

An Analysis of Selected Literature Books Prescribed
for Kenya Secondary Schools with Reference to their Underlying
Moral Values. Margaret W. Kungu.

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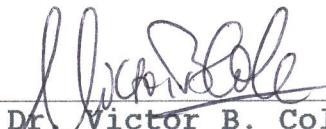
NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY


AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED LITERATURE BOOKS
PRESCRIBED FOR KENYA SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITH
REFERENCE TO THEIR UNDERLYING
MORAL VALUES


BY
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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent of wholesome moral values in selected novels prescribed for Literature in Kenyan secondary schools. Attempt was made to note what the moral basis of the wholesome values was. Two research questions, from which two hypotheses were formulated, guided this study.

The study was designed as a literary research. Data, related to wholesome and unwholesome values, were obtained by studying five novels: Things Fall Apart, No Longer at Ease, The River Between, The Concubine, and Mine Boy. The results were applied to the two hypotheses.

The results showed that there is a significant extent of wholesome values in the novels studied. The wholesome values tended to be founded on traditional morality rather than on secular morality.

Dedicated
to
The Kung'u Family
Present and Future
Kung'u, Lulu, Ciiku...

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|---|------|
| I. INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| Statement of the Problem..... | 1 |
| Purpose of the Study..... | 3 |
| Research Questions..... | 3 |
| Research Hypotheses..... | 3 |
| Significance of the Problem..... | 4 |
| Definitions, Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations..... | 5 |
| Definitions..... | 5 |
| Assumptions..... | 6 |
| Limitations..... | 7 |
| Delimitations..... | 7 |
| II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE..... | 9 |
| Substantive Antecedents..... | 9 |
| What is Literature?..... | 9 |
| Types of Literature..... | 11 |
| State of Contemporary Literature..... | 12 |
| Truth, Beauty and Evil in Art..... | 15 |
| Criticisms Against Literature..... | 20 |
| The Two Options..... | 22 |
| Censorship..... | 22 |
| Christian Standards of Appreciation..... | 24 |
| Value of Literary Art..... | 28 |
| Balanced Approaches to the Teaching of Literature..... | 32 |
| Methodological Antecedents..... | 36 |
| Establishing the moral View in Literary Art.. | 36 |
| III. METHODOLOGY..... | 43 |
| The Novels Under Study..... | 43 |
| Procedure..... | 44 |
| Data Analysis..... | 46 |
| Moral Values..... | 48 |
| Morality..... | 49 |
| IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS..... | 51 |
| Overview of Novels Studied..... | 51 |
| Things Fall Apart..... | 51 |
| No Longer at Ease..... | 53 |
| The River Between..... | 54 |

| | |
|--|----|
| The Concubine..... | 56 |
| Mine Boy..... | 58 |
| Moral Values..... | 59 |
| Systems of Morality..... | 61 |
| Interpretation of Authors' Inclinations..... | 63 |
| Things Fall Apart..... | 63 |
| No Longer at Ease..... | 65 |
| The River Between..... | 67 |
| The Concubine..... | 69 |
| Mine Boy..... | 70 |
| Discussion..... | 71 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| V. CONCLUSIONS..... | 74 |
| Summary of the Study..... | 74 |
| Purpose of the Study..... | 74 |
| Major Findings..... | 75 |
| Recommendations..... | 77 |
| Areas for Further Research..... | 78 |

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| References Cited..... | 80 |
| Appendix A..... | 84 |
| Appendix B..... | 86 |

LIST OF TABLES

| TABLE | PAGE |
|-------|--|
| 1 | Frequency of Moral Values in the Five Novels.....61 |
| 2 | Frequency of Wholesome Values in Different Value Systems.....62 |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Every society has ideals to which it aspires. In Kenya, these ideals are stated in the national philosophy. Among the various ideals, there are three which relate to morality. These three ideals are religious freedom, social justice and human dignity including the freedom of conscience (Second University in Kenya 1981, 5). These ideals do not come to human beings naturally. An organized system of inculcating them is necessary. The earlier they are instilled in an individual, the sooner they become part of the principles he lives by. In the transmission of such ideals, education plays a very significant role.

Statement of the Problem

The Kenyan educational system is guided by six objectives. The educational objectives are condensed from the ideals expressed in the national philosophy. As the national philosophy touches on morality, so do the educational objectives. The specific educational objective which touches on morality emphasizes the development of a high sense of justice and morality (Report of the Presidential Working Party 1988, 11) in the individual. To achieve this educational objective, and eventually to realize the national philosophy, it is necessary that the whole learning atmosphere (the physical, the social and the academic) be conducive to this.

One important factor in the pursuit of academic excellence is the choice of textbooks. Textbooks complement and supplement what teachers transmit to students. With respect to the subject of Literature, textbook selection calls for great care. Literature books exert a powerful appeal on an individual. The reader participates in the actions emotionally, intellectually and volitionally. This interaction can significantly influence the extent to which students are drawn to pursue an upright moral life. Literature books can thus contribute to or detract from the adoption of moral ideals in the student.

Modern writers are normally very bold in portraying human depravity. This does not often encourage pursuit of high moral ideals. To many writers though, this is not moral corruption but realism. A Christian teacher observes, "In its depiction of post-Christian world, much modern literature portrays themes of existential meaninglessness and moral relativity" (Pell 1989,7). Christian values no longer govern people's lives. Writers decide what meaning to give to life. They choose what moral standards should govern the people's lives. This point of view is gradually taking root in Africa and surfacing in Literature books.

This study seeks to examine if selected Literature books prescribed for Kenyan secondary schools in a period of 30 years portray moral relativity or not. It attempts to examine the underlying morality in the following five novels. .

Things Fall Apart

No longer at Ease

The River Between

The Concubine

Mine Boy

The type of morality depicted in the novels has potential for encouraging or hindering the development of a high sense of morality in students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to adapt the approaches of Kidner (1959), Downey (1986) and Ryken (1986) in an attempt to determine underlying morality in the five novels mentioned above.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following two questions with regard to morality:

1. To what extent do the Literature books reflect wholesome moral values?
2. If wholesome moral values exist, on what moral foundation are they based?

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

The Literature books studied will tend to reflect an insignificant extent of wholesome moral values.

This is based on the fact that values change with time and circumstances. Given that moral degeneration is easier than moral

regeneration in human beings, it is logical that moral values are affected. The conclusion is that there would be in literary art an insignificant extent of wholesome moral values now than before.

Hypothesis 2

Wholesome moral values will tend to be founded on secular morality.

The degeneration of various spheres of life means that people have increasingly refuted the existence of God and religious expressions. People have adopted a secular outlook. Any wholesome moral values are then based on secularism. Belief in God or religion is considered unimportant in directing human behaviour.

The Significance of the Problem

The results of this study will reveal the extent of morality in the Literature books analysed. Such books are considered a potential tool in shaping the moral sense in students. The results will show whether Literature books can be used in an effort to positively influence students' moral lives.

The results of this study will be profitable to teachers of Literature too. It will make them realize that works of art have definite value systems. This could be an opportunity to counteract any subversive values that are given. As a reader, the teacher does not have to agree with a writer. Both reader and writer need an objective value system to judge their experience.

The study will help the teachers to realize that the handling of moral issues in Literature books is crucial. It could motivate

them to look for non-offensive and effective ways of treating sensitive moral issues in Literature. Though this may be difficult, it can challenge a teacher to investigate the claims made by Literature books to establish their authenticity. With the knowledge obtained, a Literature teacher can direct students' responses toward a healthy moral development.

Definitions, Assumptions, Limitations
and Delimitations

Definitions

Christian -- a way of life reflecting devotion to the teachings of Jesus Christ in a relationship where God makes the first move to reach mankind.

Religious -- a way of life by which individuals or groups seek an experience of the divine in a relationship where mankind makes the first move to reach God.

Moral -- having to do with right or wrong conduct.

Moral Values -- the ideals and customs toward which a society aspires to encourage or discourage among its members.

Secularism -- view that morality should have nothing to do with religion or God.

Literature -- this term refers both to the writing and the study of the writings. In this study literature (lower case 'l') refers to the writings, while Literature (upper case 'L') refers to the subject. Literature books are those specifically prescribed to be taught in secondary schools.

Wholesome -- conducive to healthy moral well-being.

Assumptions

Man is created in the image of God. This image is distorted due to man's state of innate sinfulness. As a result man's creative acts do not necessarily give the ideal which can move others to pursue an upright moral life. Man's ideals of morality thus fall short of what God expects of him.

Literature has a lot of appeal especially in its popular form. It communicates ideas and attitudes unconsciously. A reader cannot reject an unconscious dissemination of materials. The only way to counteract such is to evaluate and challenge such ideas before they take root. This means diagnosing the problem first. As the saying goes, "A problem recognized is a problem half-solved".

In the spiritual realm a battle rages between God and Satan, forces of good and forces of evil. Man, having revolted against God, is now caught up in the conflict. Satan employs all he can, capitalizing on man's sinful nature. If Literature books will serve his purpose, he will use them. Ultimately every piece of literature has an ulterior motive: either to serve God or to hinder

Him.

Christians are commanded to test all spirits (1 Jn. 4:1-6). The spirits may be tested in terms of how they draw one near to or away from God (Tozer 1978, 184). Those which do not meet this criterion, even in Literature, should be diagnosed and rejected.

Limitations

This research is limited to the analysis of five novels (see page 2). These books include local (Kenyan) and foreign literary works. They reveal the creative attempts of different societies at different times and locations. They show how people respond to social forces affecting them during such times.

The books under consideration are those which have been prescribed between the years 1963 and 1993. The former marks the year when Kenya became self-governing in different systems including education. The latter date refers to the time during which the research was begun. Thirty years is ample time to show what trends have emerged with regard to the type of Literature books selected for Kenyan secondary schools.

Delimitations

This study focuses on an analysis of five novels studied in Kenyan secondary schools. Whatever is studied at the primary or tertiary levels is not considered. Such a study would have been too broad for this thesis. No effort has been made to study what effect the books have on students. That would have required a full-

fledged study of its own. However, recognizing what type of books are offered may be a step toward realizing what effect they may have.

Fasihi ya Kiswahili (Literature in Swahili) could also have been examined. Both English and Swahili are regarded as subjects which teach communications (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education 1990, 26, 40). It is likely that they reinforce and complement each other with regard to the inculcation of moral values.

Subjects which touch on morality could also have been studied. Such subjects are Social Education and Ethics, Christian Religious Education, and History. They would have given a more comprehensive picture of what moral values are encountered in the educational system. The focus then has been on five novels taught in Kenyan Secondary Schools.

The results of the study are limited to the five books studied, though some of the texts are also taught at tertiary levels. The generalizations can cover the whole of Kenya because education is centrally organized. All schools teach the same books at approximately the same rate.

Having established the importance of the study and its scope, the researcher continues to show in the review what other people have said on the moral dimension in Literature books. A lot of insightful work has been done. It all reflects the influence Literature books have on readers.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Much has been written on Literature by people who love the subject. The world views of such people have directed the approaches they have adopted. Christians have made their contribution by focusing on the influence Literature has on readers. This dimension has largely been overlooked by non-Christian critics.

Substantive Antecedents

This section examines the relationship between literature and morality. It explores different reactions to the question of morality in literature.

What is Literature?

The word literature means different things to different people. To some it refers to any written thing. To others it refers to writings of a particular type. Literature can be general or specialized, descriptive or prescriptive, by professionals or by novices. Due to these broad ways of understanding literature, a narrow definition is employed for the purpose of this study.

Literature has been defined as "an interpretative presentation of an experience in an artistic form" (Ryken 1974, 13). Several

observations can be made from this definition. First, literature is interpretative. It does not give a detached picture. The object of presentation passes through the writer. It is modified by his/her value system. It has the author's mark. The interpretative process therefore gives a personal touch to any piece of Literature. It explains why different authors have differing perspectives on an experience they treat artistically.

Secondly, artistic form is important. It shows that the work is not a scientific treatise. It is expressed in one form of literary art: the novel, the play or the poem. Art "represents the effort of human imagination to get hold of its experience of life by giving some concrete shape to it all" (Howard 1981, 113). An artistic form is any mode of presentation which calls upon the readers to exercise their five senses in understanding the message communicated. All the senses are utilized in trying to understand and appreciate the concrete experience given.

Thirdly, literature is concerned with experience. The writer acquires this experience in life. As he interacts with people and the environment, the experience takes form. It also gets a new twist in the writer's imagination. The new turn is not taught or explained. It is presented as the writer perceives it. This depiction gives the reader the opportunity to go through the same experience and have his own reaction to it.

Literature is thus a creative art. It attempts to draw out the lofty sentiments in mankind. This attempt has been described as "an incarnation of ideas or meanings..." (Ryken 1985,23).

Writers try to give shape to their experience of life. They base literature on life and what mankind gets out of it. Literature is a presentation of life in all its varied manifestations, in concrete and vivid ways.

Types of Literature

It has been argued as to whether or not there are different kinds of literature. In Kenya two types are recognized, oral and written. They are alike in most but not all areas. Oral literature uses the spoken word while the other, written word. The oral artist has a live audience while the literary artist imagines an audience as he writes. Both written and oral literature are taught and examined in Colleges and Universities.

A lot of books have been produced since oral literature was introduced as a counterpart to written literature. Such books focus on different aspects of oral literature: stories, songs, riddles, sayings and proverbs. Reviews of such books continue as new ones are produced. It is, however, questionable whether such works are still oral. Even though they retain most of their original features when reduced to writing, they lose their spontaneity and flexibility. Yet they expose to students the wealth of non-literate artists of the past. With the resources then at hand, they produced excellent artistic works.

A discussion of types of literature calls for an exploration of its forms. The novel is a long story with a main plot complemented by sub-plots. It gives room for the writer to be as

flexible as possible in his writing. A *play* is read and studied, though its whole potential is demonstrated when the book is acted out. *Poetry* is Literature in verse form. It is more condensed than either the play or the novel. To these main forms of literature is added the *short story* (novella). It has the features of the novel, the only difference being in length. These various forms of literature are taught in Kenyan secondary schools. They allow students the opportunity to interact with literary artists of varied sensitivities, depth, and convictions, on various issues that affect humanity.

State of Contemporary Literature

Literature has been the object of attack from many Christians. Their major complaint is that Literature books are not conducive to the growth of a wholesome moral life. A starting point in examining the state of modern literature and criticisms levelled against it are the insightful words of Fredrick Catherwood on art. He says, "Art is a reflection of life. The artist, the composer, the singer must be honest to their own generation. They serve all of us by telling us so clearly what is going on in the minds of our contemporaries" (Catherwood 1975, 49). Applied to literature, the above words imply that there is no exaggeration in what is written. The writer reveals the exact situation behind the hustle and bustle of life. There may be a lot of superficial and overt activity in our lives. Art shows us the real thing. Perhaps it tries to expose what is motivating all the activity. In this way, it forces

mankind to come to terms with self more strongly than in other ways.

The complaints against literature make one wonder whether the art has always been controversial. T.S. Eliot shows that it has not always been so. He outlines three stages through which literature has passed to its present state of secularism (1981, 146). In the first phase the Christian faith was taken for granted and omitted from the literary picture. This led to the second stage during which writers 'doubted', 'worried about' or even 'contested' for the Christian faith. At present (the third stage), most writers view the Christian faith as an anachronism. Though Eliot wrote on European literature, the effects have spilled over to Africa especially through the educational system. Literature books therefore reflect more of the spirit of the time and less of the situations in which the writer lives.

One main feature of modern literature is its degrading nature. Catherwood who commends art for its honesty, cannot help recognizing this fact. He observes with feeling that, "The main messages of twentieth century arts are almost entirely opposed to the Christian message about man. Too often they preach disharmony, the meaninglessness of life, despair, degradation, hedonism and sadness where the Christian preaches serenity. This is not a complaint against twentieth-century art" (Catherwood, 1975, 49). The above words describe the state of all art including literary art. The words capture a sense of doom and gloom. Evil seems to loom over mankind. This mood is also noted and echoed by other

critics of modern art. T.S. Eliot observes that "contemporary literature on the whole tends to be degrading" (1981, 150). Francis Schaeffer confirms it by his conclusion that there is a sense of despair and alienation in much of today's works of art (1973, 56).

Embodied in such observations is a glimpse into what mankind has become without God. Man looks at himself and sees little to inspire him. There seems to be no hope. Taking the facts as they are, mankind resigns itself to fate. This harsh situation makes some writers to envisage a "glimpse of God's dereliction" (Etchells 1987, 54). They portray humanity at the lowest level of despair since God has also lost the battle. Mankind has nothing to turn to. He has given up hope. Consequently, degeneration and waste follow him.

More optimistic writers see a slightly different picture, as the following words show: "Under the popular imagery, there emerges very clearly the age's sense of grubbiness, disappointment, set against the unquenchable vision, that 'going onwards', which is seen even in our age as characteristic of man" (Etchells 1987, 54). Etchells does not see mankind as giving up. The worst portrayals of humanity always have the dimension of man seeking for a better world. Humanity has not succumbed to the worst in life. He struggles on. He presses forward in search of hope. Occasional outburst of fortune cut through the enshrouding sordidness. Hope is not lost to despair or death. It traverses both. Contemporary art, though rather draining to the spirit, can be a stepping stone

to truthful options for humanity. The trend of ugly depictions of art can move man to examine its cause and opt for a better alternative to life.

Truth, Beauty and Evil in Art

Many people have wondered whether art contains any truth at all. The question holds firmer after establishing that much of modern literature is occupied with degradation. Nevertheless, there is truth in art, as these words demonstrate, "Art reveals what people will not say; it uncovers the unconscious assumptions; it lays bare the collective soul of a generation far more frankly than any individual would reveal his own soul" (Catherwood 1975, 49). Several words stand out in this quote. The words 'reveals', 'uncovers', and 'lays bare' show that the artists dig in and get out what is hidden within people. The effect of the words is compounded by the adverb 'more frankly'. Artists portray a deeper honesty than human beings do in their daily lives. In life, people often exert themselves to be on-guard. In art, the tendency to be on-guard breaks down. Artists do not strive to maintain the status quo. This non-conformist nature comes out as a strong support for the truthfulness of art.

The next question in addressing the topic of truth in art centres on its features. How can a reader delineate truth in art? To define its characteristics, it is imperative to know what truth is. Truth is anything that has the quality or the state of being in accordance with fact. The fact is both physical and spiritual.

In these realms God, the Creator, has given mankind facts "to reckon with... whether [he/she] likes it or not [sic]" (Mackay 1981, 16). These facts are known through the use of the senses, the mind and the spirit. God, who knows everything, guides all who seek to know the truth. Mackay says, "Such a creator is the ever-present arbiter of the distinctions between factual knowledge (that which stands to be reckoned with, whatever one's values) and the whole spectrum of value-loaded beliefs, opinions and assessment that we form (and properly form) as participants in the flux of human history" (1981,160). Truth therefore resides in God. He is its source and verifier.

Frank E. Gaebelin has tackled the issue of truth in art. He sees truth in terms of greatness, excellence, or highest quality (1981, 99). He gives it four marks: durability, unity, integrity and inevitability. Durability implies that truth is not transient. It is not affected by the passage of time. It is, however, not rigid or fixed in its unchanging nature. Truth has the ability to "welcome what is new in art" (Gaebelin 1981, 100).

Unity refers to the inner coherence and concept of order in a work of art. Gaebelin notes that "the centrifugal and schizophrenic trend in art is not enough because it reflects what is" (1981, 102). The prevailing sense of rebellion and lostness, though a barometer of the times, needs a new dimension. More should be added to show what 'is not' and 'what should be'. Without it, art is lopsided and a sense of aesthetic wholeness is lacking.

Integrity is necessary in truth. It reflects "the overall truthfulness of art" (Gaebelein 1981, 102). Nothing is included in an artistic piece for the sake of effect. Everything works dynamically for the purpose of the work of art. Integrity gives the work the quality of moral soundness.

Inevitability is the fourth mark of truth. The reader gets the impression that he or she already knows what the writer is expressing. The reader feels as if the writer gives form and expression to his/her thoughts. It appears as though that mode of communicating is the final way of expressing that idea (Gaebelein 1981, 103), and there wouldn't be a better mode to express it.

Being guided by the criteria of truth in art, the reader relates it to beauty. Is truth beauty or beauty truth? Is everything beautiful truth? Are all true things beautiful? What is beauty itself?

Beauty is a concept which is elusive to many people. There are no agreed criteria for defining beauty, in spite of people's attempts to do so. Leland Ryken defines beauty as "that part of it [to literary work] which pleases a reader by its sheer craftsmanship, quite apart from what the reader might find useful in its or social importance" (1980, 2-3). Another person describes beauty as a spontaneous experience of appreciation (Muinde 1987, 5). This shows that beauty is a quality that has its own characteristics. It gives the reader a sense of pleasure which both uplifts and exhilarates him.

Though beauty appears subjective and elusive, it can be

recognized, but in degrees. Gaebelein points to two types. First, there is beauty "in the balance and symmetry of conceptual thought and in the disciplined simplicity of symbolic logic" (1986, 95). This occurs in pure mathematics or scientific equations. Secondly, he describes beauty as "the aesthetics of the infinite" (Gaebelein 1985, 95). This kind is reflected in creation. Beauty may also be identified with what is immediately pleasing and captivating or with harmony and orderliness. Beauty also embodies power and truth. In addition to these, people's apprehension of beauty changes as they develop their aesthetic faculties. Beauty needs to be big enough to encompass these variations. Individually, none of them is sufficient to define beauty.

Therefore, beauty and art are neither synonymous nor identical. Aesthetically beautiful works are not necessarily true. Gaebelein states poignantly the reason behind this situation: "Beauty is not exempt from the consequences of the fall. Like money or power, art may become an idol. Apostasy may assume angelic forms" (1985, 96). This implies that the arts have the capacity to move mankind to adoring beauty therein. Truth on the other hand, enjoys a created piece and directs all worship to the Creator of all that is beautiful. Though beauty does not always imply truth, a reader is likely to find "flowers among thorns" (Tischler 1981, 162); the flowers being beautiful works that are true, while the thorns are beautiful works that are not true.

Knowledge of truth is the safest gauge of evil. A reader needs to be armed with truth to discover and expose evil. On the

question of evil in art, a writer asks wisely, "Does there come a point at which artistic portrayal of evil crosses a certain line and itself begins to participate in the very evil it is portraying?" (Howard 1981, 112). Many readers obsessed with realism would answer in the negative but Howard shows it is possible. He pinpoints the handling of subject matter as the point in question: He concludes that "it is entirely the treatment that decides the worth (and, hence the goodness or badness) of a piece of art. There can be good art about bad things, and bad art about good things" (Howard 1981, 115). Human depravity is a bad thing. Its incessant depiction becomes a channel for evil. Realism bluntly exposes things which would rather be kept secret.

The guilt of artistic works which perpetuate evil is deeper than the loss of secrecy. It means the writer is involved in the evil he/she describes. Evil must be included in art for it is part of life; but an author should note how he does it. The problem of evil in art "is that it fails to preserve distance. It not only points to the stew. It stirs it. It jumps in" (Howard 1981, 116). A writer sees evil, exposes it and gets carried away. The literary work, despite the truth or beauty therein, becomes a piece for preserving evil.

How do writers become involved in the evil they may be condemning? Howard traces it to relativism in society. Moral relativism has led to the disregard of absolute criterion for judging human behaviour. There is little respect for terms such as 'absolute truth'. There is an equal lack of response among human

beings in terms of humility and reticence. It is small wonder that writers strive for endeavours high and beyond their imaginations. Shoddy works of art are peddled because each individual has his/her standards of judgment by which he/she considers his/her work excellent. Bad as subtle portrayal of evil is, it is not the only problem with literature. There are other criticisms levelled against it.

Criticisms Against Literature

People who are sceptical that literature can do any good have expressed their concern. Ryken (1985, 17-18) gives seven complaints that are often voiced:

1. Literature does not communicate facts or useful information.
2. Literature teaches error.
3. Literature is merely pleasurable and entertaining and serves no useful purposes.
4. Literature is too emotional.
5. Literature is a waste of time.
6. Literature is fictional and unrelated to life.
7. Literature is immoral.

The criticisms centre on two things: the utility of literature and its realism. The former addresses the benefits one can get from literature. Literature is accused of seldom giving anything useful to its readers. The latter complaint, is about the correspondence between what is found in literature and real life. Literature is blamed for rarely relating to down-to-earth issues.

It is seen as idealistic by its focus on things that hardly affect life.

A widely read person can identify with these complaints. Their genuineness is attested to by trends in modern literature. Too much decadence seems to pervade it. An issue more crucial than its sense of degeneration is the fact that people read it all the more. Literature cannot be cast off. Its problems need to be confronted. For a Christian this brings new questions. Clarence Walhout gives some aspects of the Christian's concern:

Is all literature in some sense religious? How do religious themes enter literature? Are religious elements in literature always shaped by particular religious traditions or are they inherently religious? Can one interpret literary elements, such as symbols, in religious terms even if they are not specifically related to religious convention and traditions? Can literary form be expressive of religious meaning? What are the grounds on which the study of religion and literature can be based? (1980, 6)

To the above issues, the researcher adds more. Should the portrayal of religion be seen as honest or genuine? Is the moral life of a writer important in appreciating and evaluating his work? Is it possible that a writer may raise issues which the religious audience needs to come to terms with?

The above questions lean heavily toward the relationship between literature and religion. Religion is expected to be a repository of good moral values. This is not always the case because people use religion for various reasons. Religion can be an expression of good moral values. It can also be a cover-up for bad ones. Religious people may lack wholesome moral values. Some

people may exhibit virtuous moral values but be irreligious. To a large extent, however, religion presupposes a higher morality (Morara 1990, 16). The two are related in human behaviour. This is true in life as well as in fiction. Religious confession affects a character's moral life.

The Two Options

The above discussion shows that questions of religion and morality do not have ready-made answers. Each reader must seek a meaningful way of tackling them. There remains only two alternatives to the issue. Either to censor books which do not tally with an individual's sense of morality, or to take seriously the challenge to develop Christian standards of judging literary art.

Censorship

Censorship is the avoidance of any encounter with books which feature unpalatable ideas or episodes. Censorship can be active, in which case a book is removed from a collection, or passive, where a book is not ordered (Knight 1985/86,12). Censorship seems to be the easy way out. It has appealed to many Christians. However, those who love literary art have reacted against it from various angles. Deane Downey sees censorship as 'inappropriate and escapist' (1986, 74). It is a defensive attack. Censorship makes readers withdraw from the challenge presented by modern literature.

T.S. Eliot echoes Downey's views. His position is that

censorship is misleading. "It gives people a false sense of security in leading them to believe that books which are not suppressed are harmless" (1981, 147). This action has a limited effect for many censorship campaigns aim at not having such books in schools. The books continue to appear in bookshops from which individuals get copies. Contents of such books may follow the individual right into his/her home through television shows.

Censorship is a shortsighted answer to the problem of degradation in literature. It does not challenge people to develop their own standards of appreciation. A few people make decisions and choices for the rest who adopt a passive stand. An unhealthy dependence on the few may result. Being human, the few may opt for censorship for reasons other than literary or moral failure.

This is echoed by James Johnson's view that censorship may actually be censoriousness (1985/86, 10). The outward act of censoring books does not reflect the censor's inner motives (Johnson 1985/86, 7). Despite its shortcomings, Johnson sees censorship as legitimate in certain circumstances (1985/86, 10). It reflects the Christian as colabourer with God. He does not sit back and wait for God to act; he takes a step and does something.

The above views show that a quick resort to censorship comes short of meeting the challenge of modern literature. Censorship suggests a once-for-all answer to the question of depravity in literary art. It does not address the changing nature of society and what it values. The alternative to censorship would be an offensive attack. This would be characterized by the development

of Christian standards of literary judgement. It would do away with withdrawal because it advocates a confrontation (Downey 1986, 74).

Christian Standards of Appreciation

This is the alternative to censorship. The challenges it presents to Christians call for a dynamic spiritual life. The Christian needs to be growing spiritually, if he is to develop a scriptural perspective of modern literature. The task ahead of the Christian is difficult. Stagnant Christians are not equal to the occasion. They can cause misunderstanding, irresponsibility and regrets. Several writers give guidelines on how such standards can be developed.

David Chapman (1987, 27-28) sees three necessary things. First, a reader's maturity should be considered when selecting literature books. Secondly, seditious, obscene, trivial and poorly written works should be eliminated. Thirdly, teachers must exemplify the high standards of discernment they wish to communicate to their students. This acquaints readers with features that characterize artistic works of excellence. As Chapman notes, "the ultimate answer is not in purging the literary shelves but in reviving standards of good taste" (1987, 27). It is easy for one familiar with high standards to spot the deficiency in works that are poorly written.

Another wise and insightful approach is advanced by Ruth Etchells. Her backdrop is that Christians should ponder the scope of values available in reading of literature (Etchells 1987, 65).

Her four-point guideline starts by showing the nature of the Christian faith: it is paradoxical (Etchells 1987, 66). It can embrace opposites. Applied to literature, this means the ability to give room to despair and hope, disintegration and integration. Aspects of degradation should then never shock the Christian. They are accounted for in Christianity.

The next thing she considers is the capacity for judgement or critical discernment in Christian theology (Etchells 1987, 66). The capacity for judgement checks against a judgemental attitude to literary art by Christians. She bases this on what it costs literary artists to create. They sacrifice a lot of their effort, time and resources. Though the cost of producing literary art is high, that need not justify its acceptance. Morally detrimental art may have a lot invested into it. The cost of producing is not sufficient reason for not criticizing literature.

The third point shows the necessity of engagement with truth in literary criticism (Etchells 1987, 66). This allows for an examination of the environment within which the writer operates. Its ideals and values are considered. The principles and patterns that underlie the author's work are revealed. The background of the writer is exposed for he/she cannot remain unaffected by his/her world. He or she works in it, for or against it.

The last point centres on the trinitarian attribute of God (Etchells 1987, 67). God is not alone or isolated. He relates to the other Persons of the Trinity. He also reaches out to human beings. A literary work without this dimension misses a central

feature of reality. It champions narcissism. Such introversion goes against the social nature of God and mankind.

Etchells sums up her approach by stating that Christian reading can be 'right-discerning' or a 'setting-right' (1987, 67) criticism. It does not condemn, diminish or dismiss certain artistic works. It corrects instead. The 'right-discerning' aspect of Christian appreciation is excellent and worthy of emulation. The 'setting-right' is not so. The Christian is not called upon to correct where mankind has brought disorder and confusion. He is expected to live uprightly himself. Such a life would have the revealing quality of light and the preservative nature of salt. This may require casting away some artistic works as means of encouraging excellence in literature. Only to this extent can the 'setting-right' be carried out.

Francis Schaeffer's approach is the last for consideration. He also gives four criteria of judging art (1973, 43-47). The first criterion is technical excellence. The reader investigates the work to check whether it agrees with rules that govern its production. If it is literary, the reader examines whether it does justice to techniques of style. A work can be well treated but be on a low subject. It can also be poorly treated even though it is on a lofty subject.

The second point to consider is validity. This calls for an investigation into the purpose of the work. Is the work for the sake of money or acceptance? Is the writer honest about himself and his worldview? Though literature may be a writer's means of

livelihood, he/she need not compromise his/her integrity.

The third aspect centres on the content. The content is the window to the artist's worldview. It shows the writer's comprehension of reality. Important as a writer's vision of reality is, it is neither final nor infallible. It needs to be weighed against the Word of God. As the Creator, God sees all without distortion. As a creature, mankind's view is limited, fragmentary and prejudiced. An author's work has to be set against the standard of Him who knows all.

The last criterion focuses on the integration of vehicle and message. The reader assesses whether the message is expressed through the best mode possible. He examines how the message could have come out through other aesthetic forms. Integration of vehicle and message brings harmony. Disintegration of the two results in disharmony.

From the above ways of appreciating and evaluating art, several highlights can be pointed out.

1. Readers should assess whether a literary work is artistic at all. A novel should fit literary standards of writing it.
2. Literary qualities are insufficient in establishing the greatness of a work of art. A definite ethical and theological perspective is necessary to complete the criticism.
3. A work of art has a great impact on a person's feelings and thoughts. The impact should be taken into account but with flexibility because of variation in people's responses to art.

4. It is possible that in criticizing evil an author may actually be perpetuating it. This comes out through repeated exposures of details which do not give room for aesthetic distance.
5. The moral standpoint of a work of art should be scrutinized. It sheds light on what the author moves readers to admire.
6. Christians need wisdom and discernment in evaluating art. The normal tendency to either disregard a work completely or accept it without question is inadequate.
7. The Christian faith has the capacity to accommodate both evil and good in art. However, the evil is not the main tenor. It should be counter-balanced and overruled by the good.

Value of Literary Art

The above summary points on how to evaluate literature reveal that artistic forms are useful. Their inherent value can be of great benefit to anyone open to learn from them. Ryken (1985, 31-33) gives several reasons why Christians need to take literature seriously:

1. Literature makes people face the best and worst, hidden and exposed, repressed and expressed, in human beings.
2. Literature can be a corrective to Christians who become so heavenly minded that they lose touch with humanity.
3. Literature (and the arts) have a most accurate record of human needs, longings and values. Christians can benefit from it in their mission in the world.

4. Reading literature discourages Christians from declining into an in-group mentality.
5. The Bible communicates truth by literary means, which makes an understanding of literature necessary and desirable.
6. Reading literature exposes Christians to excessive claims made for it. This helps them give literature its rightful place as a work of art and not a religion as it is held to be.

These statements show the centrality of the mind in expressing and appreciating literature. Literature greatly influences an individual's mental development. It can shape a person's outlook steadily but unconsciously. Readers need to practise healthy reading habits. Only in this way can they counteract the effects of bad art in the development of their minds.

Kenneth Gangel shows that it is imperative for Christians to be concerned about their mental development. This calls for the ability to analyze events and issues theologically (1987, 61). Such analyses involve rigorous examination from a biblical perspective of any challenges. With this assertion, Gangel lists four ways through which a Christian can retard his mental development: carelessness, pride, sin, dogmatism and rigidity (1987, 67-68). The first (carelessness) and the last (dogmatism and rigidity) are relevant to the relationship between literature and mental development.

A careless Christian is unconcerned about what he/she chooses to read. He reads what captures his fancy, whether it is helpful or not. Such an individual is not inclined to disciplined reading

habits. He is likely to succumb to subtle influences from works which he does not scrutinize to establish their moral viewpoint. This tendency, to let unsifted ideas into one's mind, is contrary to the exhortation, "be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). The exhortation calls for a disciplined thought life. Such a life involves carefully examining any ideas or thoughts in one's mind to keep them under control (Nee 1968, 70). This is the only way to keep the world from squeezing the Christian into its mould.

The opposite of carelessness is rigidity and dogmatism. This seems to be the main problem in relating literature and mental development. It is marked by a caution which makes people dismiss literature off-hand. Like the careless Christian, the rigidly dogmatic Christian fails to inculcate in himself serious standards by which to evaluate literature. It is easier to adopt a non-flexible approach to literature than to constantly adjust one's criterion of judgement to be relevant to the prevailing mood in literature.

A rigid and dogmatic approach to literature has certain demerits. Christians may fail to come to terms with issues raised in Literature books. Since they may not be well-read and therefore not acquainted with the whole picture, they may present sub-standard evaluations. This situation may lead to such fields being dominated by non-Christians. Christians would likely complain about the situation, adopting a defensive position on the issue. An offensive stand will require Christians to permeate such fields.

Only then would they affect the artistic field from within and exert the influence desired.

It is possible for Christians to exert such an influence. They have been empowered by the triune God. Their fear of the Lord has set them on the path of wisdom and understanding (Prov. 9:10). They have the mind of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 2:16) in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and understanding (Col. 2:3). The Holy Spirit indwells and guides them into all truth (Jn. 16:13). He is the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel and knowledge (Is. 11:2). Christians do also have their senses and common sense! Such resources are unequalled in the world. It is all they need to understand literature and develop their minds. With such a mind Christians are bound to benefit irrespective of the condition of the art. Some of the values accruing from such a study of literature are given by H. Byrne as a different perspective to those given by Ryken above. There are several values:

1. Literature is a means of relaxation and enjoyment.
2. It is a source of information.
3. It is a means of getting acquainted with people, places and things.
4. It leads to an understanding of one's fellowmen.
5. It is a storehouse of great values of life.
6. It gives evidence of man's response to his environment.
7. It develops the ability to evaluate and criticize literary art.
8. Free discussion of ideas in literature will help the student to clarify his own philosophy of life.

9. Literature can produce a state of mind favourable to Christianity (Byrne 1977,334).

It appears that the mind is stimulated to development by literature. Therefore, one needs to adopt meaningful methods of handling the art in secondary schools.

Balanced Approaches to the Teaching of Literature

Teachers of Literature approach the subject from various angles. Their worldviews and value systems greatly affect the methods they adopt. A Christian teacher should use methods that bring out the best in his/her students. He should not indoctrinate but critically examine the extent to which the author justifiably deals with the issues he/she raises. This gives opportunity for a book to be evaluated without bias. Some methods aimed at balanced criticism of literature are discussed below.

Bonnie Shellnut (1986) gives a general way of approaching a course in which morality is taught. Literature is one such subject though it approaches morality from an implicit angle (Chapman 1987,26). In this approach, the Bible is taken as the final standard by which worldviews and controversial choices are judged. Biblical references called into question are checked, to ascertain the truth of the writer. This approach is based on the fact that everything mankind does should come under the scrutiny of the word of God. The scriptures are above, and not at the same level or below cultural pursuits (Ps. 138:2b). Derek Kidner puts it this

way, "Author and reader are still men under God, never outside His jurisdiction or excused His correction; and in the last analysis there can be no quarrel between moral perfection and the true excellence of art or any other province of the Lord" (1959,17).

The above words imply that all the spheres of life are interrelated. Any autonomy is limited, not absolute. This interdependence is more crucial in a reader as T.S. Eliot interjects, "... and do they [people] read novels or poetry for that matter, with a separate compartment of their minds? The common ground between religion and fiction is behaviour" (1981,146). Whatever goes into the mind, be it for religious or secular purposes, manifests itself in action. Authentic literary criticism cannot, therefore, stop at the level of aesthetics only. It should go further to establish the possible effects of such a work on an individual's behaviour.

A teacher of English tried out the above approach and found it effective. Teaching literature to Japanese students, he often had to explain what the Christian faith is (Milward 1982,68). After twenty-three years of teaching he confidently stated, "What I teach then is not only the secular shell but also the Christian kernel of English Literature. And what I hope for, as the outcome of my teaching is not so much a better knowledge of English Literature (which I have come to realize, is a forlorn hope in most cases) as a deeper understanding of both man and God" (Milward 1982,70). The experience of this teacher can serve as a model for Christian teachers of Literature. It decries superficial appreciation of

literature. It calls upon teachers to diligently examine the core of literature. The core is the centre of what takes place in a book.

The Bible's influence on literary art cannot be ignored. It has been profound and varied as a writer observes: "Sometimes the influence is overt, direct and easily identifiable; at other times it may be no more than a diffused view or approach, indirect and subtle" (Longfellow 1982,50). Going back to the Bible to evaluate any propositions made in literature is relevant. It sets all the records straight.

A more detailed way to a balanced criticism of literature is advanced by Gweneth Schwab (1982). She calls upon Literature teachers to explore ways of getting and utilizing students' responses in literature (1982,37). She adopts a strategy developed to describe and show people's reaction to literature. The strategy is in four stages.

The first stage is *engagement-involvement*. It shows the interaction of students with a literary work. This stage occurs in both experienced critics and inexperienced readers. The second step is *perception*. The students relate to the work by attempting to grasp its historical, biographical and literary facts. They do not relate the work to their own world as in the third step which is *interpretation*. Here students try to discover meaning, draw conclusions, form generalizations or find analogies from their world for the literary art. The last step is *evaluation*. This indicates whether the student finds the work good or bad. The work

is judged against an accepted standard of worth or from a personal criterion.

The above approaches crystallize various issues which teachers grapple with in a study of literature. They give room for general, aesthetic, personal and moral assessment of literary art. They show how complex and intertwined a person's life is. This is often ignored in teaching literature centring only on literary features. An example of such an approach is given below. Seven steps for consideration are given with corresponding questions (Gersten and Dimino 1989,54):

1. Main character: Who is the main character?
2. Character clues: What is the main character like?
3. Reactions: How does the main character react or feel about important events in the story?
4. Problems: Name the problems or conflicts. Circle the main problem.
5. Attempts: How do the characters try to solve the problem?
6. Resolution: How does the main problem get solved?
7. Theme: What is the author trying to say?

This approach focuses only on the literary aspects of a book. Though literary aspects are significant, they are not the only legitimate dimension. The moral perspective of such a work should be investigated as well. Many Christian teachers of literature have seen the need for it. Secular teachers are inclined to ignore it in favour of realism in literature. But morality need not preclude

realism. The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A writer comments, "Genuine Christian writing [and criticism] does not ignore depravity, but neither does it sacrifice morality for reality" (Jordahl 1986,67). Though literature should reveal the good and evil, writers and readers should know the difference. There is a close relationship between morality and literature. Means by which the moral standpoint of literary work can be determined become necessary.

Methodological Antecedents

Establishing the Moral View in Literary Art

The moral aspect in literature should be examined carefully. Several writers have proposed ways by which a reader can be assisted in such an examination. The approaches call for an uncompromising attitude in moral issues. Such an attitude is increasingly necessary as secularism continues to be the basis for education. There is an urgent need for morality and academics to be balanced.

Derek Kidner (1959) tackles the issue with reference to the relationship between morality and aesthetics. He sees a work of art as a continuum with aesthetics on the one end and human behaviour (ethics) on the other end (1959,14). This suggests that neither aesthetics nor morality is sufficient to evaluate a literary work. Both are necessary. With this foundation, Kidner gives three points which can help a reader arrive at a proper moral judgement on a work of art (1959, 26-28).

First, what is its moral standpoint? What does it invite the reader to admire? It is the author who makes a pattern emerge. He suggests meaning deliberately. The writer progressively creates and moulds the final product of the work.

Secondly, the content of the work is important. What it keeps before the reader's mind should be noted. An inventory of all the materials is necessary. This helps the reader to keep on his/her guard, for as Kidner thoughtfully notes, "A book may be, as to its moral standpoint perfectly sound, yet by its subject matter it may fix our attention so persistently on what is sordid that by sheer pressure the corruption gets in, in spite of being consciously rejected" (1959,27). The above observation points to the skill of the writer in his artistic creativity. He may make his readers hate or reject something. Yet, he may skilfully manipulate incidents related to what he has made the readers detest, and have them in the foreground. The repetition may be so effective that the episodes become entrenched in the reader's mind and continually occupy his thoughts. Content and moral perspective are indeed closely interwoven.

Thirdly, the impact of the work on a reader is vital. What power does the work of art have over its readers? What is read has the capacity to set people's thoughts and feelings in motion. The movement is in a specific direction depending on what the author desires. A work of art can thus lead a reader to respond to healthy or harmful stimuli.

The third point is crucial in artistic analysis. However, it

is the most overlooked. Readers always get something from what they read or observe. This is converted to a mode that best suits the reader. It becomes part of him and exerts its influence from within. Literature is a very persuasive art and this dimension should be dealt with.

Deane Downey is another writer who understands the challenge of modern literature to Christians. He observes that since literature is the repository of society's prevailing values and attitudes (1986,75) it should not be neglected. A Christian reader should arm himself to "encounter it with prayerful caution and uncompromising good sense" (Downey 1986,75). He gives a three-fold guideline by which to arrive at such a stance. Each point is supported by further questions aimed at guiding the reader specifically.

The reader should first try to ascertain the *presuppositions* governing an author's depiction of morality. Do the characters seem to indulge in various expressions of human depravity? Is there operative a system of ethical values which requires them to be responsible for their actions? Is the author so preoccupied with presenting sordid details of human degeneracy that the portrayal seems designed to titillate the reader rather than expanding his overall understanding of character and motive? Is there any balancing evidence for humanity's goodness, or is the work a one dimensional depiction of profanity, sacrilege, and obscenity? The moral or social significance of the work as a whole should exceed in importance the offensiveness of some of its parts.

The motivation for and attitude toward reading such material is the second point for consideration. Does the reader read such works to keep abreast of his/her culture in order to knowledgeably serve as the salt of the earth within it? Is the reader being morally repulsed by such material, or does he find himself becoming subtly immune to the tragedy of human debasement and lostness? The reader should examine whether such material refines his/her ethical sensibilities and modifies his/her literary tastes or whether it causes them to atrophy.

The third aspect is for the reader to realize the subjectivity involved in a personal response to literature. This should check him or her against imposing his/her conclusions on others. This point gives the reader an open mind to accommodate varying views to a literary work. It also helps the readers to establish the extent to which such accommodation can reach.

Leland Ryken addresses the issue of morality in art. Like Derek Kidner and Deane Downey above, he gives three points to consider in such an investigation. The three points are subject matter, author's perspective, and reader's response, in an ascending order (Ryken 1986,239). Subject matter is significant when viewed against the author's view of it and ultimately the influence it has on the reader.

Ryken's approach touches on the factors considered by Kidner and Downey. It differs however by giving more elaborate details of each factor. It is more comprehensive in that it gives specific features which the reader can look for in an effort to establish

the moral perspective of literary art. Each point is discussed below.

The first factor is *subject matter*. This refers to the outward content of a work, setting, objects, characters and actions (Ryken 1986,241). It is different from theme, which is the perspective the work offers to this content. Immorality at this level is usually realism: the depiction of explicit human depravity in all its sordid forms (Ryken 1986,239). Realism itself is not immoral since it reflects modern life. However, it becomes immoral when it operates without any limits (Ryken 1986,242). This comes out through a preponderance of depravity, dramatization of profanity and condoning of evil (Ryken 1986,242). Though realism is argued for because it is a serious and sincere representation of reality, it can never become a moral criterion for art. The fact that something happens is not a proof of good morality either in life or in art. Ryken sums up his discussion on art and morality with the following words:

The strategy of art is to give form to our own feelings and impulses. These inner impulses are a mixture of good and bad, waiting to be encouraged or discouraged by outward stimuli. The effect of some artistic subject matter is to awaken the wrong impulses - impulses toward hatred or violence or sexual license, for example. And the influence of other types of subject matter is to encourage good impulses - toward honesty or courage or self-control or compassion and many other virtues. Even artistic subject matter, therefore, can become a moral issue.(1986,247-48)

Literature affects us deeply. It gives form and shape to specific tendencies in us. Literature should therefore have subject matter which motivates readers to good actions.

Perspective, the second factor, deals with how a writer handles the subject he has chosen. The crucial issue is the degree of reticence and distance with which an artist portrays the experience of evil (Ryken 1986, 284). Literature embodies an immoral perspective toward its subject matter when it lures the reader to approve of evil. This is done in several ways,

making immoral acts attractive; leaving goodness without beauty; generating sympathy for immoral characters and actions; belittling characters whose actions and attitudes are moral; omitting models of morally good behaviour as an alternative to immoral models; treating immoral acts in a comic tone, thereby prompting a reader to refrain from moral judgement; portraying immoral acts as something people have no choice in rejecting. (Ryken 1986, 248-49)

A moral perspective is the opposite of the above. In it moral behaviour is recommended. As the same writer states, "Moral art is not art that avoids evil as a subject but that finds ways to discredit evil and encourage good" (Ryken 1986, 248).

The third factor focuses on the *audience* (Ryken 1986, 249). While the above two factors are tendencies within a literary work, this factor is without. "The ultimate responsibility rests with the individual reader ... to be moral in his/her response" (Ryken 1986, 249). The reader is the decisive factor in morality in art. This depends on whether he is moral or not. A moral person can be repelled by an immoral perspective in literature and have his moral stamina strengthened. Immoral readers can seize upon isolated scenes that portray depravity in a perverse way. People need to examine their responses to what they read. If one feels pushed to have immoral tendencies he can stop reading such material and

exercise stronger control. Works of art are powerful in moral persuasion but "no artistic response is automatic" (Ryken 1956,249). In the long run, the individual reader determines his moral controls.

The above review attests to the importance of a moral perspective in Christian appreciation of literature. The above approaches are clear guidelines in a reader's analysis of morality in art. The researcher has adapted the following aspects from the above approaches of Kidner, Downey and Ryken: presentation of moral values and its purpose; moral values in characters and possible models of good behaviour; value systems and the moral values they encourage in a society.

The next chapter focuses on the method the researcher has adopted in analysing the moral values of the novels under investigation in this research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The nature of this study has limited research to the five novels analysed and the researcher's deductions as she interacted with the materials. The following is a breakdown of the method employed to establish the moral perspective of each novel.

The Novels Under Study

This study focuses on Literature books selected for secondary schools. About a hundred books were prescribed between 1963 and 1993. One third of the books are novels, the other third are plays and the rest anthologies of poetry and/or short stories. Only the novel has been examined. The novel shows the writer's ability to situate characters firmly in their social environment and allows for "limitless characterization" (Indangasi 1989,2). As such the novel gives plenty of room for characters to reveal certain moral values in their attitudes and actions.

Thirty-five novels were prescribed between 1963 and 1993. Some novels were prescribe more often than others (See Appendix A). The first five novels on the list were selected for this study. They have the highest frequencies on the list and they have been read by most students. This is deduced from the repeated prescriptions as well as the increasing number of students in schools each year.

The novel among the top five with the highest frequency is analysed first. The novel with the lowest frequency is considered last. The third novel is considered before the second because it is a sequel to the first novel. The frequencies of the five novels are listed below. The frequency shows the number of years each novel has been prescribed for Literature.

| <u>Novel</u> | <u>F</u> |
|-------------------|----------|
| Things Fall Apart | 12 |
| The River Between | 8 |
| No Longer at Ease | 7 |
| The Concubine | 6 |
| Mine Boy | 5 |

Procedure

This is a literary as opposed to a field research. The five novels were read through. Different moral values surfacing in the novels were noted and recorded (see Appendix B). To discover the moral values in a novel, several factors were considered: what a character says and does, how a character expresses and carries out an activity, what other characters say of a particular character, and how the author describes a character (Jatemwa 1988, 28). The above can be seen in narration, exposition, description, dialogues, monologue and authorial commentary (Indangasi 1989, 2). These help the researcher to note what moral values surface in a novel.

To establish the morality in a novel the following questions were used. The questions come under three headings: moral values,

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characters and value system. The three are **useful** in determining the authors' inclinations. The questions are adapted from Kidner, Ryken and Downey. Kidner and Ryken suggest ways of determining the perspective authors give to moral values. Downey proposes ways to help a reader arrive at the moral presuppositions that underlie human behaviour in a society presented in a novel. The questions are as follows:

Moral Values

1. How does the author present moral values?
2. What is the purpose of this presentation?

Characters

1. What values do the characters, and especially the protagonist, generally exhibit?
2. Are there models of wholesome values in the society depicted in the novel?

Value System

1. What value systems emerge in the novel?
2. What moral values do they foster?

Author's Inclination

On the basis of the above, what is the author's inclination with regard to moral values and their moral bases?

The six questions above touch on aspects through which an author reveals whether a value is wholesome or not. As Ryken has pointed out, "The morality in art should not be confused with its intellectual truth or falseness. Morality has to do with human behaviour, especially between one person and another" (1986, 239).

Moral art encourages wholesome conduct among the characters. It discourages unwholesome conduct among them. It moves the reader to approve the former and disapprove the latter.

Data Analysis

In reading the five novels, different values that surfaced were noted and recorded. The frequency at which the values occurred in characters' thought, speech, or actions was recorded. The frequencies of different wholesome and unwholesome values in each novel were added up to give the total for the two categories. The total frequencies of the individual novels were added up to give the combined total for all the five novels. The resulting data were tabulated and employed in testing the first hypothesis.

The wholesome values in a novel were recorded with reference to the value systems present. The total figures of wholesome values in a particular value system were added up to give the combined totals for the five novels. The results were employed in testing the second hypothesis.

To arrive at the moral perspective of each novel, the questions given under 'procedure' were employed. They help the researcher to give an interpretation of the data under moral values. The statistics give data which are interpreted by use of the questions. Answers to the questions are given per individual novel. A conclusion summarizes the interrelationships among the five novels in terms of moral values and value systems.

The Bible is employed as the basis for the analysis of moral

values and moral systems in the novels studied. It gives principles and specific commands to govern human conduct. The adoption of the Bible is based on the following premises:

1. God has made plain what people may know of Him (Rom 1:18-20). No one can claim to be ignorant of the moral demands God expects of humanity;
2. People have a conscience which communicates to them when they do good or evil (Rom. 2:14-15). This is seen as a spring board in teaching moral education in a secular school. It has been termed as "tacit morality" (Kibble 1978, 15). However, ignoring one's conscience can make it dead, thereby having no effect on actions done whether good or bad;
3. The world is the Lord's and it operates under His law. This law is spelled out in the Bible. The secular world ought not to have its own ethic. It should be subjected not just to the Christian ethic (Mott 1984, 25) but to the biblical ethic. The Christian ethic is part of the biblical ethic;
4. Man, as God's creation, is responsible to live by that law.

The particular way in which the Bible was adopted in the analysis of the novels is explained below.

Moral Values

This study has utilized direct precepts (specific commands) in analysing the moral values in the five novels. The precepts are not exhaustive but representative of biblical morality. What the Bible commends as acceptable behaviour is taken as wholesome moral values. What the Bible condemns as unacceptable conduct is taken as unwholesome moral values. For example, the Bible encourages diligence and industry in work. These two are taken as wholesome moral values. The Bible discourages idleness and laziness in work. These two are taken as unwholesome values.

Some examples of wholesome moral values are: sexual purity, marital fidelity, blessings, truth, justice, integrity, courtesy, mercy, humility, self-control, sobriety, goodness, kindness, godliness, love, honour, forgiveness, gratitude, responsible living.

Examples of unwholesome moral values are: adultery, fornication, prostitution, rape, pornography, incest (sexual immorality); murder, theft, corruption, embezzlement, child abuse, divorce (relational evils); profanity, cursing, blasphemy, gossip, grumbling, lying (filthy language); drunkenness, arrogance, covetousness, ingratitude, bitterness, revenge, violence, idol worship (other vices). These are the antonyms of wholesome moral values.

Morality

Several moral systems should surface in the novels. These are traditional, biblical, Islamic and secular value systems. The four are present in African society. They are likely to surface in the novels because literature is an imitation of life.

Traditional morality was based on the belief in God, ancestral spirits and magical powers (Wanjohi 1985, 7-8). It motivated people to obedience by fear. If they did not fulfil certain demands, fearful consequences befell them.

Islamic morality is based on belief in God and evil spirits as taught in the Quran. It also keeps people obedient by use of threats and fear. Terrible consequences befall anyone who dares to leave the Islamic way of life.

Secular morality repudiates any belief in God or religion. In so doing, relativism is adopted as the basis for morality. None of the proposed standards of moral behaviour is adequate because they "depend upon a subjective absolute determined by autonomous man" (Lutzer 1981, 67). Moreover, they cannot "solve the deeper problem of knowing right and having the power to do it" (Bromiley 1982, 186).

The Bible reveals a moral system based on God's character. God is above and beyond all humanity. Yet He is near and reachable. This fits with a writer's view that moral nonconformity takes "faith in something more important than [oneself]" (Macgoye 1985, 8). God, as the object of belief, is more important than

human beings, spirits or magic.

Biblical morality does not consist of a moral code though. It primarily involves a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. This relationship is based on love and God's word. Love is the antidote against fear so prevalent in traditional and Islamic moral systems. God's word shows His standard for all activity. It is the antidote against relativism found in secular morality. As such the Bible transcends the shortcomings inherent in the traditional, Islamic and secular value bases. These value systems condone various moral values which the Bible condemns (Okolo 1987, 90).

The plan explained in this chapter has been adopted in the analysis of the novels. The next chapter is devoted to the results of that analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The results of the study are presented in this chapter. The first part is a summary of each individual novel. The second part focuses on the incidence of moral values in the novels. The third part deals with the value systems that emerge in the novels with particular reference to wholesome moral values. The last part is an interpretation of how the authors handle moral values and value systems in each of their novels.

Overview of the Novels Studied

Things Fall Part (Chinua Achebe)

This novel is about the tragedy of Okonkwo, the protagonist. From the beginning to the end of the novel, Okonkwo is portrayed as striving for prestige which always eludes him. As a young man, he has signs of prosperity: wives, children, wealth and titles which he has not inherited but worked for. His father Unoka, being a lazy person, could not leave any heritage to him.

The elders notice Okonkwo's rise and accord him responsibilities of leadership. By virtue of this, Okonkwo becomes the custodian of Ikemefuna. Ikemefuna had been given as a peace-offering to Okonkwo's village. After a difficult beginning, Ikemefuna settles down to life at Okonkwo's home. He influences

Nwoye, Okonkwo's first son, to admire masculine qualities. This makes Okonkwo happy but he does not show it. Ikemefuna has just forgotten his home when a village god decrees his death. Obierika, Okonkwo's closest friend, does not comply with the order. Ezeudu, the oldest man in the village, warns Okonkwo against being involved. Okonkwo disregards the warning and becomes the person who strikes the fatal blow. Ikemefuna's death temporarily shakes Okonkwo but he hides his true feelings. Nwoye is deeply affected and haunted by the experience.

Other catastrophes come Okonkwo's way. For example, he accidentally shoots a young son of Ezeudu during Ezeudu's funeral. As a result, he is banished to his mother's village for seven years. Okonkwo is tempted to despair but his maternal uncle, Uchendu, tries to encourage him. In the meantime, Nwoye converts to Christianity. Okonkwo disowns him and chases him away from home. What keeps Okonkwo going is the hope of recapturing his former glory when the exile is over. This will be enhanced by initiating his sons into high class society and giving his daughters in marriage.

After the seven years Okonkwo goes back to his village to find it different. Missionaries and the colonial government have entrenched themselves. Okonkwo suggests that the villagers should remove them forcibly. They convene a meeting to discuss the issue. When government representatives try to stop it, Okonkwo attacks and kills one of them. His people are shocked and do not join him. Okonkwo's hopes are shattered by their indecision. Demoralized,

Okonkwo goes home and commits suicide.

No Longer at Ease (Chinua Achebe)

This novel depicts the life of Obi, Okonkwo's grandson. He grows up as a child of staunch Christian parents, Isaac and Hannah Okonkwo. He is the only son in the family, born after four girls. At an early age, he shows brilliance and talent. He completes school and obtains the first scholarship loan in his village for further studies in England. Though originally meant to study Law, Obi changes and studies English.

After his university education, Obi returns to Nigeria. He obtains a government job in Lagos. By virtue of his job, he receives a house and a car. He then begins to participate in the urban life of Lagos. Obi finds it quite different from his rural up-bringing at Umuofia.

Obi is rich by prevailing standards. However, he has many responsibilities. He has to maintain his status, take care of his parents, entertain his girlfriend, Clara, pay back his education loan to the Umuofia Progressive Union (U.P.U.) and clear bills accruing from his living expenses. Obi's monthly salary, with which to accomplish the above, is about fifty pounds.

The U.P.U. members have high expectations of Obi who holds a big post in the government. Obi on the other hand continually disappoints them. He studied English against their wish. He speaks simple English (for their benefit) but they prefer sophisticated language. Obi wants to marry Clara whose ancestry is

questionable. The U.P.U. members make their feelings about Clara known to Obi. Consequently, a rift develops between them. Shortly after, Obi's parents refuse the marriage on the same grounds. They had been informed about it by Joseph, a U.P.U. member. Obi decides to continue with marriage preparations despite the hindrances.

One thing common in Lagos is corruption at every sphere of life. Obi blames the uneducated and inexperienced people in the Civil Service for it. He thinks young educated people would not accept bribes. Christopher, an economist friend of Obi, does not agree with him. He is proved right when Obi (a young educated man) resorts to bribery to make ends meet. This happens at a critical time in his life. His girlfriend has left him and his mother has died. Just when he thinks he should stop accepting bribes, Obi is caught, arrested and convicted. He loses the case and is sentenced to imprisonment.

The River Between (Ngugi wa Thiongo)

This novel builds upon past rivalries in a tribal village. It shows how the rivalries intensify when Europeans come to the village. The village is made up of two ridges, Kameno and Makuyu. Both ridges are separated by a river, *Honia*, which means healing or cure. The river is a source of nourishment for people and animals from both ridges.

The rivalry in the ridges is caused by the desire to be the leader in the hills. There are potential leaders from each ridge. Chege, Waiyaki's father, comes from a family of tribal leaders at

Kameno. Joshua is a convert and the pastor of the Christian congregation at Makuyu. Kabonyi, a backslidden Christian, forms the *Kiama*, council of elders, who are concerned with the purity of the tribe.

Waiyaki, the protagonist, is seen early in the novel as a leader among his peers. He is destined to fulfil an ancient prophecy concerning salvation for the hills. His father, Chege encourages him to attend school. He studies hard and his talents are recognised. When he comes of age, he participates in the circumcision ceremonies without scruples. Victory for him as a leader lies in blending tribal and modern ways of living. Unfortunately his desire for education is cut short. Missionaries demand renunciation of tribal practices as a pre-requisite to beginning or continuing with school.

Having tasted the value of formal education, Waiyaki gives himself tirelessly to the task of building schools at Kameno. His childhood friends, Kamau and Kinuthia, join him as teachers. There is an undercurrent of tension between Kamau and Waiyaki though. Everything Kamau desires seems to always come Waiyaki's way. As a result Kamau joins his father, Kabonyi, in his fight for the purity of the tribe. Kabonyi knows about the ancient prophecy destined to be fulfilled in Waiyaki. He however, claims to be the foretold saviour.

Since Kabonyi is from Makuyu and Waiyaki is from Kameno, the old rivalry between the ridges is manifest in them. Kabonyi stands for the traditional way of life. Waiyaki desires to merge both the

traditional and Christian ways of living. Kabonyi works towards his desire by having no relationships with Christians after breaking away from them. Waiyaki works toward his desire by associating with Christians even though he upholds traditional practices. This desire motivates him to take Muthoni to the mission hospital and later to marry Nyambura. Both are daughters of Joshua, the pastor at Makuyu.

Kabonyi takes advantage of Waiyaki's involvement in the family of Joshua and uses it against Waiyaki. More out of hatred for Waiyaki than love for the villagers, Kabonyi stirs the villagers against Waiyaki. He accuses Waiyaki of being concerned with education when the people want political freedom. He accuses him of being unclean because of taking Muthoni to hospital. His uncleanness would contaminate the whole tribe. Though the villagers love Waiyaki, Kabonyi's accusations seem valid. They hand Waiyaki over to the *Kiama* to decide his fate. This will relieve the villagers of the responsibility of judging Waiyaki, their teacher.

The Concubine (Elechi Amadi)

This is a story about Ihuoma, a woman destined to a life of unhappiness. Her first husband, Emenike dies after a short illness. Ihuoma is left a widow with three children. Madume, Emenike's rival, sees this as an opportunity to take Ihuoma as a second wife and possess a disputed piece of land which the elders had given to Emenike. Madume starts the process by quarrelling

with Ihuoma over a banana in the said piece of land. Suddenly, a cobra spits into his eyes. In spite of medication, the eyes swell until Madume loses his sight. Anyika, the diviner, sees no remedy for him and Madume commits suicide.

Meanwhile, Ihuoma decides to live as a widow against her mother's wishes. Ekwueme begins to openly display his love for her. Ihuoma is shocked to find out that she loves Ekwueme too. She does not reciprocate his love due to two factors. Firstly, she does not want to neglect her deceased husband's land. Secondly, Ekwueme is engaged from birth to Ahurole.

Marriage negotiations for Ahurole begin. Ekwueme reluctantly marries her for the engagement cannot be broken. Knowing of her husband's affections for Ihuoma, Ahurole tries all possible ways to win Ekwueme's love. A love-potion she puts in his food (at her mother's suggestion) drives him mad. Ekwueme takes the opportunity to either have Ihuoma or die. He gets her while Ahurole is divorced for her disgraceful behaviour.

However, Ekwueme cannot marry Ihuoma. Anyika reveals that she is a sea-goddess who left the spirit world against her husband's consent. The Sea-King, her husband in the spirit world, can only allow her to be a concubine and not a wife while she is on earth. Ekwueme is not dissuaded and his parents seek another diviner, Agwoturumbe. Contrary to Anyika's advice, he suggests that the Sea-King can be appeased.

Ihuoma, unaware of her unpleasant past, continues with the marriage negotiations. Ekwueme tells her the good side only. He

knows she wouldn't agree to the marriage if she knew the whole truth. Everything for the sacrifice is ready when Ekwueme is shot by a stray arrow. Once again, the Sea-King releases his fury on yet another of Ihuoma's suitors. She has to live without a husband until she goes back to the spirit world. There her husband, the Sea-King, awaits her.

Mine Boy (Peter Abrahams)

This novel features Xuma, a new arrival in Johannesburg in search of a job. He arrives one early morning at the shanty town of Malay Camp and gets accommodation at Leah's house. No sooner has he arrived than Dladla, one of Leah's beer customers, attacks him. The following day as he helps Joseph, Leah's brother-in-law, sell beer white police attack them. Joseph runs away while Xuma tries to retaliate. Fortunately, a coloured man appears in time and helps him to escape.

Xuma begins work at the mines as a foreman (boss boy). His master, Paddy O'Shea, and the miners respect him. He works diligently and the miners listen to his advice. He is impressed by blacks who work hard to earn a living but ashamed of those who live idly and carelessly. With time he gets himself a room so that he does not have to depend on Leah.

Meanwhile, Xuma falls in love with Eliza, Leah's niece. Eliza's love for Xuma is affected by the fact that he does not live like a European. She tries marriage with him but leaves after a short time. At the same time, Maisy, a friend of Leah, loves Xuma.

Most of the time, she is the buffer between the two. When Eliza leaves, Xuma realises Maisy's love is genuine and decides to reciprocate.

As Xuma interacts with people, he realises the hindrances apartheid exerts on black people. He discusses the effects of racism with Paddy O'Shea and his confused ideas clear up. He is challenged to move beyond being a black man to being a man. As he thinks about the challenge, Xuma wonders how it can be effected.

His mind still on the challenge, Xuma goes to the mines to find an accident he forewarned people about has left two people dead. A white engineer certifies the mine to be safe and the manager orders the miners to go down the mine. Xuma insists that the problem in the mine be fixed first. His boss and the miners stand with him. Riot police are called and arrive at the scene. Just then Xuma remembers he has to inform Maisy about the situation. Ma Plank, who lives with Maisy, advises Xuma to hide. Xuma does not agree with her. The time has come to put to test his thoughts about being a man. Maisy promises to give him full support in his struggle for equality. She also promises to wait for him in case he is imprisoned. Xuma then goes to hand himself over to the police.

Moral Values

In each novel, conflicts arise and characters respond to them in positive or negative ways. Such responses come out in speech, thoughts and actions. The responses reveal the moral values

embedded in the characters' lives. Table 1 is employed in the discussion about moral values.

The frequencies of wholesome and unwholesome values are added up to find the total in an individual novel. The percentages of wholesome and unwholesome values are calculated from the total frequencies (see Appendix B). The resulting data is applied to the first question and the first hypothesis. The percentage of wholesome values is considered significant if it is 10 or more. It is considered insignificant if it is 9 or less.

Research Question 1

1. To what extent do the Literature books studied reflect wholesome moral values?

Hypothesis 1

The literature books studied will tend to reflect an insignificant extent of wholesome moral values.

The results of the individual novels and the combined totals show that the percentages of wholesome moral values are more than 10%. The percentages range from 35.4 to 60.9 in the novels. These results would lead to the rejection of the first hypothesis. The hypothesis anticipated an insignificant extent of wholesome values. Contrary to the expectation, wholesome moral values tended to be significant in the five novels studied.

TABLE 1
 FREQUENCY OF MORAL VALUES IN THE FIVE NOVELS

| Title of Novel | N | Wholesome Values | Unwholesome Values |
|-------------------|-----|------------------|--------------------|
| | | % | % |
| Things Fall Apart | 181 | 35.4 (64) | 64.6 (117) |
| No Longer at Ease | 144 | 41.7 (60) | 58.3 (84) |
| The River Between | 238 | 60.9 (145) | 39.1 (93) |
| The Concubine | 243 | 47.7 (116) | 52.3 (127) |
| Mine Boy | 163 | 42.3 (69) | 57.7 (94) |
| Total | 969 | 46.9 (454) | 53.1 (515) |

Systems of Morality

Moral values accrue from specific value systems. Table 2 shows the value systems that surface in the novels studied. The frequencies of wholesome values in each value system are given. The data have a bearing on the second research question and the second hypothesis.

Research Question 2

2. If wholesome moral values exist, on what moral foundation are they based?

Hypothesis 2

Wholesome moral values will tend to be founded on secular morality.

TABLE 2
FREQUENCY OF WHOLESOME MORAL VALUES IN
DIFFERENT VALUE SYSTEMS

| Title of Novel | N | Wholesome Moral Values | | |
|-------------------|-----|------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| | | Traditional | Christian | Secular |
| | | % | % | % |
| Things Fall Apart | 64 | 78.1 (50) | 17.2 (11) | 4.7 (3) |
| No Longer at Ease | 60 | 46.7 (28) | 21.7 (13) | 31.7 (19) |
| The River Between | 145 | 45.5 (66) | 16.6 (24) | 37.9 (55) |
| The Concubine | 116 | 100.0 (116) | --- | --- |
| Mine Boy | 69 | 8.7 (6) | --- | 91.3 (63) |
| Total | 454 | 58.6 (266) | 10.6 (48) | 30.8 (140) |

Three value systems surface in the novels studied: traditional, Christian and secular (see Chapter 3). In one novel The Concubine, secular morality does not feature. In the other four novels, secular morality features in varying proportions from 4.7% to 91.3%. It is the basis of wholesome values in Mine Boy (91.3%). In the other four novels, the basis of wholesome moral

values is traditional morality. In total, secular morality accounts for 30.8% of the wholesome values while traditional morality accounts for 58.6% of the same.

The data would lead to the rejection of the second hypothesis. Secular morality was expected to be the basis of wholesome values. This is the case only in one novel. Traditional morality tends to be the basis of wholesome values in 80% of the novels studied.

Interpretation of Authors' Inclinations

The authors handle both wholesome and unwholesome values in specific ways. This comes out in the arrangement of situations, interactions and responses of characters. Readers approve or disapprove of the values characters exhibit. Each novel is considered separately in examining the authors' inclinations.

Things Fall Apart

Wholesome values such as achievement, bravery, celebration, kinship, prosperity and wealth are portrayed attractively. They have the highest frequencies because they reflect what give the society status and cohesion. Unwholesome values with the highest frequencies are anger, fear, gods/idol worship, killing and murder, magic and charms, and war. Values such as gods and idol worship, magic and charms are part of the culture. Anger and fear are discouraged because they do not enhance cohesion and prestige. Killing and murder are punished severely when they occur. Natural and supernatural sanctions deter the practice of different

unwholesome values.

The characters exhibit varying degrees of wholesome values. The protagonist, Okonkwo expresses wholesome values such as achievement and prosperity because they afford him status. He also exhibits unwholesome values such as anger, fear, hatred and violence in his desire for prestige. Models of wholesome values maintain a balance between their desires and means of achieving them. Obierika and Ezeudu are good examples. They have a high status in society but would not engage in activities that disrupt social cohesion such as being involved in Ikemefuna's death.

Okonkwo subscribes to traditional morality and despises Christianity and secularism. The Christians have won his son's heart while secularists humiliate him in prison. Through subtle satire against Christianity (Anonby 1990, 16) and secularism, Achebe attempts to elicit sympathy for traditional morality. Christianity and secularism threaten traditional ideals of prestige and cohesion.

The society depicted in Things Fall Apart is just beginning to experience the tensions of conflicting value systems. Christianity challenges traditional practices such as gods/idol worship, magic and charms, polygamy and infanticide. It challenges the ideal of status by accepting people who traditionally have no position. Secularism challenges the traditional ideals of respect for age and achievement. On the whole, the social context is mainly traditional, and traditional morality (78.1%) determines that traditional ideals are practised.

Achebe's inclination leans toward the practice of wholesome values which foster cohesion and kinship. He discredits excessive zeal for one's own ideals and unquestioning obedience to particular practices. Characters such as Obierika, Ezeudu, and Uchendu, question practices which Okonkwo engages in without qualms. This endears them to the reader more than Okonkwo does. Since they represent tribal morality, their success points to the soundness of their value system.

No Longer at Ease

In this novel Achebe depicts moral values which reflect the presence or absence of integrity in society. Wholesome values which foster integrity are diligence, justice, love, self-sacrifice and sensitivity. Unwholesome values which hinder integrity are, bribery/corruption, flirting, lying, cursing and sexual immorality. Both wholesome and unwholesome values have benefits if characters play their cards right.

Characters seem to adopt those wholesome or unwholesome values which are easy to live by. Bribery is often practised because it is the order of the day. Obi, the protagonist, concludes that, "we all have to stand on the earth itself and go with her at her pace" (Achebe 1960, 151). He comes to this conclusion just before he begins to accept bribes. When he is arrested for bribery, the U.P.U. members are angry because it was a small bribe. This does not mean that Obi does not care for wholesome values. Somehow his ideals do not agree with his actions. "Obi lives by half measures.

by resolute decisions mollified by irresolute actions" (Lindfors 1972,10). This conflict shows the characters' inability to stand for wholesome values without compromise. All characters behave according to different unwholesome values and no models of wholesome values can be cited.

Success in society is seen in characters who uphold traditional morality. Obi fails because his secular orientation makes him ignore crucial traditional values and practices, such as Clara being a social outcast. Obi's parents reject Clara because of her ancestry, showing Christianity has not given them answers for the social outcast issue. Characters succeed when they pay allegiance to traditional morality irrespective of other value systems they may adopt. Traditional morality has room for both moral integrity and moral laxity.

The society depicted in No longer at Ease is secular. Though traditional morality accounts for the highest proportion of wholesome values (46.7%, Table 2), unwholesome values predominated (58.3%, Table 1). This may be due to the fact that a consensus on morality is lacking. Characters strive to maintain cordial relationships in the hope that they will have support in time of need. Characters individually determine what moral values to uphold, except when it is costly to ignore traditional demands.

By making traditional morality succeed in a secular society, Achebe seems to suggest that social demands, rather than individual responsibility, govern moral choices. The strength of traditional morality is the ability to withstand the pressures of modern

living. Its weakness lies in providing room for unwholesome moral values. The individual character has to decide whether to live by wholesome moral values or not.

The River Between

In this novel wholesome values such as belief in God, education, peace and orderliness, reconciliation, salvation, love and obedience foster amicable relationships among the characters. Unwholesome values such as anger, betrayal, division, fear, hatred, practice of magic and witchcraft, rumour-mongering and violence, thrive due to lack of trust among the characters. Unwholesome values act as a catalyst in widening the gulf between the two ridges. Wholesome values help characters to bridge the gulf.

Characters choose good or bad ways to realise their desires. Kabonyi exhibits anger, fear, hatred, jealousy, violence and blackmail, in his effort to be a leader. Waiyaki demonstrates bravery, obedience, love, respect, reconciliation, sacrifice and service, as he leads the people. Kabonyi tries everything to undermine Waiyaki. Waiyaki tries to respect Kabonyi as one of the elders. This sense of choice diminishes when people act as a group. This explains why the people, instead of fighting for Waiyaki, give him over to the *Kiama* at the end of the novel.

The society depicted in The River Between is at the early stages of colonization. Traditional ideals still govern people's behaviour. Wholesome values (60.9%) are more than unwholesome values (39.1%). Both traditionalists and Christians are not ready

to compromise their value bases. Individuals who have either a traditional or Christian background, such as Waiyaki, Muthoni and Nyambura, try to merge the two value systems. Due to this secularism accounts for 37.9% of the wholesome values. "Ngugi sees no hope in conservatism, either on the part of the Christians or of traditionalists" (Ngubiah 1973, 67). Hope lies in merging wholesome values in Christian morality and traditional morality. Those who hold to either Christianity or traditional morality exhibit more unwholesome values than those who combine both systems.

The author's attempt to show that balance comes from merging wholesome values from both the Christian and the traditional value systems is biased against Christianity. He believes Christianity, and not traditional morality, should be scrutinized. His view is echoed by a critic who observes:

The only thing he [Ngugi] thought the Kikuyu (and all Africans) could get from the white man was scientific technology, exact measurement and testing, but nothing in the moral and value spheres. (Liyong 1992, 28)

The critic portrays Ngugi as one who believes that traditional morality is enough for one to lead a wholesome life. However, this is not the case. Staunch adherents of traditional morality exhibit unwholesome values. They also lack wholesome values present in the 'white man's' Christian morality. Traditional morality can be enhanced by Christian morality as Waiyaki shows. Christian morality can be enhanced by traditional morality as Muthoni's and Nyambura's attempts show. Both value systems need scrutiny and not Christian morality alone.

The Concubine

In this novel, the writer depicts a traditional society that has not been affected by other value systems. Wholesome and unwholesome values are part of its life. Wholesome values are constantly encouraged while unwholesome values are continually discouraged.

The characters display varying degrees of wholesome and unwholesome values. Madume shows unwholesome values by indulging in anger and greed. Anyika lives by wholesome values, leading to integrity and sympathy. The best model for wholesome values is Ihuoma, the heroine. She is portrayed as almost perfect, without faults, in her behaviour. She exhibits a balanced propriety which endears her to the other characters, and to the readers too.

The society depicted in The Concubine is traditional. Traditional morality governs human conduct, with wholesome values (47.7%) being less than unwholesome values (52.3%). The supernatural exerts a strong influence on the society. Wholesome values show harmony between the supernatural and the natural in society. Unwholesome values show this harmony has not been attained. A case in point is Ihuoma. She is a human being in all respects until Anyika reveals that she is a sea-goddess. Her background allows marriage but to the peril of her prospective husband. In her case sacrifices through the most competent diviner, cannot help. The supernatural thus contributes to the presence of wholesome and unwholesome values. So long as there is no breach of supernatural conventions, life continues with good and

bad aspects. Unwholesome values are seen as necessary evils which cannot be avoided.

The author seems to suggest that there is always a motivation for practising wholesome moral values. The motivation could be: to have a good reputation, to save one's face, to keep social conventions or not to hurt others. Ihuoma, who attracts the other characters due to her wholesome behaviour, is a goddess. Perfect human beings have a spiritual origin. Wholesome values appeal to human beings but they are mainly a trait of the gods. Humanity can only hope to attain this high standard in the spirit world.

Mine Boy

There are wholesome and unwholesome moral values in this novel. Wholesome values such as bravery, happiness, kindness, helpfulness, love, singing and dancing occur at different intervals. Unwholesome values such as betrayal, cursing, drunkenness, fighting, shouting, fornication, racism, corruption and violence also permeate the story. Both wholesome and unwholesome values are the means of survival in a harsh society.

Characters can choose between the wholesome and unwholesome values. Those who practice wholesome values without direct benefit to themselves are seen as naive. Xuma is often considered a fool when he desires to help others. Those who practise unwholesome values are seen as clever. Leah is a tough woman who indulges in different unwholesome values. She is considered clever because she has money and power. Characters resort to different wholesome or

unwholesome values to assert their dignity and self esteem.

The society depicted in Mine Boy is urban and secular. Secular morality (91.3%, Table 2) exerts more influence on people's behaviour than traditional morality (8.7%, Table 2). Unwholesome values (57.7%) are more than wholesome values (42.3%). The government is based on the unwholesome system of apartheid (racism). The white minority exploit the black majority. The whites exhibit an attitude of smug complacency. The blacks exhibit bitter resignation. Neither is better nor worse than the other except when they fail to question the basis of their conduct.

The author shows that those who are favoured or victimized by apartheid need to rise above their particular situations and undertake a constructive response. Xuma and Paddy O'Shea are good examples. They team up to fight against apartheid. A new government based on wholesome values is a possibility if the whites and blacks will fight alongside each other. However, each character must individually decide whether or not to commit himself or herself to the cause. Such a character's strategy should reveal that wholesome values underlie his principles and actions.

Discussion

The authors seem to handle wholesome and unwholesome values to suit the given social contexts. The contexts can be expressed in a continuum. At one end is a traditional context, while on the other is a secular context. In-between, the two surface in varying degrees depending on whether they are nearer the traditional or the

secular context.

A traditional context would be expected to have more wholesome than unwholesome values. This is not the case in The Concubine which depicts a fully traditional society. Unwholesome values (52.3%) are more than wholesome values (47.7%). Therefore a traditional culture does not necessarily imply a predominance of wholesome values in spite of the communal ideals upheld.

A secular context would be expected to have more unwholesome than wholesome values. This is attested by the data in Mine Boy which depicts a secularized society. There are more unwholesome (57.7%) than wholesome values (42.3%). This may be due to the fact that a secular context is highly influenced by individualism.

A society at the initial stages of change due to the presence of a new value system would be nearer the traditional end of the continuum. As such it would be expected to have more wholesome than unwholesome values. Such societies are depicted in Things Fall Apart and in The River Between. In the former unwholesome values (64.6%) are more than wholesome values (35.4%). In the latter wholesome values (60.9%) are more than unwholesome values (39.1%). As such a society at the initial stages of culture contact and conflict may or may not have more wholesome than unwholesome values. This depends on the writer's perspective of the different value systems in the society.

A society nearer the secular end of the continuum would be expected to have more unwholesome than wholesome values. Such a society is portrayed in No Longer at Ease. Unwholesome moral values

(58.3%) are more than wholesome moral values (41.7%). Although the society is increasingly secular, traditional morality still exerts a strong influence on conduct. Traditional morality accounts for 46.7% of the wholesome values (see Table 2). This may be due to the importance the author attaches to traditional morality in governing the lives of characters.

The extent to which wholesome or unwholesome values predominate would depend on the context. However, the context is highly influenced by the writer's view of the value systems at work in such a society.

The pattern of morality that emerges in the five novels seems realistic and balanced. Both wholesome and unwholesome values feature irrespective of the contexts depicted. The authors seem to keep distance by not openly displaying unwholesome values. Different value systems have strengths and weaknesses. Traditional societies are depicted as becoming more individualistic but not necessarily worse.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

This study involved an analysis of five novels prescribed for Kenya secondary schools with reference to their underlying moral dimension. Kenya's national philosophy and educational objectives emphasize the development of a high moral life in its youth. This study particularly focused on the underlying moral values and the value systems surfacing in the novels studied.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the extent of wholesome moral values in the novels. The study also sought to find out the moral base of such wholesome values. The approaches of Kidner, Downey and Ryken were employed.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided this research:

RQ1. To what extent do the Literature books reflect wholesome moral values?

RQ2. If wholesome moral values exist, on what moral foundation are they based?

Hypotheses

Two Hypotheses were formulated based on the research questions as well as the results of the literature review.

Hypothesis 1

The Literature books studied will tend to reflect an insignificant extent of wholesome moral values.

Hypothesis 2

Wholesome moral values will tend to be founded on secular morality.

Major Findings

The first hypothesis, that there will be an insignificant extent of wholesome moral values, was not confirmed in any of the five novels. The frequency of wholesome values exceeded the minimum percentage given for significance. The second hypothesis, that wholesome moral values will tend to be founded on secularism, was not confirmed in four novels. In the four novels the traditional value system accounted for the highest frequency of wholesome moral values.

The above results are due to two factors: context of story and author's perspective on different value systems. Firstly, the extent to which the society depicted is fully traditional or fully secular affects the values upheld. The percentages of wholesome values in the traditional (47.7%) and secular (42.3%) societies are about the same (Table 1). This trend may be due to two factors.

Either the society has not experienced change due to the introduction of new value systems, or the society has stabilized after experiencing change due to the introduction of new value systems. In both contexts only one (but not the same) value system prevails. Societies which are neither fully traditional nor fully secular have varying percentages of wholesome values (35.4%, 41.7%, 60.9%, Table 1). This may be due to conflicts resulting from the introduction of new value systems.

Secondly, the authors tended to focus more on the value bases than on the actual values practised. Though all value systems were depicted as having strengths and weaknesses, the authors tended to treat traditional morality more favourably than both Christian and secular value systems. In Things Fall Apart, The River Between, and No Longer at Ease, there were conflicts between different value systems. In these three novels, traditional morality exerted a strong influence on the conduct of the characters. Though other value systems disrupt the uniformity of traditional ideals, traditional morality still governs characters' lives.

However, irrespective of context and author's perspective on value systems, there is a big proportion of wholesome moral values in the novels studied. Such values are based on the interaction of different value systems. Due to the interaction, books prescribed for Literature do not seem to portray moral relativity although there is room for individual choice in matters of morality.

Recommendations

Public Schools adopt a secular approach to education. Due to this there is a discrepancy between faith and education in what is presented to a student. The relationship between faith and education can be described as separated, juxtaposed, overlapped or permeated (Fischer 1989, 25). The best approach is to permeate all spheres of life with a wholesome value base. The following suggestions are put forward as ways to improve on wholesome literature in Kenyan schools.

1. Christians should be encouraged to read and appreciate literature from a biblical perspective. They should not compromise the truth of the Bible when it conflicts with professional standards or expectations. As a librarian observes, "We must not live as [readers] who happen to be Christians, but as Christians who happen to be [readers]" (Knight 1985, 11).
2. Literature should be taught in Bible or theological colleges especially as part of cultural studies. Potential Christian leaders can then have the opportunity to examine its trends.
3. Literature teachers should point out what moral values are wholesome or unwholesome in Literature books. However, this depends on the importance they as individuals attach to morality in their lives.
4. Parents should be actively involved in their children's education in order to be aware of the contents of books

their children study in and out of the school environment.

5. Educators should be aware of the moral implications of the texts they prescribe. Literature books, as moral persuaders, can significantly affect the moral lives of students.
6. Writers of fiction should portray characters who strive to exhibit wholesome moral values in their lives. Christians should take up the challenge too by doing away with "a religious mentality characterized by timidity and lack of moral courage" (Tozer 1970, 103).

Areas for Further Research

This study focussed on the extent of wholesome values in literature books. A similar study on unwholesome values and their moral bases can be carried out to complement this one.

Context of the novel as well as author's view of value systems were factors influencing the results of the study. A study can be conducted to establish what other factors affect the extent of moral values in a novel in spite of the context portrayed.

Traditional societies have communal ideals which should be followed by all the members. A study can be carried out to examine the extent to which such ideals tally with those of individual characters.

Secular societies tend to be governed by individualistic tendencies. A study can be carried out to explore whether a

certain consensus on morality exists in secularistic societies depicted in literature.

Morality in literature is important when it affects the moral lives of the readers. A study can be undertaken to establish perception of morality among Literature teachers and students.

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APPENDIX A
 NOVELS PRESCRIBED FOR KENYA SECONDARY SCHOOLS
 BETWEEN 1963 AND 1993

| <u>Title of Novel</u> | <u>Year(s) Prescribed</u> | <u>Frequency</u> |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------|
| Things Fall Apart | 67, 68, 69, 76, 77, 78 79, 80, 89, 90, 91, 92 | 12 |
| The River Between | 71, 72, 76, 77, 78, 79 82, 83 | 8 |
| No Longer at Ease | 72, 73, 74, 81, 82, 83, 84 | 7 |
| The Concubine | 73, 74, 75, 80, 81, 93 | 6 |
| Mine Boy | 72, 73, 75, 76, 77 | 5 |
| The African Child | 70, 71, 72, 81 | 4 |
| Animal Farm | 76, 77, 78, 79 | 4 |
| Carcase for Hounds | 84, 85, 86, 87 | 4 |
| So Long a Letter | 84, 85, 86, 87 | 4 |
| The Moon and Six Pence | 74, 75, 76 | 3 |
| Kill Me Quick | 77, 78, 79 | 3 |
| The History of Mr. Polly | 63, 64 | 2 |
| News from Tartary | 64, 65 | 2 |
| A Tale of Two Cities | 65, 66 | 2 |
| The Chrysalids | 66, 67 | 2 |
| Old Mali & the Boy | 68, 69 | 2 |
| The Pearl | 68, 69 | 2 |
| No Highway | 68, 69 | 2 |
| Lord of the Flies | 69, 70 | 2 |
| White Eagles Over Serbia | 69, 70 | 2 |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|---|
| Mission to Kala | 70, 71 | 2 |
| Fahrenheit 451 | 70, 71 | 2 |
| Cry, the Beloved Country | 71, 72 | 2 |
| Down Second Avenue | 73, 74 | 2 |
| The Old Man and the Medal | 73, 74 | 2 |
| Danda | 73, 74 | 2 |
| A High Wind in Jamaica | 75, 76 | 2 |
| Efuru | 80, 81 | 2 |
| Burmese Days | 80, 81 | 2 |
| Miguel Street | 80, 81 | 2 |
| Balaustion's Adventure | 63 | 1 |
| Far from the Madding Crowd | 64 | 1 |
| A Pattern of Islands | 68 | 1 |
| Jonah and the Whale | 69 | 1 |

The first five novels in the list were selected for the study.

APPENDIX B

INDEX OF MORAL VALUES IN THE FIVE NOVELSThings Fall Apart

| <u>Wholesome Values</u> | <u>Frequency</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Achievement | 6 |
| Bravery | 5 |
| Celebration | 6 |
| Handwork | 1 |
| Hope | 3 |
| Industry | 2 |
| Justice | 4 |
| Kinship | 6 |
| Peace | 6 |
| Prosperity | 6 |
| Reconciliation | 1 |
| Respect | 3 |
| Responsibility | 2 |
| Sobriety | 2 |
| Strength | 3 |
| Unity | 3 |
| Wealth | 5 |

Unwholesome Values

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Adultery | 1 |
| Anger | 6 |
| Bitterness | 1 |
| Bribery/Corruption | 2 |
| Conflict | 2 |
| Determinism | 5 |
| Division/Alienation | 4 |
| Failure | 3 |
| Fear | 8 |
| Foolhardiness | 2 |
| Gods/Idol worship | 10 |
| Hatred | 4 |
| Hypocrisy | 4 |
| Idleness/Laziness | 5 |
| Infanticide | 5 |
| Inflexibility | 2 |
| Killing/Murder | 12 |
| Lying | 4 |
| Magic/Charms | 7 |
| Polygamy | 1 |
| Pride | 3 |
| Reincarnation | 3 |
| Suicide | 1 |
| Threats | 4 |
| Trickery | 1 |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Violence | 3 |
| War | 9 |
| Weakness | 2 |
| Wife-beating | 4 |

No Longer At Ease

| <u>Wholesome Values</u> | <u>Frequency</u> |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Affection | 1 |
| Cautious | 1 |
| Celebration | 4 |
| Courtesy | 2 |
| Diligence | 4 |
| Forgiveness | 2 |
| Friendliness | 3 |
| Generosity | 1 |
| Justice | 4 |
| Kinship | 8 |
| Love | 5 |
| Realism | 6 |
| Reconciliation | 2 |
| Responsibility | 2 |
| Self-control & Discipline | 2 |
| Self-sacrifice | 4 |
| Sensitivity | 5 |
| Trustworthiness | 1 |
| Unity | 3 |

Unwholesome Values

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Abortion | 3 |
| Adultery | 1 |
| Bribery/Corruption | 22 |
| Cheating | 1 |
| Cursing | 4 |
| Flirting | 10 |
| Fornication | 4 |
| Gluttony | 1 |
| Gruffness | 4 |
| Hatred | 2 |
| Lying | 4 |
| Magic | 2 |
| Neddling | 2 |
| Gods/Idol worship | 6 |
| Racial prejudice | 4 |
| Prostitution | 1 |
| Reincarnation | 1 |
| Selfwill | 2 |
| Theft/stealing | 1 |
| Threats | 2 |
| War & Violence | 3 |
| Materialism | 4 |

The River Between

| <u>Wholesome Values</u> | <u>Frequency</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Belief in God | 10 |
| Bravery | 9 |
| Celebration | 5 |
| Education | 16 |
| Foresight | 1 |
| Freedom | 6 |
| Healing/Life | 6 |
| Leadership | 6 |
| Love | 11 |
| Obedience | 11 |
| Peace & Orderliness | 9 |
| Realism | 4 |
| Reconciliation | 8 |
| Respect | 2 |
| Sacrifice | 4 |
| Salvation | 20 |
| Service | 6 |
| Submission | 2 |
| Tolerance | 1 |
| Unity | 8 |

Unwholesome Values

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Anger | 13 |
| Betrayal | 10 |
| Cursing | 3 |
| Division | 10 |
| Fear | 10 |
| Hatred | 11 |
| Ignorance/Naivety | 3 |
| Inflexibility | 4 |
| Jealousy | 4 |
| Legalism | 2 |
| Lying | 2 |
| Magic/Witchcraft | 5 |
| Obstinacy | 2 |
| Polygamy | 2 |
| Revenge | 2 |
| Rumourmongering | 5 |
| Scheming/Blackmail | 2 |
| Self-righteousness | 1 |
| Violence | 4 |

The Concubine

| <u>Wholesome Values</u> | <u>Frequency</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Bravery | 3 |
| Companionship | 4 |

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Courtesy | 5 |
| Creativeness | 6 |
| Faithfulness | 1 |
| Friendliness | 3 |
| Gentleness/Tenderness | 8 |
| Helpfulness | 6 |
| Industry | 5 |
| Kindness | 3 |
| Life | 1 |
| Love | 7 |
| Obedience | 2 |
| Optimism | 3 |
| Orderliness | 3 |
| Peace | 3 |
| Politeness | 4 |
| Propriety | 5 |
| Purity | 1 |
| Respect | 3 |
| Responsibility | 2 |
| Sacrifice | 1 |
| Selfcontrol | 5 |
| Sensitivity | 5 |
| Singing/Dancing | 10 |
| Sobriety | 3 |
| Strength | 5 |
| Sympathy | 9 |

Unwholesome Values

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Childishness | 8 |
| Death | 16 |
| Fights & Quarrels | 13 |
| Gods & Idol worship | 15 |
| Gossip | 6 |
| Greed | 7 |
| Hatred | 2 |
| Indifference | 3 |
| Insensitivity | 1 |
| Jealousy | 3 |
| Lying | 8 |
| Madness | 9 |
| Magic & Charms | 8 |
| Polygamy | 6 |
| Pretence | 4 |
| Pride | 2 |
| Reincarnation | 2 |
| Resignation | 3 |
| Rudeness | 1 |
| Suicide | 1 |
| Wife-beating | 9 |

Mine Boy

| <u>Wholesome Values</u> | <u>Frequency</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Beauty | 3 |
| Bravery | 5 |
| Caution | 2 |
| Courtesy | 3 |
| Friendliness | 4 |
| Gentleness/Tenderness | 2 |
| Happiness | 8 |
| Helpfulness | 5 |
| Industry | 2 |
| Kindness | 7 |
| Laughter | 6 |
| Life | 1 |
| Love | 5 |
| Peace | 2 |
| Singing & Dancing | 7 |
| Strength | 4 |
| Sympathy | 2 |
| Unity | 1 |

Unwholesome Values

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Alienation | 3 |
| Arrogance | 2 |
| Betrayal | 8 |
| Blackmail | 1 |
| Bribery/Corruption | 5 |
| Cursing | 6 |
| Death | 4 |
| Double Life | 3 |
| Drinking | 7 |
| Exploitation | 3 |
| Extravagance | 1 |
| Fear | 3 |
| Fighting | 7 |
| fornication | 6 |
| Hatred | 1 |
| Indifference | 2 |
| Laziness | 1 |
| Lying | 2 |
| Murder | 1 |
| Prostitution | 1 |
| Racism | 8 |
| Selfishness | 2 |
| Shouting | 6 |
| Theft | 1 |
| Unhappiness | 5 |
| Violence | 5 |

CURRICULUM VITAE

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