142 / 152, sec. 1).

3.5 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE MORAL DEGRADATION BY POLITICAL LEADERS SINCE INDEPENDENCE

Most of the Kenyan politicians since independence have found it difficult to correlate the need for the values of Ubuntu with their histories of service. They have failed to reconcile Ubuntu spirit and leadership, hence going astray in terms of their delivery to the state. Ubuntu values should be the first skills that a real leader should always adopt whenever he or she assumes the office that the citizen has entrusted him with. This is because Ubuntu is what defines a person's essence. A person is well-defined by his relation to society or the state; similarly, this same person is primarily the subject in any government. Therefore, Ubuntu and the government should complement each other. The Republic of Kenya has experienced at a greater level a certain degree of moral degradation, dehumanization, and human harassment, revealing a loss of the spirit of Ubuntu, as elaborated below.

Just a year after the first election in 1964, a protest was witnessed along the streets of Nairobi, in which over 500 men stood in opposition against the way the first government, led by the late Hon. Kenyatta under the KANU government, was going about its affairs in the state. They presented petitions demonstrating that many citizens remained unemployed despite the achievement of freedom and the promises made to them of imminent social emancipation through national liberation. They accused the president of favouring his Kikuyu community when appointing top government officials and allocating development funds⁵². According to the protestors, the KANU slogan of “*Uhuru naKazi*” (Freedom and Work) was just a mere slogan

⁵²Daniel Branch, *Kenya: between hope and Despair*, Yale University Press publication, (New Heaven & London, 1963-2011), pg.53

which later changed to ‘*uhuru na tabu*’ (freedom and suffering). They then demanded that the ministers sell their expensive cars and give the proceeds to the neediest in their societies⁵³.

The petitions that were laid out by the protestors reveal the beginning of mistrust from the citizens towards their leaders, and they outwardly showcase the type of political environment in which the Republic of Kenya has thrived since independence. Leaders only focus on their expensive personal needs and interests, leaving the majority of the citizens in despair. The common interests that they vowed to observe have been turned to personal interests to the extent of even denying the citizens their basic freedoms; speech, association, and sometimes the freedom of life. Like in the case above, Kenyatta ordered a ban on public meetings and gatherings around Nairobi and all the major towns to prevent such protests from happening again. The Ubuntu spirit employs empathy and sympathy as the simplest and most important values that an African leader should adopt; however, in this case, these values have not been considered, resulting in the need to question such practices in society, which only the Ubuntu spirit can cure.

Thabo Mbeki, the former South African President, had an awareness of this type of regime, hence his remarks considering the role of Ubuntu in society: *“We have not done enough to articulate and elaborate on what Ubuntu means, as well as promoting this important value system in a manner that should define the unique identity of South Africa...We therefore have a responsibility to utilize the many positive attributes of Ubuntu to build a non-racial or Xenophobic, non-sexist, and a United South Africa. We also need to use the values and ethos of*

⁵³Ibid, pg.35

*Ubuntu in our moral regeneration campaigns*⁵⁴. Ubuntu is seen as a curative tool in the political realm.

3.6 THE IMPACT OF UBUNTU VALUES ON THE LIBERATION OF KENYA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM THROUGH MEJA MWANGI NOVELS

As it was postulated in the previous subheading, 'Ubuntu' is understood in terms of the human nature of a person in the society. It can be equated to the essence of a human person since it is what defines a human person in relation to the community to which he belongs. The very meaning of the term 'Ubuntu' connotes moral values and processes by which one becomes a person through other persons. The centrality of Ubuntu is therefore, oriented towards the reformation of a moral human person bedecked with moral values and principles of good living. From the previous chapter, we saw how Ubuntu and the state can complement one another in the development of individuals and society since they share the same subject.

African humanism thus promotes some important values that should be upheld, particularly in Kenya's political arena and throughout society. These values should function as the liberation pillars that can restore the spirit of communalism, humaneness, and interconnectedness as a vision towards the realization of a peaceful and perfect Republic of Kenya. Hence, from a traditional African point of view, any African person should develop the following values in his being;

Ubuntu promotes the spirit of listening to other people's opinions as a leader and affirming others with the use of procedures that foster trust, justice, shared understanding, respect for human dignity, and the development of a harmonious interaction between individuals in society. In this case, a leader should develop the sense of listening to and recognizing the

⁵⁴Thabo Mbeki, *speech on Heritage Day celebrations* (24/09/2005), South Africa

decisions of the majority of human beings as valuable and, in particular, the sense of obeying and respecting the freedom and rights of his subjects. In a governance system. The general will must always be greater than the individual will.

The general consciousness of Ubuntu is all about the desire to build a caring, sustainable, and just community extending to the entire state. The spirit of Ubuntu is always driven towards creating a general balance among people in society without the defects of classism, which create a gap between the weak and the strong or the poor and the rich. It calls for additional support where the disadvantaged are cared for appropriately. The leadership system also must create a sustainable economic environment suitable for all the citizens to strive for so as to accumulate available resources for their survival. This type of state should also allow justice to flourish in all areas, including employment positions through just wage distribution. A good state should always care for and protect its citizens no matter what happens than to ruin their lives. Political leaders should feel a sense of devotion towards considering the general social welfare in terms of their service delivery; they should be endowed with the feelings of sympathy, hospitality, generosity, honesty, tolerance, social justice, and respect for the dignity of a human person in their regime.

Second, the Ubuntu spirit emphasizes the common humanity or interconnectivity that all human beings in society embody; it thus renders a way in which we can ethically respond generally to each other, to create a community-based environment that favours a productive individual vs. individual, state vs. individual, and state vs. state relationship (global relationship). These then ease the way of living together with respect, compassion, and dignity among individual. The practice of justice which will enable reorganization and the distribution of resources evenly and justly. It is realized that Ubuntu in this case not only creates a level of

interconnectedness among human beings only but also extends to the state - state. This would ultimately be about sharing wealth, abilities, and making basic services, such as food, housing, and access to health and education, accessible and visible to all members of our global family, supporting each other in terms of businesses and external security.

The Ubuntu spirit requires equal distribution of available resources and opportunities, beginning with the family as the foundation of all these and progressing to the community and the government. In this case, resources are to be shared fairly and equally among members of the state. This will reduce the state of imbalanced development in some regions within the state and will also promote a sense of inclusivity in which all citizens will feel like they belong to the state and be sure of their protection. Sharing will eliminate egoistic behaviour in matters related to job opportunities, like in the case of the above mentioned novels in which the two characters wander around in search of job opportunities but get the response that there is no job vacancy.

Ubuntu also calls for service and active participation by all members of the community in matters pertaining to the community. The officials of the state should therefore be at the service of their citizens, with values rooted in humanity. To accomplish this, Ubuntu embodies a tradition of consultation and decision-making by ordinary members of society. This enhances the general will, which can never be destroyed or corrupted in any way.

Reconciliation is also an important aspect to be considered. This is a state in which two or more parties involved in a kind of difference come together in dialogue to settle the dispute. For example, the experience of the writer among the Pokot community of Kenya reveals that, forgiveness is a norm deeply rooted in Pokot culture. It involves serious dialogue between the parties and appropriate compensation is agreed. Therefore, the spirit of reconciliation must be a

core component in Kenya's democratic system. This could be a weapon to end the post-election violence that is constantly occurring in the state of Kenya. For instance, the conflict in the 2007 general election was principally the result of the way elections were conducted. These made the supporters of the specific parties fight for their supremacy, causing physical evictions by indigenous communities, and the destruction of properties and businesses. The spirit of reconciliation should then be considered an important tool whenever differences occur in society.

Lastly, Development and expansion of a state are based on good governance and fair accountability. Good leadership or governance that is transparent and accountable has always been Africa's Achilles heel⁵⁵ as Lumumba could mention. Most government institutions have deviated from their main purpose in which they were instituted and now exist as vacant memorials to misguided development efforts after years of neglect, this is primarily as a result of improper handling of public funds and accounts by the government in charge. This has led to unfavourable situations, with many states in ruins as a result of corruption scandals brought on by the political leadership's frequent obsession with gaining unbridled power and the egotistical desire to amass enormous personal wealth. Therefore, under governance that is truly transparent, effective and accountable, citizens have access to crucial information about how government operates, establishes priorities and makes decisions. This enhances inclusivity and sense of belonging and accountability at all levels of government.

Thus, leaders should be as role models since they can influence the values and general behaviours in society either negatively or positively. Thus Positive ideologies created by these leaders can provoke the emergence of an ideal society. Similarly, negative ideologies can

⁵⁵Prof. PLO Lumumba, Thoughts on the role of African professionals in the quest for development, presented at the association of chartered certified accountants of South Africa at Addis Ababa Ethiopia on Friday the 8th December, 2017.

dehumanize the whole society. Therefore, the moral stature and integrity of political leaders are very important in charting the direction of a society in terms of entrenched values and the general behaviour of members⁵⁶.

3.7 Conclusion

The Ubuntu spirit in society, governance, and politics encourages people to be ethically oriented and morally upright. This will contribute to the creation of an ethically organized culture that will foster the creation of public values and the development of strong and trusting relationships among members of society.

⁵⁶Unifer Dyer. James Ogude, *Ubuntu and Everyday*, Africa world press, (Trenton, New jersey), 2019, pg., pg.81

CHAPTER FOUR

UBUNTU AND THE PERSONHOOD

This chapter provide a summary of the whole thesis. It articulates some of the important conclusions drawn from the study as well as crucial recommendations accruing from the study, along with some suggested ways of entrenching Ubuntu values in the community. Lastly, it shall outline the findings of the study together with the list of sources that have facilitated the whole idea in this thesis.

4.0 The role of community in the understanding of personhood

According to Kwasi Wiredu a Ghanaian Philosopher, a person is conceived in relation to the society. That the role society plays in the life of any human person is very core. He holds the development of personhood as dependent upon the community. So there has be a community in which this unfolds for the person to come into being. Moreover, the process of communication is essential to the growth of human beings as individuals within societies. Harmony and solidarity are necessary to maintain channels of communication and the resulting growth of personality. Solidarity and harmony provides the community with identity that contributes to the identification of the person as a person⁵⁷. Thus, both the person, and the community exhibit a symbiotic relationship, for the community provides for the well-being of the person and the person also contributes to the foundational basis of the community. John Dewey summarises this kind of communication as a form of “the give-and-take⁵⁸. For the community takes care of the individual therefore the individual must take care of the community. Thus, if any of the parties fail, the other is not fulfilled.

⁵⁷Mark Tschaepe, *A Humanist Ethic of Ubuntu: Understanding Moral Obligation and Community* (by The American Humanist Association, 2013). pg. 54.

⁵⁸John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1927), p. 154.

4.0.1 The ontological progression of personhood in the community

The discourse on the ontological progression of a person will enable us to understand the vital role the community plays in the transformation and development of a person from the first stage existence (pregnancy) to the late stage. This is thought to be a progressive journey connecting the living with the dead.

In African culture, the project of becoming a person is viewed as a societal project that begins from the family. The community does a great role in the transformation of individuals' right from the first stage to the last. The individual and the society are inseparable. Hence the ontological progression from childhood to adulthood was approached in the community through the following stages according to Bernard Matolino, in his discourse on the metaphysics of persons⁵⁹: The first stage ranges from conception to birth, followed by Naming, Initiation, marriage, eldership, death and lastly ancestor hood. One unique thing in all these stages, the community had the full role in journeying with one from the first stage to the latter, and that is why the dead are still remembered for they have a role to play.

Therefore, the activity of teaching these values should be dedicated primarily to the family and the community as discussed above. Partially, these values can also be re-instilled in a person through educational institutions being incorporated in the syllabuses. Also religious institutions should promote these values through preaching's and catechesis lessons in relation to the supreme source of all morals, God. Political leaders and those working in higher offices should also help to administer these norms in the lives of their citizens. They should at first be

⁵⁹Matolino Bernard, the (mal) function of "it" in ifeanyi Menkiti's normative account of person, (published by Center for African Studies, 2011). Pg. 37 – 27.

role models to the people they are leading through the words they speak, their characters, etc.; for we agree that a river will always follow its rills.

Secondly, work is also an important aspect in which the Ubuntu spirit can be cultivated in society. Apart from culture and language, it is one of the most important aspects that distinguish humans from other brute animals. Work is a means for people to not only meet the needs of others, but also to create and express their own⁶⁰. As a result, through work, each individual can meet his or her own needs while also supporting the community in which he or she lives. This is what happened in the case of Ujamaa village in Tanzania, thanks to the principle of division of labour, which required each village to engage in specific activities aimed at assisting the least and poor in society, hence brotherhood. Work can also promote Ubuntu values by paying just wages, collectively sharing available resources among members of society, and caring for the underprivileged. This is because the concept of Ubuntu pertains to how we relate to one another and thus defines ourselves in relation to others.

Lastly, language also holds an important place in the incorporation of these Ubuntu values in society. This is because an appropriate and well-deserved language enables one to express himself firmly and clearly without emulating disrespectful behaviours or even degrading the dignity of the other person. Children should then be taught to use respectful and polite language, and this can only be achieved through their elders. Thus, adults too should avoid the use of obscene and disrespectful languages in their addresses to others, since this lowers the demands of Utu life. Therefore, one has to be cautious about the use of language to the extent that the language used should be in a position to promote the cultural norms and values of Ubuntu but not to eradicate them.

⁶⁰Unifer Dyer. James Ogude, *Ubuntu and Everyday*, Africa world press, (Trenton, New jersey), 2019, pg. 83

4.1 Entrenching Ubuntu spirit in the current society

For Ubuntu values to become a part of our daily lives, they must be integrated into our core socialization and interactions in society, where they can be internalized and integrated into our normal daily lives. These important values can be incorporated into society in many ways. However, this will just be a way of renewing the lost values of Africanacity because, from a traditional conception, Africans are known to be bound in the Ubuntu spirit from childhood, which is evident in day-to-day encounters such as greetings, eating, and living with people. However, because of the rise of new vices in contemporary times, for instance, corruption, politics of interests and conflicts there is an increased suppression of these values, leading to their loss. As a result, an important criterion should be adopted: focusing on the restoration of these values and making them central to changing the character of individuals in society.

Firstly, Ubuntu values have to be taught and emphasized right from childhood through the formal education system at the family level and the community at large. Imparting this knowledge of Ubuntu should begin in the family, that is, from the parents to the children, because this is where character formation begins, and as the children grow, they inject these values into society to transform the dominant cultures⁶¹. The community then continues to shape the individual until the end.

This is the most effective way of incorporating these values as compared to a society that has already internalized dominant cultural vices, for instance, violence, aggressiveness, dehumanization, human harassment, theft, corruption, tribalism, and racism. Such a society becomes difficult to transform back to the former state since its members have already indulged

⁶¹ibid, pg.73

in a state of misfortune, unless a strong and convincing ideology is developed, like the Ujamaa, the Familyhood of Nyerere, and the Harambee of Kenyatta, which had a strong impact on people even in the latter days of their lives. Therefore, this formation is important at an early age and continues in the community until one dies. These kinds of formal education in the family and in the community were done through the following trajectory, which showed the role of the community in the entire life of a person, thus the ontological progression of a human person in the community:

4.2 FINDINGS

Meja Mwangi understands that the current Kenyan society is prone to societal stratifications based on classes, gender, wealth, socio economic factors and occupation which have negatively influenced the nature of human beings. This has created an inevitable condition as the foundation of immoral acts in human society. He continues by saying that the aforesaid conditions can only be eliminated when members of the society adhere to *Ubuntu*, which upholds moral principles, human dignity, and respect for life. Thus, the presence of social classes in the modern Kenyan state is of great effect to the *Utu* of individuals as it provokes the emergence of vices such as exploitation, poverty, inequality, and dehumanization of human beings.

Hence, for Kenya as a state to come out of this yoke of inhumane practices and human harassments, a revamping of African indigenous modes of life as in the Ubuntu philosophy has to be undertaken. These will aid in recovering the spirit of the former way of life, as Nkrumah and Nyerere assured us that what we must recapture is not the physical form of the traditional African society way of life, but rather its essence, which is based upon the spirit of it. The communist spirit is embodied in its humanism and in its ability to reconcile individual

advancement with the welfare of the community⁶². Even if there is insufficient anthropological evidence to reconstruct the traditional African society with accuracy, we can still recapture the rich human values of that society.

Thus, through Ubuntu, we can be certain about the unity of each individual in society and strive for a global outlook of unity among all humanities, which will promote natural cohesion and increase productivity rate, thereby lowering living standards and dehumanizing human beings' characters as posited within the Ubuntu values, thus holding human dignity as ideal in a community set up.

4.3 RECCOMNDATION

This study seeks to make a contribution by proposing some practical recommendations aimed at initiating and sharing a discourse on Ubuntu in society, as well as steering a debate on whether Ubuntu can be found to have a common value in the construction of a unified state of Kenya.

In the spirit of Ubuntu, the first recommendation should be to ensure that one makes himself conscience of other people's perceptions, freedom, thoughts, and actions in society. This will allow society and its members to move as one whole, each person fulfilling the needs of the other, without limiting or degrading the dignity of others. This should cut across the government and governmental based and private institutions, as well as the members of the state at large.

Secondly, life is about sharing and communication. In modern society, there should be mutual sharing of meaning rather than the somewhat universal mode of communication that is

⁶² Kwame Nkrumah, *African socialism Revisited*, published by peace and socialism publishers, translated by Dominic Tweedie. 1967.pg 84

driven by efficiency goals⁶³. This is the fulfillment of the demands of democracy which implies a sharing of meaning in life. A society that does not support the needs of its members and recognize the role of its citizens cannot stand tall in the fight against the contemporary vices of corruption, dehumanization, and respect for human dignity.

Thirdly, despite the fact that traditions are valuable, they should be modified to fit with the current values of society because cultures are not static but rather dynamic. This is because societies are constantly changing their norms and values to reflect the modern way of living. It is therefore advised that outdated customs be updated to reflect the state of society today, and that special consideration be given to reaffirming and consolidating these values within specific communities, either through the implementation of informal education in locals' schools and places of worship or through the teaching of the same morals in young age.

Fourthly, unity is what defines a well-mature, developed and goal-oriented state. Additionally, a united populace can create stable conditions for the emergence, maintenance, and perpetuation of national pride and the flourishing of moral principles. This is what is promoted in the spirit of Ubuntu. Thus, it is recommended that unity and cohesion be the end goals of a state. Therefore, leaders and citizens should fight in order to restore, observe, and consider unity within the state. This should include work, community gathering places, and the entire state, because unity contains peace and harmony.

Fifthly, there should be a need for emphasis on education and schooling to be adaptable to the cultural practices of the day. This will enable the pupil to have a general knowledge of the society in which he lives and the role that society plays in his life. This instills important values in the student, which will be very beneficial when the child is released into society as a working

⁶³ From Nontobeko Winnie Msenganathe, Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. Dec 2006. pg.119

class member. The curriculum should at least involve some culturally related units and syllabuses to help foster these values.

Finally, in the current state of Kenya, the Ubuntu spirit is recommended at a higher level to be engulfed in nearly all corners of life since it provides a broader view of cultures and traditions of people in the society and is thus perceived to have the basic characteristic of being accommodating, applicably and adaptable to all. It is thus considered a means to reconcile different traditions and cultures in order to develop a strong will and desires that promote social cohesiveness between the state and her citizens, or from a broader view, to promote global relations among different states⁶⁴. This indicates that individuals will uphold one another's dignity and engage in internal and exterior harmony and collaboration. Ubuntu will also aid in the development of a community-based society rooted on social values like justice, compassion, love, and respect, which are conducive to social living, as it is in all individuals who respect the right to justice of every individual and society at large.

In this realm, any African person should have that intent desire to improve the lives of the people around him to promote a united state of Kenya and Africa at large. As Prof. Lumumba may outline, this should be founded on the following seven (7) pillars: I A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development (ii) A politically united, politically integrated continent built on the principles of pan-Africanism and the idea of an African Renaissance (iii) An Africa with democratic government, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law (iv) A continent that is stable and safe (v) An Africa with a strong sense of cultural identity, a shared past, and ethical standards. (vi) A people-driven Africa that values

⁶⁴ibid. pg.202

children and relies on the potential of its people, particularly its women and youth. (vii) Africa as a powerful, cohesive, and significant partner and player on the world stage.⁶⁵

The native philosophers (African philosophers) also have a role to play within this realm of spreading the Ubuntu values. In order to fully realize the diversity and richness of African cultures in the practice of African philosophy, they should think about rooting African philosophical ideas in particular African civilizations. African philosophy should also be distinguished from the Hegemonic way of philosophizing since they can never correlate. This is because the west civilization runs counter to the very tenets on which African philosophy is built. African philosophy becomes relevant and meaningful in the framework of African culture through being rooted in indigenous African culture.

4.4GENERAL CONCLUSION

Following the Socratic common known dictum which states that “*Unexamined life is not worth living*⁶⁶”, rather in simple connotation, “*Know thy self*,” African societies, should critically examine their own thinking and ways of approach and turn against Eurocentric tendencies in their daily endeavours in the society. They have to abandon the Eurocentric mentality and embrace back the native African values so that they can be defined as authentic and fully Africans. Thus African philosophy promotes a positive thought should think outside the Eurocentric realm of behaviour and characters have contributed a lot to the current problems experienced within the state. Thus as a result of these, an ideal philosophical outlook has to be

⁶⁵ United Nations Development Programme; ‘Transparency and Accountability in Africa’ November 2012. Available at <http://www.africa.undp.org>.

⁶⁶James, Ambury, Socrates. *The Unexamined Life* (the [Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy](#)). (469—399 B.C.E.)

embraced, that is Ubuntu philosophy, as an African-based practice which promotes communism principles suitable to point out and eliminate the rogue Eurocentric inclinations from the society.

Therefore, as Ubuntu values are thought to be universally shared by all humanity because they stem from the faculties of reason and consciousness, which are present in all humans, thus everybody is assumed to have Ubuntu because everyone embodies Ubuntuism core principles of sharing, caring, respect, interaction, compassion, and love which are inclined within the rational faculty. Today Kenya and Africa at large are faced with many challenges of social unrest and human rights abuses, and therefore there is need for a serious and urgent home-grown philosophy that can redress the need for social cohesion and human well-being in order to promote societal order and unity.

Meja Mwangi depicts in his novels, how social structures impact the humanness of individuals in present day societies where capitalism and individualism are the dominant ideologies. Initially, before the colonization of Africa, people practiced mutual respect, upheld human dignity, practiced equality, and sharing of property. However, colonialism bred crude ideologies that are characterized by greed for materialism, egocentric behaviours, and the struggle for power to control and manipulate others. These trends have given birth to division, hence causing distinctions in terms of classes such as the weak and the strong, the rich and the poor, which have now taken shape in the current Kenyan society.

Approaching all these through the mind of Meja Mwangi, it is quite evident that social institutions are increasingly avenues of dehumanization, given that they are platforms for personal interactions in daily affairs. Ideally, social structures such as public offices and families, among others, are meant to help nurture the humanness of individuals. However, as Mwangi

illustrates in his novels, that these structures have also become avenues for human oppression, intimidation, and exploitation particularly among the least individuals in the society.

As a result of these, consideration of Ubuntu values is very ideal in the reformation of the Republic of Kenya's political, social, and economic conditions. This is because they facilitate the creation of a value-based society that cares for its citizens without neglect or torture.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources

Branch, Daniel. Kenya: *Between hope and Despair*, (Yale University Press publication, New Heaven & London), 1963-2011,

Daily nation Newspaper, (July 31 2017).

Dewey, John, *The Public and Its Problems*, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1927)

Hensbroek, Pieter Boele van, *African Renaissance and Ubuntu*, (published by Hensbroek, P. B. V. 2002).

Hornsby, Charles. Kenya: *A history since independence*, (published by I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, London) 2012.

James, Ambury, Socrates. The Unexamined Life (the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy). (469—399 B.C.E.)

Kant, Immanuel. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*. Translated by Ellington, James W. (3rd ed.). Hackett. 1997

Kaunda, Kenneth. *A Humanist in Africa*, published by Longmans, 1966 (1st edition)

Mark Tschaepé, *A Humanist Ethic of Ubuntu: Understanding Moral Obligation and Community* (by The American Humanist Association, 2013).

Matolino, Bernard. The (mal) function of “it” in ifeanyi Menkiti’s normative account of person, (published by Center for African Studies), 2011.

Mbeki, Thabo, speech on Heritage Day celebrations (24/09/2005), South Africa

Mbiti, S. John. *African religion and philosophy*. (Nairobi: EAEP, 1969).

Mwangi, Meja. *Going down the river road*, published by HM Books 2014

Mwangi, Meja. *Kill me quick*, published by HM Books 1972, HM Edition 2017

Mwangi, Meja. *Going Down River Road*, ed., by Chinua Achebe 1962-1990 (Adewale Maja-Pearce 1990).

New People, “*Africa interprets “FratelliTutti”*”, As sweet as Ubuntu), No.190, (dated January – February 2021).

Nkrumah Kwame, *African socialism Revisited*, translated by Dominic Tweedie. 1967. (published by peace and socialism publishers).

Nkrumah, Kwame. *Consciencism, philosophy and ideology for Decolonization*, 1970, United States of America (1st edition)

Nkrumah, Kwame. *African socialism Revisited*, translated by Dominic Tweedie, (published by peace and socialism publishers), 1967.

Nontobeko, W. Msenganathe, Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (University of Stellenbosch), South Africa, Dec 2006.

Nyerere. K., Julius. *Ujamaa, Essays in socialism*, Oxford:(1968) Oxford University Press.

Ogude, James, Unifer Dyer, *Ubuntu and Everyday*, (Africa world press), Trenton, New jersey, 2019,

Priscilla Jana, *African renaissance and the millennium action plan*, in Quest Vol. XV No. 1-2, 2001

Ross, Stephen David. “*Literature & Philosophy an Analysis of the Philosophical Novel.*” (1969).

The constitution of Kenya 2010

The standard nation magazine (dated 15th September 2022),

Yamamoto, E. Kholmurodov. 1997. “*Race Apologies.*” *Journal of Gender, Race and Justice*, Vol. 1, (A critical reflection on the nexus of Ubuntu, race, gender and justice)

Secondary sources

Journals

IOSR Jour Fhakunanal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 24, Issue 8, Ser. 5

(August. 2019)

Jacob Mugumbate and Andrew Nyanguru. Exploring African philosophy: The value of Ubuntu in social work ed. 2020.

Kaplan, Irving & et.al.. Area Handbook for Kenya, Second Ed., U.S. (Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C). 1976.

Shirley, Graham, "Julius. Nyerere: Teacher of Africa", (published by Julian Messner, New York 1975).

Tschaepe, Mark. "A Humanist Ethic of Ubuntu: Understanding Moral Obligation and Community" (by The American Humanist Association, 2013).

Wiredu, Kwasi. "Ibadan. Journal of the Humanities: The Akan Concept of Mind", Vol 2 (1983)

Online Journal Article

Abdelaziz Marhoum, & David A. Samper. East Africa Living Encyclopedia.

<https://www.africa.upenn.edu/NEH/kgeography.htm#:~:text=Kenya%20shares%20borders%20with%20five,neighbors%20are%20Somalia%20and%20Ethiopia>. Accessed on 7th October 2022.

Alistair Boddy-Evans. Nyerere's Social and Economic Policy in 1960s and 1970s Tanzania Updated on August 02, 2019.<https://www.quora.com/What-were-the-successes-and-failures-of-the-Ujamaa-policy-adopted-by-Nyerere-in-Tanzania>.S July 2nd 2021. At 6:02pm.

Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Meja Mwangi." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, November 27, 2022.
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Meja-Mwangi>.

Human Rights Commission. Kenya Events of 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/kenya> Visited on April 22, 2020 1:06AM ED

The International Organization of Scientific Research. Vol 5 Poland, Edited by Dr. Pongsak Dos.

<https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol.%2024%20Issue8/Series-5/G2408055160>.

The Colonization of Kenya. Editorial Team Kenya.

<https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/african-history/the-colonisation-of-kenya/#:~:text=The%20Protectorate%20of%20Kenya%20was,Sultan%20dated%2014%20December%201895.&text=Native%20Kenyan%20labourers%20were%20in,squatter%2C%20contract%2C%20or%20casual>. Accessed on 22nd July 2022. At 11pm.

Gen. Samuel N. Thuita. Tel Aviv Embassy of the republic of Kenya in

Israel. <https://kenyaembassyisrael.com/brief-history-of-kenya/#:~:text=By%20the%201st%20Century%20AD,and%20settled%20inland>. Generated on October 23rd 2022. At 12:13am.

Gilberto Garcia. Economics and global trade from the OEC

[https://oec.world/en/profile/country/ken#:~:text=Imports%20The%20top%20imports%20of,and%20Saudi%20Arabia%20\(%24632M\)](https://oec.world/en/profile/country/ken#:~:text=Imports%20The%20top%20imports%20of,and%20Saudi%20Arabia%20(%24632M)). Accessed on 7th October 2022.

Global health data exchange 2019. Visited on 29th October, 2022.

History.com Editors Kenya. Kenya declares independence from Britain. <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/kenya-declares-independence-from-britain>. Accessed on 22nd July 2022. At 9:30pm.

<https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajcr/article/view/182084>. Accessed on 22nd June 2021.

<https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajsw/article/view/127543#:~:text=Ubuntu%20can%20best%20be%20described,ngumuntu%20ngabantu%20in%20Zulu%20language>. Accessed on 3rd June 2022.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317606569_African_Humanism_as_a_Basis_for_Social_Cohesion_and_Human_Well-Being_in_Africa

Human rights commission. Kenya: Police Brutality During Curfew.<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/22/kenya-police-brutality-during-curfew> . Visited on April 22, 2020 1:00AM ED

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <https://iep.utm.edu/hunhu/> . (Accessed on 28th November, 2022 at 2:43AM)

John Segar. Nelson Mandela, The power of Ubuntu: We are Africa. print magazine,(Cape Town 2018)https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277107796_Nelson_Mandela_and_the_Power_of_Ubuntu

Kanu, Ikechukwu and Anthony. Kenneth Kaunda and the Quest for an African Humanist Philosophy.[https://www.worldwidejournals.com/international-journal-of-scientific-research-\(IJSR\)/recent_issues_pdf/2014/August/August_2014_1406987075_114.pdf](https://www.worldwidejournals.com/international-journal-of-scientific-research-(IJSR)/recent_issues_pdf/2014/August/August_2014_1406987075_114.pdf). Accessed on 3rd June 2022.

Michael Battle. Desmond Tutu.Becoming fully human in community: A critical theology of Ubuntu.University of Birmingham.[https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/132842-a-person-is-a-person-through-other-persons-none-of#:~:text=Learn%20more\)-,%E2%80%9CA%20person%20is%20a%20person%20through%20other%20persons.,in%20order%20to%20be%20human](https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/132842-a-person-is-a-person-through-other-persons-none-of#:~:text=Learn%20more)-,%E2%80%9CA%20person%20is%20a%20person%20through%20other%20persons.,in%20order%20to%20be%20human).Accessed on 24th June 2021.

Nelson Mandela speech on international celebration day in Tanzania: <https://youtu.be/IDCeYfHKVHY> .Viewed last on 17th November, 2022.At 2:45pm.

Obioha, Uwaezuoke. African Humanism as a Basis for Social Cohesion and Human Well-Being in Africa. University of Abuja Abuja, Nigeria.

Pope Francis. The Life and Dignity of the Human Person.

https://www.stpaulcatholicparish.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=839534&type=d&pREC_ID=1212850 Visited on 5th August,2022.

Prof. P.L.O Lumumba. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Regional Bureau for Africa; 'Transparency and Accountability in Africa' November 2012. Available at <http://www.africa.undp.org>.

Revised and updated by Kathleen Kuiper. History of film. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Meja-Mwangi>. Accessed on Tuesday 1st February 2022. At 0500hrs.

Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Busani Ngcaweni. Celebrating the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth and his nationalist humanist vision. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajcr/article/view/182084> visited on 11th November, 2022, at 10:35pm.

Sabelo.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Busani Ngcaweni, Steve Paulson', Shannon Henry Kleiber and Anne Strainchamps. I Am Because We Are': *The African Philosophy of Ubuntu*. <https://www.ttbook.org/interview/i-am-because-we-are-african-philosophy-ubuntu> Accessed on 22nd June 2021.

Vocabulary.com. <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/humanism#:~:text=Humanism%20comes%20from%20the%20Latin,instead%20of%20supernatural%20religious%20ideas> . visited on 21st March 2021. At 11:05pm.

William Anderson. Humanism: Types & Philosophy. <https://schoolworkhelper.net/humanism-types-philosophy/>. Accessed on 24th February, 2022.