

The Quintessential Role of the Soil: A Postcolonial Reading of
Shadrach Ambanasom's *Son of the Native Soil* and Wilson Katiyo's *A
Son of the Soil*

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Abstract

This paper entitled, "The Importance of the Soil: A Postcolonial Reading of Shadrach Ambanasom's *Son of the Native Soil* and Wilson Katiyo's *A Son of the Soil* demonstrates the importance of the soil which raises conflicts as well as generates wealth. The problem posed is that the soil, which is an empowerment tool, stimulates conflicts as agents desire socio-economic and political control. Such conflicts slow development and relegate the weak in both national and global affairs. The bond of contention evoked here is that socio-economic and political powers are secured through oppressive means which leave societies in chaos and stagnation. Some tenets of postcolonial theory will be used as a theoretical guide for analysis in this paper. Findings reveal that the soil has the ability to stimulate both prosperity and poverty that reinforce binaries. The paper concludes that, the expansion of the agricultural sector is fundamental to meet needs of a fast growing population. If the improvement of the soil is neglected, conflicts in societies risk to be increased resulting to high mortality rate caused by war and famine.

Keywords: Power; Colonialism; Conflicts; Globalization; and Soil.

Introduction

Postcolonial literature which has significant impacts in the field of globalization, deals with literature of the colonized, the suppressed and the subjugated. Helen Tiffin writes in her article in *The Post Colonial Studies Reader* entitled, “Post-colonial Literature and Counter-discourse” thus, “over the three quarters of the contemporary world has been directly and profoundly affected by imperialism and colonialism.... This has frequently been accompanied by demand for an entirely new or wholly recovered ‘reality’, free of all colonial taint” (95). The essence of this study is not only illuminating colonial hazards but also to demonstrate both historical continuity and the need for change. It demonstrates in a concrete manner that the material realities and modes of representation common to colonialism are still very much glaring in today’s society. Post-colonialism as Eleke Boehmer in *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* opines has to do with “writing which sets out in one way or the other to resist colonialist perspective” (93). The assertion restates the zeal for colonized people to take part in the affairs of the world. There is the need for the colonized to project their own identity and to erase certain assumptions that are imposed on them by the colonizers. This therefore illustrates that this literature does not only deal with dates, but also has a resistant structure. As a result, this work examines how the colonizers usurp the land and resources of the colonized; how the colonized respond to colonization and oppression; and how they shape their image in present day’s modern society. The study questions the relationship between imperial powers and the colonized who constitute the weak in a global setting. This study upholds Homi K. Bhaba’s view in *Nation and Narration* that postcolonial literature demonstrates that historical events are characterized by colonialism, imperialism, and neo-imperialism which are highly exploitative. This paper thus reflects the scuffle over the soil as a source of power in a highly competitive society. The work is focused on Wilson

Katiyo's *A Son of the Soil* and Shadrach A. Ambanasom's *Son of the Native Soil*.

Postcolonial Theory is the theoretical lens that guides analyses.

The Importance of the Soil

The soil is the most important and central component of all living things. It is the root on which every living thing depends on its security and safety. Elizabeth Ayuk Ako in her article entitled "Eco-sustainability and the Culture of Power: Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*," writes that, "Man's dependence on nature implied that nature had a significant role to play in human survival" (191). Therefore, the nation that destroys its soil destroys itself. The soil as an aspect of nature is essential because of the vital role it plays in human survival. It is the centre of life as it secures good health through the provision of quality water and food security. Man is made from the soil which also provides the environmental space on which all his activities are run. People move from one place to the other for the exploitation of fertile soils which constitute a small portion in the entire universe, yet must provide life to that universe. Saskia Sassen in his article entitled "Whose City is it? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims" in *The Globalization Reader* highlights that Globalisation transcends nation states' boundaries and there is little governance and accountability as far as transnational activities are concerned. He states that, "Globalization is a process that generates contradictory spaces, characterized by contestation, internal differentiation, continuous border crossing" (76). Movement in a global arena is motivated by the zeal to make profits in order to secure socio-economic power. The urge for economic expansion thus arouses oppressive and aggressive mentalities. Timothy Clark in *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment* says that: "The very term of 'nature' has several incompatible meanings whose interrelation can be said already to enact some distinctive environmental quandaries" (6). The soil as an aspect of nature nurses many other elements of nature that depend on it for survival. The interrelation among other aspects of

nature evokes diverse problems that are sources of difficulties that result to conflicts in communities. This study highlights some of such problems in discussing the importance and relevance of the soil which is divided into the soil and conflicts and the soil and economy as portrayed in the texts under reference.

The Soil and Conflicts

The agricultural sector in most developing countries is deficient irrespective of the ever growing population rates. Very little spaces are endowed with fertile soils and most of the infertile soils that need improvement through adequate use of fertilizers and other facilities are most often neglected. As a result, the vast differences that exist in the domain of social and economic conditions lead to many problems and conflicts as demonstrated by Shadrach A. Ambanassom in *Son of the Native Soil* through the Dudum clan. Polarity and conflicts exist between Anjong and Akan, which are parts of Dudum. While nature has made it that Anjong occupies the fertile part of Dudum, Akan on its part is pushed by nature to occupy the barren part. Since there is that urge for man to emerge socio-economically, the Dudum clan is in constant war and conflict provoked by the contrast of the soil occupied by the Akans and the Anjongs. David Horowitz in *Hemispheres North and South: Economic Disparity among Nations* emphasizes that the prime factor of economic growth is investment. He writes thus:

...investment is conceived in its broadest meaning... the investment of capital and skill, of know-how, of managerial ability, and of initiative. In every field of economic endeavor, investment is the key to progress and expansion. The most impressive example of the truth of the statement is agriculture. To expand agriculture and augment the supply of food is the most urgent concern of the underdeveloped world. (7)

Investment and not conflicts is the key to the growth of any economy. The People of Dudum needs investment from all points of view to expand their economy. Wilson Katiyo in *A Son of the Soil* demonstrates that the magnetic power of the soil facilitates globalization as it encourages interaction and integration of people, companies, and governments of different nations. This process which is driven by international trade and capital investment generate conflict and tension as the desire to satisfy personal needs to maintain personal growth cannot be controlled. Katiyo underlines thus:

... some very strange visitors arrived in the village... as many as one hundred.

... they were all white men...

‘We want them to work for us ...

... As the warriors surged forward, the white men began firing. Several warriors fell...

Next, Hill ordered two of his men, one white and the other black, to force Shonga to lead them to the cattle pens. They were to find and bring twenty-four fit oxen... As soon as Shonga and the two men returned with a herd of twenty-four oxen, the fresh set was yoked. Hill shot dead all the twenty-four oxen that had been unyoked In all, there were forty warriors dead; and eleven had been wounded. (9-10)

Globalization aims at a collective effort and at change which can be caused by some fundamental forms of capital movement throughout the global economy. These include: Human capital; financial capital; resource capital; and power capital. The positive goals of globalization make it very attractive but it becomes questionable when the relationship that governs people in the global society is violence, oppression, and suppression as seen in the encounter between white and blacks in the quote above. Hans Kung in an article entitled, “A Global Ethic as a Foundation for Global Society in *The Globalization Reader* advocates that

“Every human being must be treated humanely... What you wish done to yourself, do to others” (42). He continues by saying that, “This is time for international community to be bold, to explore new ideas, to develop new visions and to demonstrate commitment to values in devising new governance arrangement” (43). The excerpt above counters Kung’s desires as Hill does not treat the people of Chuma’s village in a humane manner. He oppresses and treats them violently, yet he is not happy when Chief Chuma shouts at him. The intension of globalization is to promote unity and to demonstrate commitment in values; but Hill’s intention as revealed in the quotation is not in any way geared at promoting common good but evidently, to safeguard his selfish and personal interests. He rather finds interest in their soil and its resources because these will contribute to his growth and empowerment. The idea of security in globalization is challenged and disparities are enhanced. Paradoxically therefore, instead of globalization uniting people to demonstrate commitment and explore new ideas to developing a common vision that could change lives, conflicts are generated. The soil is consequently portrayed as a magnetic force that becomes a battle ground for exploitation, challenging globalization’s vision for collective welfare and growth.

Conflicts that result from the soil are not only caused by external forces brought by space/ time compression, but also by internal factors from poor management and governance.

Mary Kaldor in *Global Civil Society* argues thus:

Civil society needs governance, a framework of rules and institutions for managing society that civil society helps to construct and, at the same time, provides the conditions for civil society to function. Particularly important is the removal of fear, the absence of violence and coercion in everyday life so that people feel able to speak freely and be heard. (109)

Ambanasom in *Son of the Native Soil* presents a situation where the leaders of Akans demonstrate skills in poor governance and management which plunge not only the Akans but

both Ajong and the entire Dudum clan in a quagmire. Instead of creating a peaceful environment conducive for creativity and development, they create a tense atmosphere characterized by fear and violence that result to insecurity and destructions of lives and properties. The conflicts experienced in Dudum result from land disputes between the Akans and the Anjongs. The inequitable distribution of their fertile farmland by nature provokes chronic conflicts as expressed in the following quotation:

How can Umeitoh suddenly stand and lay claim to the entire area? Have our two villages not been farming Ukob for a long time now? Are we not all offspring of Ngiikum ? Yes, we disagreed over the land, but have we not tried to patch up our differences like brothers? Was it not six years ago that the elders of both villages agreed to avoid useless quarrels by letting each village control the section of the controversial plot nearest to its own land? What then is this new talk that I hear about land? When appetite overreaches itself it is looking for death. (13)

The land generates continuous disputes in the Dudum clan. In spite of all agreements and peace talks made, the Akans find it difficult to give up the fertile land to the Anjongs because they consider it a source of socio-economic and political power. Alexander Pope's postulates in his poem entitled, "An Essay on Man" extracted from *The Northon Anthology of World Masterpieces* that:

leave all meaner things to low ambition, and the pride of kings...Expatriate free o'er all this scene of man; a mighty maze! but not without a plan; A Wild, where weeds and flower promiscuous shoot; Or Garden, tempting with forbidden fruit. (309)

A society that ignores, value, is a mean and decadent society. Pope envisaged a peaceful society, considering the transient nature of life. He thinks that people should freely

expand their skills and talents systematically in an organized manner in a society which generally is characterized by good and evil. A society that is ‘tempting with forbidden fruit.’ Power is tempting because of the sweetness it offers. That is why there are land conflicts in societies since land is a channel that leads to socio-economic and political empowerment. The land dispute in the above quotation is master minded by few individuals in Akan who do not care about collective unity and progress, but are more concerned with their individual progress. Instead of constructing ideas that can facilitate the smooth functioning of their society which can lead to sustainable development and growth, they mastermind conflicts and war that destabilizes their society leaving it fragmented and undeveloped. Globalization stresses investment and economic expansion which are major factors that lead to the progress of any society. If Anjong which is part of Dudum is blessed with fertile land as capital, one will expect that Akan and other Dudum tribes should mobilize skills, initiatives and managerial abilities to revamp their agriculture and augment the supply of food to meet the urgent need of developing societies and the world at large thereby, projecting an authentic identity in global affairs. Ironically, instead of the Akans drawing a strategic economic plan of action that will lead to the development of the entire clan, they skillfully distract the Anjongs from adequately cultivating their fertile area and also provoke them into squabbles as seen below:

There was consternation in Anjong when some of their women folk came back from Ukob in tears. They had gone to the disputed piece of land where they were surprised by a group of young men from Akan, who seized their hoes. Such a thing had not been heard of before. Anjong interpreted it as a flagrant act of war (16).

Food is a source of life and security. The hard working nature of the Anjong people pushes them to exploit their fertile land by investing in the agricultural sector for economic

empowerment. The Akans do not feel comfortable depending on their agricultural yields and economic power. Consequently, they become aggressive towards the Anjongs, attack them, seize their farming tools and destroy their crops. Instead of uniting their effort with that of the Anjongs by improving on their land so that their collective efforts can cause a revolution that uplift a positive image for them worldwide, they rather paint a derogatory picture that relegates them in global matters. Irrespective of gross provocations, the Anjong choose peace and decide to remain calm. That notwithstanding, the Akan people continue with their abusive behavior as demonstrated thus:

It happened a week ago after the Anjong women had gone back to their own portion of Ukob. They had planted their crops and safely returned home. But two days later a group of hefty Akan men fully armed with machetes, spears, clubs and even dane guns invaded Abang, that part of Ajong nearest Akan. The Anjong people did not expect such an attack (62).

The infertile land of the Akans is a reflection of their barren minds. They are determined not to see the progress of the Anjong because they have what they, the Akans lack. The Akans continue with their destructive attitude as an attempt to impoverish the Anjongs. The Anjongs' optimism rather infuriates the Akans who inflict chronic pains on them by attacking and destroying their lives and properties.

Simon Dalby in an article entitled "Globalization, Geography and Environmental security" in the *Globalization Theory and Practice* writes that, "To advocates of the neoliberal economic and political agendas of globalization ... promise greater wealth and hence... greater human security for all...the last assumption has been challenged in the last few decades" (38). The essence of globalization is to promote growth and security in a wider scale, but this is challenged by the Akans at the local level. Their attitude retards and relegates their whole clan in global affairs as their focus is on weapons and the destruction of

human efforts and dignity. This is reflected in their perilous acts that leave not only Anjong but all of Dudum in tears, as their livelihood is undermined. The need has been stressed for underdeveloped nations to boost up their agriculture to meet with the demands of their ever growing population that depend on their meager food production. Consequently, it is disgusting to see the Akans embarked on schemes that reinforce poverty and civil unrest at a local level. Akans action can only retard their growth because it prevents them from getting adequate food supply to provide their survival and economic needs. If they desire growth and visibility in the global scene, then they must double their food production. Rowntree et al. (2003) underlines thus:

During the last 40 years of the twentieth century, the world's population doubled. Even more remarkably, during the same period global food production also doubled to keep pace with this population explosion. This increase in food production came primarily from the expansion of intensive, industrial agriculture into areas that previously produced subsistence crops through extensive and traditional means.

... since 1950 the increases in global food production have come from three interconnected processes that are known as the first stage of the Green Revolution... first the change from traditional mixed crops to monocrops, or single fields of genetically altered, high-yield rice, wheat, and corn seed; second, intensive application of water, fertilizers, and pesticides; and third, further increases in intensity of agriculture by reduction in fallow or field resting time between seasonal crops. (71)

The conflicts experienced in Dudum result from the desire of the Akans to secure power. They envisage Ajong as a threat to their prosperity, so they embark on destruction as means to reduce the Anjong to nothing. By so doing they destroy also themselves as they

retard the progress of their entire clan. In crises situations, differences need to be abandoned and values projected in order to create a solid society. It is true as the following expresses that, “The land in question was a fertile valley.... A stream flowed through then dividing it into two. The larger portion belonged to the Anjong side of the stream while the smaller part was on Akan side of it” (13). Though Anjong owns the smaller portion of the fertile land, hard work and diligence are keys to progress. Therefore, with modernity that facilitates development, the Akans need not worry and cause more damage because they have been cheated by nature. What one expects from them is that they implement at least one, if not all of the above strategies that lead to a “Green Revolution” which in itself is power. Considering that a stream runs across the land, they could be considered privileged if they could implement the second strategy above which requires ‘intensive application of water, fertilizers and pesticides,’ to expand food production. They could further reveal their managerial skills which could result to growth still applying the technique of ‘reduction in fallow or field resting time between seasonal crops.’ If they must emerge successful in their locality and in the global society then they must forsake their laziness which is masked by their aggressiveness. The fact that Akan area had once attracted investment, illustrates that it was once fertile. Chief Umeitoh argues thus:

... Some of you may ask why we have now pushed it to this point. I will tell you why. The ruins of the courthall in Dudum are in Akan. But where is the present courthall? Was the first chief in Dudum crown by the Germans not my great grandfather? Now who is regarded as the paramount chief of Dudum? Don’t you see sense in our reasoning? If the first courthall in Dudum was in Akan before being transferred to Anjong, and the first paramount chief in Dudum from Akan before the title was given to the grandfather of Akaya by the British who defeated the Germans, don’t you see that even our Ukob may

soon officially become part of Anjong. Is there anyone still in doubt as to why we sent our children to Ukob? Umeitoh was applauded. (17)

The soil is at the centre of all human activities. The infertile land of the Akans provokes them to be violent. But as it is evident above, Akan had once been a fertile area that attracted state investments as reflected in the ruin of the court hall. But like the ruins of the hall, the soil had suffered threats from poor soil management and degradation. Instead of the Akans being industrious and zealous to revamp their land, they resort to insurgency as seen below:

How can brothers carry arms against brothers? Are there not some here who have married the daughters of Anjong? ... We are a single family. Should we declare a war against Anjong today, we are inevitably declaring a war against ourselves, a war of self-extermination. (20)

The spirit of the Mau Mau fighter as Marshall S. Clough informs in *Mau Mau Memoirs : History, Memory, and Politics* was to “maintain national unity and preserve political and economic stability ... represented Mau Mau as heroic, not criminal; nationalist more than tribal; central instead of peripheral; a political success... rather than a failure” (61). Africans, like the Mau Mau fighters, need to be patriotic, put in collective efforts and discard derogatory attitudes that retard progress and subjugate them in a global village. Instead of putting their skills and knowledge together in order to emerge, the people of Dudum carry arms against each other reinforcing division instead of unity. They marginalize themselves through war and destructive behaviors that accelerate poverty and misery, instead of putting together values that could relocate them from the periphery to the center in global matters. Tribal attitudes are reflected in their egoism that ignites violence. The Dudum predicament is a symbol of the fate that befalls most African countries where people of the same nation carry arms against each other because of land disputes. Such attitudes relegate them in all spheres

and they remain backward in a global society. If the Africans, as well as any other developing nations must fight, it must be to protect their land from foreign intrusion, and to promote growth in their societies.

If the Dudum people must emerge in today's challenging and competitive society, peace must inevitably reign in their society. Ambanasom writes that, "though the Dudum people are generally quarrelsome among themselves they can abandon their differences and unite" (124). The spirit of unity is preached and promoted by Achamba who is referred to as 'a son of the soil'. He tells Abaago this, "I'm a son of Akan, but I'm first of all a son of Dudum"(126). He works to ensure that peace reigns in Dudum. He persuades the people of Dudum to see the importance of unity and purpose that can make them to benefit from government projects and development. He also educates his people to understand that they too have a central role to play for the development of their land. William Tordoff writes in *Government and Politics In Africa* that, "a united Africa, subject to a single government was the only effective way..." (260). A united Africa is an efficient way to combat racist/ tribal inclinations in order to successfully build a strong economy and sustainable development. This vision is ruined as reflected in the following excerpt:

Abaago realized with trembling fear, like the kind that follows a nightmare, that Achamba was more of a threat than an asset to the Akan man. He would uproot all that Abaago had planted. He was a dangerous and traitorous person who had to be dreaded. Consequently, Abaago carried out a vigorous campaign against Achamba's ideas, cautioning every Akan youth against being brainwashed by him. (128)

Abaago is an example of evil that destroys the African vision towards progress. He is egocentric, thus, determined to do anything that will protect his personal interests. He sees Achamba's vision of unity as a threat to his personal ambitions, therefore, he sabotages

Achamba's plans and ideologies. Ali A. Mazrui and Michael Tidy in *Nationalism and New states in Africa* say thus: "the struggle for viable modern nations within Africa is considerably hampered by acute ethnic cleavages" (xii). Achamba's vision for the unity of the Dudum clan could be interpreted as a symbol of Nkwame Nkruma's vision for a united Africa. Abaago's rejection of Achamba's vision symbolizes the denial for a Pan African government because of egocentric schemes. Achamba's idea for the unity of Dudum, though a strategy to promote empowerment and development, is challenged by both tribal and egocentric demands. Such deadlock attitudes must be discouraged. Ambanasom remarks that, "A community, like a nation, can only progress very well when its inhabitants are fully mobilized and united behind their leader; when they live in a state of peace devoid of mutual distrust and suspicion, petty rivalries and jealousies" (98).

Homi K. Bhabha *In Nation and Narration* asserts that, "Nations, like narratives lose the origins in the myths of time and only realized their horizons in the mind's eye" (1). Nations as well as communities are built on the platform of unity and progress. Bhabha notes that like narratives whose objectives are entrenched in change, the nations lose their original objectives with the emergence of new and challenging ideologies and lifestyles that are characteristics of the time. Such exigent models implanted in power, leave the nation disintegrated and destabilized as seen in the *Son of the Native Soil*.

Achamba exemplifies that there is strength in unity by establishing a conjugal relationship with a woman from Anjong. He thinks that "... our marriage uniting two apparent enemies would help to reconcile our estrange village..." (149). But a "marriage that in a different community might have served as a unifying factor in Dudum only threatened the unity of the clan" (142). Achamba and Echunjei's marriage is supposed to be a call for unity, but it rather reinforces distrust, petit rivalries, and jealousy, instead of bringing reconciliation, as Abaago assigns murderers to eliminate Achamba. This is explained thus:

“assailants fell on him, administering him more savage blows on his head, shoulders and back...” (193). Achamba dies because some egocentric agents in his community think, “He must be got rid of. He was rather nosy, prying into matters that did not concern him”(145). Such self-centered mentalities can only take a society backward. The death of Achamba, as such, deconstructs destructive mentalities that retard growth in a society. It is a clarion call for people to abandon egocentric desires and adopt positive mindsets that could lead to the progress and development of a community.

The Soil and Economy

Present day production and distribution of goods operate on a global policy that brings together regions organizations and various groups. William Greider in his article in *The Globalization Reader* entitled, “Wawasan 2020” admits that:

The process of global economic integration is broadly driven by market forces... Given the worldwide thirst for economic development ... multinational companies usually have the leverage to stipulate terms for their capital investments...

A corporation’s power is naturally strongest if it is dealing with a small, very poor country desperate for industrial development.... Starting from position of weakness, the poor states hope this exchange will start them on an upward track toward higher levels of industrialization and an escape from general poverty.

Even successful nations, however, discover that a basic insecurity lingers in their economic advance. (148)

In Wilson Katiyo’s *Son of the Soil*, economic integration is evident as different multinational companies and corporate societies come to chief Chuma’s village to invest in

agriculture and to exploit mineral resources for economic empowerment. The relationship between these investors and the villagers is not very cordial. Exploitation and oppression become prevalent as the quotation below highlights:

One night, a month or so after Shonga's return to Chuma's village, Hill and his men made a surprise attack on the village. They did not use their guns until after they had set fire to many huts. Most people were asleep inside huts and they burned to death. Others tried to escape but that was when Hill and his men used their guns. They shot anybody who was trying to escape. Some of the warriors manage to arm themselves and fought very fiercely. The white men finally retreated. When the sun rose the next morning, people counted the dead. They also found some corpses of white men. Shonga was one of those who had been killed. They found him with his fingers still clawed around the neck of a white man. He too was dead... (21).

Hill and his men are mineral hunters who attack the people of Chuma's village because they learnt that their land is rich with diamond. Instead of exploiting each other's skills and resources to excavate the available mineral resources, Hill and his associates are determined to eliminate the villagers in order to have total control of their resources. Their presence in Chuma's village defeats the idea of global economic integration because instead of the villagers experiencing improvement in their livelihood, poverty, pains and misery are intensified.

What motivates the massive destruction and killings as seen above is hunger. Hill whose name symbolizes that the road to economic prosperity is an uphill task, says, "we are all very hungry. You know how hard we work. Now I want you to slaughter a nice fat fox..." (18). Hill and his men "dig a diamond mine" (13) At Chuma's village in order to fight against

future hunger. They deplete fauna and flora to satisfy their hunger indicating that the soil is crucial to life.

There is a fierce fight because of fear of insecurity. Rowntree et al. (2003) postulate that:

If the human population continues to grow at expected rates, food production must double... Every minute of each day, 170 people are born who need food; during the same minutes, about 10 acres of existing cropland are lost because of environmental problems such as soil erosion and desertification. Many experts argue that food scarcity will be the defining issue of the next several decades, just as ideological tensions between superpowers defined the recent past. (70)

Population growth poses a threat to hunger and insecurity since the soil is threatened by erosion, degradation, desertification, poor management and urbanization. Such threats are signs that the future shall be defined by food scarcity which will be a source of tension in the society for a starving people are incapable of leading a nation. Food scarcity leads to hunger that can even slow down social activities that make life pleasant. Rudo, a character in *Son of the Soil* says, "When she came near the city, she had to concentrate. There were too many buses, too many bicycles, too many people! People! They made her nervous" (41). The too many people found in the city confirm the assertion that human population is constantly growing. Rural exodus is rampant as villagers move to cities for better livelihoods. The congestions of the city do not leave free lands for farming as buildings have occupied the lands. The observation that while many people who need food are born, acres of existing croplands are also lost is not farfetched. Consequently, food scarcity is unavoidably a source of tension and conflicts as reflected among the Dudums in *Son of the Native Soil*. This is made known thus:

The soil and economy Measures ranged from avoiding sharing meals or drinks with the Akan men to putting an end to inter-village marriages between Akan and Anjong. But sterner and more stringent economic measures were proposed by Ubeno and Ekunidi who felt that anything short of an economic warfare against Akan would be innocuous. (68)

Rowntree et al. (2003) aver that “The geological environment is also critical to a wide spectrum of human activities and concerns, such as the relationship between soil fertility and agriculture or the distribution of mineral resources...” (49). The soil is a source of conflict among the Dudum people because they directly earn their livelihood from the soil. Poverty is the order of the day, which is why the Akans constantly provoke the Anjongs who are privileged with fertile soil to war. To prove the economic importance of the soil, the economic boycott the Anjongs put on the Akans adversely affects them, both socially and economically. The impact of the economic war is seen below:

Month had gone by since Anjong declared an economic war against Akan. True, the Akan people were hard hit by the blow. A few petty businesses had been shut down, and eating and drinking houses in Akan market were no longer fully operational. Important celebrations such as Anyajuh’s reburial were put off for lack of sufficient food and drinks for the elaborate ceremonies. As hunger stared the people in the face ... people were sick. (88)

The Anjongs who could no longer tolerate the arrogance of the Akans imposed an economic war on the Akans as a more peaceful way to resist their consistent threats. The war greatly affects the Akans as most of their businesses and social activities are put off as a result of scarcity. Hunger becomes the order of the day and people fall sick signifying that the soil is fundamental to human health. Their misery and ill health affirms Horowitz’s view that, “almost half of the world’s population is still hungry, or badly nourished, or both” (4).

Famine, as a result becomes a threat especially as the few fertile soils appropriate for farming are fast deteriorating.

Global time is an era of time and space compression that facilitates collaboration among nations. Horowitz (1966) advocates that, “If aid from rich countries to low-income countries is to be decisive, the rich countries must pour into the low-income countries a much greater flow of men, materials and skills. They must provide more of their aid on easy terms” (7). His statement sounds laudable, but the disturbing factor which this study questions, is whether binaries have been eclipsed such that interconnectedness and interdependency can promote free exchange for egalitarian society. Katiyo writes thus:

Boss Newton’s farm was very big. He grew tobacco and maize, but mainly tobacco. He also reared dairy cattle, sheep and chickens. He employed many people. Every day, except Saturdays, the head foreman used to sound reveille two hours, or maybe three hours before sunrise.... (52)

Boss Newton is a representation of foreign investors who invests financial capital in third world societies. He recruits natives to work for him. He owns farms, shops and schools, thereby centralizing wealth as the natives who earn meager incomes, working for him, use the income to buy from his shops and to send their children in his schools. The natives cannot make personal investments because, “ ... their wages were not enough to buy what they wanted... they were given credits which were four years old, others were there to pay bicycle credits and start another” (52). The credits they take keep them constantly dependent and “the farm school was only good enough to produce more farm labourer” (53). Their constant state of indebtedness and their insufficient empowerment are strategies to knock them out as entrepreneurs in a competitive world. They are consequently faced with the challenge to raise capital and to develop personal skills so as to meet up with global challenges.

Katiyo's character, Murimi demonstrates through his sense of assiduity and independence as he "had the reputation of being one of the hardest workers in Jena's village"(59). His industriousness signifies that, the Africans as well as other developing nations need to develop self-reliance policies and work extremely hard to improve on their wellbeing. Horowitz (1966) states that, "There is no short cut to a better life. Tremendous efforts and a long, difficult period of transition are unavoidable (6). Thus, for any individual as well as any nation to emerge, remarkable efforts as well as endurance are required Murimi makes lots of sacrifices to be successful as the passage below indicates:

Murimi, got up at the usual time. They went to the field and finished ploughing. The whole field was now completely ploughed. Another few days and the sowing would be done as well. No one else in the village was anywhere near to finishing these jobs. Murimi and Alexio had picked and packed tomatoes and cabbages which were to be taken to the bus stop at Makosa and then sent to Salisbury. In Salisbury, Murimi had arranged with another man to sell the vegetables at the market. (62)

Murimi demonstrates through his hard working nature that the path to success is not smooth. It demands lots of sacrifices and hard work. He trains Alexio who symbolizes the future to understand the importance of sacrifice and investment to growth. He markets the excess of his yields in cities exemplifying that; traditional agriculture which requires mostly intensive labor could be a starting point and a way forward for most poor and developing countries. His outstanding success as a traditional farmer further highlights that an economy must not only be uplifted through industrial agriculture which demands huge capital investments.

Conclusion

This paper which has exhibited the importance of the soil to expansion and growth has highlighted how socio-economic and political powers are secured through oppression; thereby leaving societies in chaos and stagnation. The studied has used postcolonial theory as a critical lens to reflect that the imperial process is still very visible in modern day society as seen through the globalization process. The paper discussed the importance of the soil which displayed that as a source of wealth it attracts investors and also generates conflicts. It further discussed the soil and the economy which revealed that investors invent strategies that disempowered the locals whose dependencies impede them from playing a major role in the global system. The section expresses that hard work and endurance are tracks to economic empowerment. Since it has been revealed that the soil stimulates both prosperity and poverty that reinforce binaries, the conclusion drawn here is that, the soil must be protected and revamped where necessary so as to meet up with societal needs. ___

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