

**Book Review: *Mabepari wa Bongo* (2007)**

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*Mabepari wa Bongo* (2007) written by Frown. P. Nyoni, perfectly captures what this literary work embodies. It is a play that reflects a higher degree of corruption in the country. Through this endeavors of touching on thematic expression, the play attempts to reveal the government leaders' irresponsibility which surrounds most of the African countries. In most cases, the leaders use globalization as a scapegoat to justify their bad deeds to the masses.

Lack of dignity and integrity among political leaders is one among the causative factors for the increase of poverty and moral decay in society. The play attributes the increase in violence and misbehaviour among youth as a result of inequalities of distribution of resources and opportunities among the majority. Another marked sign of moral decay is clearly shown by the leaders who devote much of efforts on raising their pocket instead of arousing public interest towards development.

The anonymous style of memorial ceremony adopted by the playwright in African culture along with the peculiar use of satiric language gives this play an ability of effectively sending the intended message. By this style the play tackles what has resonated in many African countries where people are praised after death even though nothing good they did in their life time. The trend is obvious in politics which influence all the things prevailing in day to day life of people ranging from cultural, social and economic aspects.

Parallel to this, the play exemplifies social classes which prevail in most of the developing countries like Tanzania. The portrayal of a complex figure of a drunker; MC Kilevi represents the image of the lower class. On the other hand, Guduza, the traitor echoes the different life styles and evils of the ruling class which jeopardize the life of the low class. To enhance the social differentiation, Guduza like most of the leaders sends his children abroad for better education. Unfortunately, home education is left in a bad situation where schools lack of enough teachers due to turnover caused by unconducive working environments and lack of teaching facilities. Those educated abroad are the ones who come to take the higher position in society. Due to these circumstances, they lead people whom they do not know their traditions, customs and norms. This is revealed by the first born of Guduza whom according to MC Kilevi is an alien in his own country:

Unatoka nchi gani? Ok, nimeelewa ndio matatizo haya ya kuzaliwa ocean road, nursery ukasoma kampala, primary south Africa, secondary Canada na chuo kikuu ukasoma Arizona (pg.2).

Where do you come from? Ok! I have understood, This is the problem of being born at Ocean Road hospital, attending nursery in Kampala academy, primary education in South Africa, secondary education in Canada and pursuing university education in Arizona (My translation).

Guduza reflects government leaders who betray their fellow citizens who voted them to office. Guduza not only misuses public funds for his individual interest but also, uses his power to suppress his people and alienate the ancestor land. The behaviour shown by Guduza provokes outrage to the people resulting into disharmony and lack of peace. And for those who have no ability of taking actions against the humiliation end up on frustration and awful desperation as it is illustrated by MC Kilevi. Those who put eyes into him will think he is a narrow minded person who does not care about tomorrow. But, this may not be true as the comments he provides need to be aware of the ongoing situation in his country. Through this lens every one can understand the effects of bad leadership in the country.

Apart from the problems caused by the leaders, the government in this play is viewed as something belonging to a privileged group, that is, those who have an access in every thing. In this context, the country is characterized by decay and humiliations to the citizen and no one can reprimand about those evils. The prevailing circumstances become worse when material things are valued more than people's life. For instance, a character called Baba explains how Guduza wrongly translated to the investors who wanted a part of land that; *Charity begins at home. It is agreed* (pg. 17). Following the alienation of his people's land, Guduza further lies to his wife that his parents have died a long time ago as he could not trace their whereabouts.

In general, the events discussed in the play reflect the effects of globalization in developing countries. The leaders who are supposed to be the role model in the society are now selfish as depicted by Guduza in *Mabepari wa Bongo*. The bitter and harsh impacts of globalization are well illuminated when life reminds the people about back memories of Mwalimu J.K Nyerere regime. During his rule there was free primary and secondary education. There was also no cost sharing in higher learning institutions. Also farmers were given subsidies; the government provided free health services to the people and ensured that everyone was valued to his or her humanity.

On the other hand, the uses of verbal irony through a simple language in this play enhance the readers to comprehend the theme. But, those who are not much competent in literary language may fail to get the message. For instance, in the following quotation:

Marehemu alikuwa mzalendo mpenzi wa nchi yake na mpenda maendeleo binafsi. Aliyejitoa daima kuhakikisha utandawizi unaenea nchini (pg. 12).

The deceased was a patriotic leader who was proud of his country and personal development. Always he dedicated his efforts to ensure that globalization spreads in the country (My translation).

The character's words are praising the late Guduza while it is contrary to what it really means. Such verbal irony is used in many parts of a play, and to some extent creates contradiction.

The writer ends the play by giving the suggestions of sacrifice to the people as a means of solving problems. This conclusion gives way forward to the people who are living in such context to apply what is so called Marxist view on class struggle. People are mobilized to fight for their self identity and rights which are in the hands of the few.