

## **Chapter 2**

### **Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

The main methodology employed by the author was practice-as-research, a method used in recent years for performance based studies such as those highlighted by PARIP.<sup>1</sup>

Biggs, in his paper for PARIP's 2003 conference, cites the UK Arts and Humanities Research Board's definitions of research, lists their three groups of characteristics and suggests that: '[m]ost humanities research offers interpretations rather than answers to problems.'<sup>2</sup> That certainly was the case in this study where the main question was whether anyone who was not born or raised in Ethiopia should write or illustrate a book for Ethiopian children. Biggs argued that the production of such artefacts is not enough because the importance of the research into this problem should also contribute: 'to the advancement of knowledge, understanding and insight.'<sup>3</sup>

When the author first started to write for this audience in 2005 she had neither developed the skills to write nor taken account of the full impact of context. Her first work was rejected by an Ethiopian publisher.<sup>4</sup> Her second attempt two years later led to a suggestion that it would be better to focus on subject matter which she was familiar with and write for an Ethiopian audience but tell it from a western perspective.<sup>5</sup> In spite of more than three years residency in Ethiopia the author is still daunted by the challenge of writing and illustrating for Ethiopian children, a concern shared by other foreign authors and illustrators of Ethiopian literature.<sup>6</sup> There was no issue about whether she could produce books for an Ethiopian audience but when the question asked here is, should

anyone write or illustrate a book for Ethiopian children, it raises a host of other issues relating to post colonial discourse, ethnography and other issues.

The first question one could ask is why write for this market? An acceptable answer could be to meet a growing demand and encourage wider readership which will pave the way for local writers and illustrators to earn a living from this profession. The study into the history of Ethiopian illustrated children's literature provided evidence of the dearth of material and the lack of Ethiopian writers and illustrators sufficiently skilled and able (both financially and physically) to meet this growing need.<sup>7</sup> There is no denying the talent and desire among Ethiopians, both in their own land and in the Diaspora, to fulfil this, yet relatively few can commit to such a mammoth task due to the economic restrictions and cultural restraints such as religion, language and other factors which vary across the regions of the country and throughout the Diaspora. Volunteers and those funded by charities or the sale of books to a wider audience can afford to produce publications, and even have them translated to local languages to meet some needs. In this respect the author was no exception. Her concern centred more on how such writers and artists can produce literature that is of a high standard and appropriate to that audience.

This unease is raised in essays by Maddy and MacCann who attempt: 'to call attention to the way many Western writers for children promote a damaged image of Africa and the African personality – an image that is not essentially different from the distorted picture presented by their journalistic colleagues.'<sup>8</sup> They suggest that: '[to] move into a post-colonial era, concepts such as power-sharing, coexisting cultures, and mutual respect must find their way into the fictions that appropriate Africa as their

setting.’<sup>9</sup> The author has attempted to include such ideas in the three stories. For example, the narrator of *Back in Time* is the ‘conscience’ of a white child who had, in an earlier existence, been the ‘conscience’ of a young Ethiopian prince. The setting is Ethiopia, past and present, but viewed through western eyes. In *The Storyteller* all characters are of African origin living in western society and exploring the culture and history of Ethiopia from which lessons could be learned. The illustrations in the picture story, *Ten Donkeys*, are taken from current observations of life in rural Ethiopia, respectfully showing a contemporary society relying on hard work, mutual support and family values. Would this be sufficient to satisfy the critics who rightly have concerns about the value and appropriateness of materials entering the African market? The likelihood that, in spite of thorough research, feedback and reflection, these publications would still be viewed as a post-colonial discourse is as strong as ever.

### **Post-colonial Discourse**

Post-colonialism is an issue in spite of the fact that Ethiopia is the only African nation that has never been colonised.<sup>10</sup> However, Ethiopia does share many characteristics with other colonised countries including strong reliance on western nations for development support which includes education and learning resources. The reign of Haile Selassie I was interrupted by the invasion of Italian forces in 1935 and their subsequent control of much of the country until 1941.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile the Emperor resided in Bath, England, and was supported by the British forces in the battle to regain control of Ethiopia. This possibly accounts for the strong links between these nations and the adoption of English as the language of learning which is still used in secondary schools and higher education

institutions. Yet an Anglo-Ethiopian agreement in 1942: ‘acknowledged Ethiopia to be “a free and independent state”, but reserved many British privileges and deferred territorial issues.’<sup>12</sup>

In the field of post-colonial arts and literature, some of the illustrators and writers who have gained international endorsement, such as Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong’o,<sup>13</sup> have lived, studied and produced literature in their later lives outside the country of their birth, yet they retain the culture from their roots.<sup>14</sup> There are others, like the author, who moved to new places, settled for a while, learnt about this different environment and its people which did not share the same culture and wrote stories about them. Michael Morpurgo is one such children’s writer who happily admits to this in his autobiographical book *Singing for Mrs Pettigrew - A Story-maker’s Journey*.<sup>15</sup>

When writing about another culture, language is one trait which can expose the author’s limited knowledge and understanding of a place, particularly in other countries including those colonised by Britain. Ngugi describes the use of English in Africa as: ‘a “cultural bomb” which aids not only in the blotting out of traditional customs, language, and history but also functions in the service of neo-colonialism...’<sup>16</sup> Many African countries have more than one written language and Gérard noted that: ‘the first half of the nineteenth century was the period when the verbal art of Black Africa began to develop a written form alongside oral output.’<sup>17</sup> In the same paper he commented on Europe’s contribution, first through ‘colonial imperialism’ which put an end to this phase, and the: ‘introduction of the alphabet.’<sup>18</sup>

Language issues can be partly overcome if access to translation facilities is available. In writing for children in Ethiopia, providing a version in Amharic<sup>19</sup> (or

Tigrinyan or any of the other major Ethiopian languages) might enable wider readership, yet the difficulties faced in trying to create believable characters and situations can still elude a writer who is not immersed in that culture, regardless of whether they live or were born in the same country.

How objective should a writer be? George Orwell noted: ‘that what one sees in the colonial world depends on the circumstances which allow one to be in the position of observer.’<sup>20</sup> Writers like Jane Kurtz, who spent her childhood in Ethiopia, no doubt have a different perspective to those whose first experience of the country is as an adult with a specific role such as the author, Elizabeth Laird, and illustrator, Eric Robson, who bring not only preconceptions based on received information about the place they are visiting, but also comparisons with their home and other places they have visited. Spurr wrote: ‘[t]he hiatus of perception is literally a matter of interest; one sees what it profits one to see, what one has a share or stake in, a claim upon.’<sup>21</sup>

Living in Addis Ababa and travelling around the country as an employee, as well as a tourist, particularly during periods of unrest when it was possible to have a glimpse behind the façade, helped the author to better understand the people but this was no substitute for being brought up in the language, and learning the other cultural traits of a place. Consequently, in drawing Ethiopian characters and putting them into a context which is still alien to her own life, the author accepts that she risks ‘negrophobia’ recognising that: ‘African ethics, norms, and behavioral patterns have been misused and misunderstood by Westerners – by observers who have never tried to comprehend the meaning of religious community, and domestic life practices.’<sup>22</sup> There is a danger of portraying the country and its peoples as: ‘less developed’<sup>23</sup> or describing it through what

might be seen as superior Western eyes.<sup>24</sup> It is difficult to portray Africans, or people of any race or culture which is different to that of the author, and describe their various characteristics and personalities as naturally as possible but with humility while avoiding being patronizing. It is another problem for which there is no easy answer yet many great children's writers such as Michael Morpurgo<sup>25</sup> may appear to have mastered the skill of writing about people from other countries or different races within our own country. An honest evaluation of such literature, however, must take account of feedback from those readers who come from the country or culture being depicted. There is scope for further research to be undertaken in this area of writing for diverse cultures.

Sprinkling in a few Amharic phrases was not a solution as Michael Daniel Ambatchew, one of a number of Ethiopians who read through the story texts and provided feedback, suggested in this comment on one draft of *Back in Time*: 'You really have to think about which language people are speaking with to each other; just adding a word like *behuala* sounds wrong. This is a big area you have to think about throughout the novel. No easy answers.'<sup>26</sup> In a face to face discussion Michael Daniel Ambatchew reassured the author and explained that Ethiopian illustrators have also misrepresented a different culture in their own country.<sup>27</sup> It would appear that, as long as writers and artists from other cultures do their research thoroughly, their work should be acceptable.

Could another solution to the problem of authenticity involve the use of local folk tales and myths? This was to be the focus of *The Storyteller* but it proved to have weaknesses. Michael Daniel Ambatchew's comments included this one. 'It felt like a contrived collection of stories whose relationship to one another and authenticity did not quite ring true. Moreover, most of them are the bare bones of the stories rather than the

fleshy and juicy elaboration story-tellers usually add to them.’<sup>28</sup> Reproducing authentic African folk tales in a new and exciting style for a different audience remains a challenge to those brought up in a different culture. Yulisa Amadu Maddy, a Sierra Leonian writer, raised awareness of the dangers of creating stereotypes of Africa and Africans and voiced his concerns about using folk tales.<sup>29</sup> But he also identified good practice including Frank P.Arauja’s *The Perfect Orange* which introduces: ‘the reader to that very special outgoing kindness of the African spirit: the spirit of giving.’<sup>30</sup>

### **Ethnography**

The author gathered information from Ethiopia through document research and by listening to people, questioning them and observing different aspects of their life. She was undertaking ethnographic research despite having no specific training in ethnography. Sangasubana identified the characteristics of ethnography as having: ‘certain distinctive characteristics... First it is conducted on-site or in a naturalistic setting in which real people live. Second, it is personalized since you as the researcher are both observer and participant in the lives of those people.’<sup>31</sup> Living and working among Ethiopians for almost three years including one year of more in-depth research, the author was able to collect data in a variety of ways, discuss the findings with local people and get feedback on the creative and critical writing from some of them. She was able to observe changes in availability of children’s literature over a period of nearly seven years and accessed a wider group of experts in the field. As well as simply observing life and keeping records (photographs, sketches, notes etc.), and doing archival research of materials located in Ethiopia, the author also carried out interviews and gathered oral

history. Between 2008 and 2009 interviews took place with the following writers for children: Michael Daniel Ambatchew, Tesfaye Gebre Mariam, Alula Pankhurst, Yohannes Gebregiorgis, Meron Feleke and Fikirte Addis; artists: Mulugeta Gebre Kidan, Atlabatchew Reda, Fikru Gebremariam, Yihenew Worku, Mihret Dawit, Zenah Asfaw, Assefa Gebre Kidan, Yodit Wolde Mariam, Abiyalew Assefa; publishers; Fitsame Teferra (Habte Books), Hishe Hailu (Kuraz International Publishers), and others with an interest in children's literature: Hirit Belai (HaHuBooks), Merga Yonas (The Reporter), Solomon Nigussie (student), Girma Alamayehu (Head of Civics and Ethical Education). The author also corresponded by email or telephone with non-Ethiopian writers and illustrators including: Jane Kurtz, Elizabeth Laird, Eric Robson, Frances Somers-Cocks and Martha Hardy. In 2011 the following writers, publishers and illustrators were interviewed: Mary Jaffer, Gassan Bagersh, Senayit Worku Mamo and John Kilaka. Some were interviewed on more than one occasion and the views of a number of other Ethiopians were taken into account. Examples of their correspondence and other notes are included in appendix 1.

### Oral History and Interviews

Both stories (*Back in Time* and *The Storyteller*) include historical information. In describing these events there was a dilemma in deciding which sources to choose in order to avoid errors, insinuation and patronisation. Each author or editor of history interprets primary and secondary evidence, analysing it and making judgements and conclusions which are no doubt influenced by their own knowledge, culture and position. The British expedition to free the prisoners of Theodros II, featured in *Back in Time*, has been well

documented but the sources used were all written in English.<sup>32</sup> When carrying out the research into this period the author made decisions about what to include and dismiss and how to make the selection palatable to the intended readers.<sup>33</sup>

The choice of what to include is essentially an interpretation of history perceived by white visitors or settlers in Ethiopia.<sup>34</sup> Even the rituals of storytelling, taken to be an aspect of life in Ethiopia in the past, may not have existed in the actual location and timescale described in *The Storyteller*.<sup>35</sup> To verify some of these issues the author tried to gather evidence from Ethiopians and people who had close links with that country. She spoke to students in Addis Ababa and colleagues working in the field of education, as well as to publishers, authors and illustrators. Contact with some of these individuals continued through email when she left the country.

When it comes to more recent history, such as the period of military government also referred to in *Back in Time*, oral and written sources are widely available in Ethiopia. Yet there are differences of opinion, particularly between the generations who witnessed and lived through the period as adults and those who were born during those times.<sup>36</sup> Among the positive points of gathering oral history one is the value of identifying what events meant to those involved in them, and yet, on the contrary, they can prove false, partly because people only remember what they want to remember and also because the interviewer can misinterpret their views.<sup>37</sup>

Oral tradition is associated with the telling of stories, tales and proverbs passed on orally through generations (as referred to in *The Storyteller*) although, with communication extending across regions and countries through trade, technology and travel, attributing stories to specific regions and groups can be problematic and, for this

reason, most of the stories listed in appendix 2 are not sub-classified although those selected for the website [www.ethiopianfolktales.com](http://www.ethiopianfolktales.com) are grouped according to regions. Nevertheless, some claim it is possible to identify the differences in the: ‘diverse storytelling traditions of regions such as Afar, Gambella, Oromiya, and Tigray.’<sup>38</sup>

Oral history according to UNESCO: ‘is a record of an event (an interview, a story-telling, the recitation of an epic poem, etc.) that took place in the recent past, not a surviving relic of that more distant past of which the narrator speaks ... a detached and academic process of inquiry into the memories of people who have experienced the recent past directly.’<sup>39</sup> Life under the three governments<sup>40</sup> falls into the experiences of many adults in Ethiopia. Although no formal interview techniques were used, over the period of seven years of living in and visiting the country the author was able to have conversations with different work colleagues and friends which influenced her own views of the country’s history. Having been involved in the publication of materials for teaching civics and ethical education for a year, the opportunities to discuss the past frequently emerged. Discussions on the military regime raised angry emotions, particularly among the generation who had been university students at the time of the Red Terror,<sup>41</sup> yet many acknowledged the problems which emerged in Haile Selassie’s reign. However, there was still a danger of assuming who supported a particular government and who was against it on the basis of their social situation and education. Thus, in writing both stories, the author took care to avoid trying to be rigidly accurate about the political past.

When it came to social conditions, the experiences shared by these colleagues proved useful though not comprehensive. Those interviewed generally lived in urban

areas yet they had come from different economic backgrounds. It was a common language, English, that acted as the main denominator thus restricting access to those who had completed secondary education. Gaps in knowledge therefore remain. If the author had the ability and opportunity to converse with people from a wider educational and social background, maybe the writing could have had broader acceptance and impact. This raises another issue that arises when working across a communication divide.

### The Issue of Ethics

In describing the main character in *The Storyteller*, there was no specific person who influenced the author, rather elements taken from different people she had met or seen. The characters in *Back in Time* were easier to visualize since they were based on real people who she lived and worked with, professional families who had aspirations and education. Gathering information from others raises the issue of ethics. In many cases the author explained that the purpose was to satisfy the need for authentic evidence for this thesis, particularly when gathering stories and questioning about the past. With the exception of the stories recorded, which are attributed to the sources, and specific interviews with artists and writers, the method used to gather information was simply by listening and memorizing the main facts then making notes after the event. When the discussions contributed towards the development of a character or story-line, such as Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Addis Ababa<sup>42</sup> in *Back in Time*, there was no written or even spoken acknowledgement. Kvale<sup>43</sup> poses a number of questions relating to the ethics of questioning and, in response to issues such as confidentiality and the consequences of the study for the participating subjects, the author's justification was that the characters in the stories were largely fictional and could not be identified as people even though the

situations were often very real and the historical characters depicted were based on research findings.

When asking questions of illustrators and writers for the theoretical sections of the paper, the same questions were asked of each and concerned the sources of inspiration to take up illustration, the education and training received, influences on their work and examples of published work. All were acknowledged in the references and, although contributors did not give formal consent,<sup>44</sup> they were aware of the author's intentions to publish the findings. In publishing this thesis the consequences for contributors will be negligible, any criticism being supported and explained. On the contrary, in raising awareness of the existence and quality of certain individuals and their work, the outcomes could be regarded as positive. One issue that had to be taken into consideration with the interview questions was the language. All questions and answers were in English which was the second (and possibly third) language of the majority of those interviewed. This sometimes required probing questions to generate responses and, in some cases, the interviewer was unable to gain the required information. Opportunism enabled the author to gather further information from unplanned sources, for example when attending a meeting of publishers with a representative from the Ministry of Education.<sup>45</sup> Use of email and telephone conversations enabled the author to gain first hand information from sources she could not meet in person and to verify facts following discussions. Feedback on the stories was provided in this format from colleagues and publishers<sup>46</sup> whose views and recommendations are taken account of in the editing and amendments which are ongoing.

Another source of information was through observation and capturing images in sketches, photographs and videos. The question of ethics arises again in this process. Whilst there are restrictions relating to taking photographs and film of children in the U.K., the current situation in Ethiopia is not controlled and, in some places where families expect payment by tourists for such images, it is actually encouraged.<sup>47</sup> Although photographic images of people were not included in this thesis, the issue of gaining permission and copyright for publications is contentious and is likely to be influenced by western legislature<sup>48</sup> and individuals' increased awareness of their rights.

The main reasons for gathering this type of information was to understand and relate to how people live and behave in their everyday lives. Viewing another culture as a tourist restricts one's access to real life situations. Living among a people of different cultures enables greater opportunity to witness and share in many cultural and daily activities. One example is the Ethiopian coffee ceremony<sup>49</sup> which the author first encountered in a hotel performed for the benefit of international guests. Later experiences of this cultural ritual provided evidence of its common application and format in the homes of many Ethiopian families and also in the work place and restaurants.

Gathering evidence by photographs enabled the author to have a resource which could be referred to at any time, was specific to different groups, individuals and their situations or actions (unlike photographs in books or on the internet) and provided a much more realistic picture of their culture. To achieve this, the camera was sometimes given to Ethiopians to take photographs which they found interesting, or images were taken from vehicles or other obscured viewpoints. If such material was then used without

asking permission there could have been an ethical issue but, in this case, it was used as reference material. Pink<sup>50</sup> has identified and described the value of using visual resources for ethnographic research and the experience of using it in this project was important. Consideration of what to use and include within the stories as well as the supporting papers had to take account of its value and factual correctness as well as preserving the dignity of the people that were involved. This required a process of reflection which will continue well beyond the publication of this thesis. Redrafting, rewriting and reviewing creative work on the basis of self evaluation and external feedback is a necessary process until it is either published or put aside.

### **Reflexivity**

One concern identified when writing the stories was the use of tales and proverbs identified in other published sources. The rewriting of such literature is not a plagiarism issue, yet, retaining the same message and voice with the appropriate element of performance without reproducing a tale word for word, proved difficult in *The Storyteller*. If a story is not taken direct from its source is it eligible? Finnegan wrote:

[i]t is true that many collections of African stories give the impression of fixity just because they have been written down and printed. But in fact, in most African cases that have been fully examined, this variability of tales according to the teller and the occasion is one of their most apparent characteristics. There is no one *correct* version or form.<sup>51</sup>

This on-going reflection on the content and style was important to achieve a piece of writing (or illustration) that was authentic, relevant to the audience and acceptable to those whose culture is described or spoken. To enable this reflection, discussion and debate with other writers, illustrators and those with a personal knowledge and awareness

of the context was important and led to reconsideration and the task of rewriting the texts of both the creative and the critical pieces as well as redrafting the illustrations. In spite of thorough primary and secondary research and the experience gained from living in Ethiopia, the author felt more rigour was necessary to ensure professionalism.

She relied on a number of sources of individual and group feedback including academic support in the university, writers' critique groups and email responses to the papers, illustrations and stories submitted within this thesis. She also checked many of the facts by gaining first-hand experience, visiting sites, meeting people and taking photographs, videos and notes for reference; and through documentary evidence from written and electronic sources gathered to verify most of the facts and opinions presented. One example of this was the research into Theodros which began in 2008 when reading Marsden's newly published *The Barefoot Emperor*.<sup>52</sup> *Back in Time* was at that time in its early draft stages but, with the discovery of this historic and well loved character, it took a detour. There followed deeper research into Theodros II through history books, on the internet and through discussions with Ethiopian historians and students. Although most documents were written in English by non Ethiopians, the author wanted to be more sympathetic to this character held in esteem by many past and contemporary Ethiopians as witnessed by books and artwork relating to him.<sup>53</sup>

The need for reflection, particularly with the stories, will continue in order to reach the standards required for publication. Although some of the papers have been distributed to journals and presented at conferences,<sup>54</sup> they need further work to ensure wider access. Two stories have been circulated to publishers and agents<sup>55</sup> but further work is necessary to meet the relevant markets' needs including amending *The Storyteller*

which was written as a short novel to meet the requirements of this submission. The processes and skills gained through this study have had a more wide reaching impact in preparing the author to write for cultural diverse groups in Britain.

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<sup>1</sup> PARIP — Practice as Research in Performance — was a five-year project directed by Professor Baz Kershaw and the Department of Drama: Theatre, Film, Television at the University of Bristol. Its 'objectives were to investigate creative-academic issues raised by practice as research, where performance is defined[...] as performance media: theatre, dance, film, video and television. As a result of PARIP's investigations and in collaboration with colleagues, educational institutions and professional bodies throughout the UK and Europe PARIP aimed to develop national frameworks for the encouragement of the highest standards in representing practical-creative research within academic contexts. Sources: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/parip/>., downloaded on 1/7/2011 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Practice\\_research](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Practice_research), downloaded on 8/2/2011

<sup>2</sup> Biggs, M. (2003) 'The rôle of 'the work' in art and design research' presented to 2003 PARIP National Conference Source <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/parip/biggs.htm>., downloaded on 8/2/2011 He listed these three characteristics from the AHRB's definition of research: 'it must define a series of research questions that will be addressed or problems that will be explored in the course of the research. It must also define its objectives in terms of answering those questions or reporting on the results of the research project; it must specify a research context for the questions to be addressed or problems to be explored. You must specify why it is important that these particular questions should be answered or problems explored; what other research is being or has been conducted in this area; and what particular contribution this particular project will make to the advancement of knowledge, understanding and insights in this area[; and] it must specify the research methods for addressing and answering the research questions. You must state how, in the course of the research project, you are going to set about answering the questions that have been set, or exploring the matters to be explored. You should also explain the rationale for your chosen research methods and why you think they provide the most appropriate means by which to answer the research questions.'

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Feedback from Gassan Bagersh, Managing Director of Shama Publishing in June 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Feedback from Michael Daniel Ambatchew in September 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Revealed in a discussion with Elizabeth Laird and through email correspondence with Eric Robson in Dec 2010.

<sup>7</sup> This will be referred to in the next chapter on the History of Ethiopian Illustrated Children's Literature.

<sup>8</sup> Maddy, Y.A. & MacCann, D. (1996) *African Images in Juvenile Literature – Commentaries on Neocolonialist Fiction*, Jefferson: McFarland & Co. Inc., p4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid p13.

<sup>10</sup> Punter D. (2000) *Postcolonial Imaginings Fictions of a New World Order*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, wrote 'The whole of Africa, with the single exception of Abyssinia, was under European rule.' p1.

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<sup>11</sup> This period is described in Henze, P. (2004) *Layers of Time – A History of Ethiopia*, Addis Ababa: Shama Books, pp 216 – 237

<sup>12</sup> Ibid p 235.

<sup>13</sup> Although both authors were brought up in their home countries of Nigeria and Kenya where they studied and worked, political situations resulted in them later living elsewhere. ‘... in 1970 Nigerian government again took the region and Achebe got involved with prevailing political parties. Soon Achebe was frustrated by elitism and corruption and resigned from politics. Achebe lived for several years in United States during the decade of 70,s. In 1990 Chinua Achebe again came to live in U.S after a major car accident which made him partially disabled.’ Source <http://chinuaachebe.net/>., downloaded on 22/2/2011. ‘While Ngugi was in Britain for the launch and promotion of *Devil on the Cross*, he learned about the Moi regime’s plot to eliminate him on his return, or as coded, give a red carpet welcome on arrival at Jomo Kenyatta Airport. This forced him into exile, first in Britain (1982 –1989), and then the U.S. after (1989-2002), during which time, the Moi dictatorship hounded him trying, unsuccessfully, to get him expelled from London and from other countries he visited.’ <http://www.ngugiwathiongo.com/bio/bio-home.htm>., downloaded on 22/2/2011

<sup>14</sup> Ross, R.L. (1999) *Colonial and Postcolonial Fiction*, New York: Garland Publishing Inc.

<sup>15</sup> Morpurgo M. (2006) *Singing for Mrs Pettigrew A Story-maker’s Journey* London: Walker Books Ltd ‘...by the time I set pen to paper, I feel I am living inside that story. I must know the places; I must know the people.’ p27.

<sup>16</sup> Ross (1999) op cit pviii.

<sup>17</sup> Gérard, A. (1990) *Contexts of African Literature*, Amsterdam – Atlanta: Rodopi, p137.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid p137 - 9.

<sup>19</sup> This language uses Fidel – based on the traditional Ge’ez alphabet form.

<sup>20</sup> Spurr, D. (2004) *The Rhetoric of Empire - Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing and Imperial Administration*, Durham: Duke University Press, p191, referring to Orwell’s 1936 essay, *Shooting an Elephant* First published: *New Writing*,.GB, London. autumn 1936.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid p192. He also acknowledged Ethiopia’s legacy in creative writing: ‘While the written art was thus being securely established in Ethiopia, a second wave of literacy swept over vast areas of Sub-Saharan Africa with the Muslim conquest during the first few centuries after *hijra*.’ p48.

<sup>22</sup> Maddy, Y.A. & MacCann, D. op.cit. describe a character in Nancy Farmer’s book *Do You Know Me?*, ‘he is seen to have little capacity to deal with abstractations, to compare, analyze, predict, hypothesize, infer, deduce, or reason beyond what the concrete conditions of the moment suggest to him. This is one of many signs of Negrophobia in this text’ p64.

<sup>23</sup> Spurr, D. op cit p157.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. What we think we see may not be the full picture or may be misinterpreted by western eyes which have a ‘commanding view’. p15. The writer literally sees the landscape of the non-Western world in terms either of the promise for westernized development or of the disappointment of that promise.’ p19.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Morpurgo’s *The Kites are Flying* (Walker Books: London 2009) portrays children in Palestine and Israel through the eyes of a journalist. Morpurgo discussed this and his other works in the Richard Dimpleby Lecture on 15/2/2011, [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00ymf57](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00ymf57)., downloaded 13/7/2011.

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<sup>26</sup> Email received from Michael Daniel Ambatchew in June 2010 stated: You have a really winner in this one. Congratulations! Obviously, there is room for improvement and I have some comments; I'd like to see better descriptions of the principal characters so I can visualize them, but the main comments are about plausibility (see appendix 1)

Martha Hardy (children's book illustrator) included these comments: Great chapter length!

I am a little anxious about the interest in the queen....though it's a great and useful link...but would she really be that interested? It concerns me that I forget that she is interested in that....

Am anxious about making more comments as each time I think of something it gets sorted in the next chapter!

So far I would say it's a great page turner, the narrator needs something but think that's about to happen? Still a little unsure about the queen interest but she is so useful for the plot and doesn't seem contrived I'm just not certain. But it's taught me loads and apart from some of the earlier conversations between Teddy and Vicky over the 'phone' I haven't noticed I was learning, if you know what I mean! I like the characters too. Sorry this isn't much and the notes are so unsure, basically I like it so I am not sure I can suggest improvements but know that just saying its great isn't that much help!

Feel free to send me more anytime (asap - I want to know what happens)!

p.s looking forward to seeing pics - I think black and white line would be lovely but I also want to see eg her travel documents, the books they have been looking at, the photos etc. Like the scrapbook travel diary idea. I am keen on that!

<sup>27</sup> The author met Michael Daniel Amatchew in May 2011 and discussed issues relating to this thesis.

<sup>28</sup> Email received from Michael Daniel Ambatchew in June 2010 regarding *The Storyteller* about which he wrote: 'I'm afraid this didn't quite work for me. It felt like a contrived collection of stories whose relationship to one another and authenticity did quite ring true. Moreover, most of them are the bare bones of the stories rather than the fleshy and juicy elaboration story-tellers usually add to them

<sup>29</sup> Maddy, Y.A. & MacCann, D. op.cit. 'The issue of modern urban culture as a source of generating new tales as well as modernizing old ones has become the subject of folklore studies all over the world.' p131.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid p133. 'For the very youngest child, Wendy Harmann's wildlife counting book, *One Sun Rises* (illustrated by Nicolass Martitz; Dutton, 1994), and Ifeoma Ohyefulu's "*A*" *is for Africa* (Cobblehill Books, 1993) complement each other in a unique fashion.' p130.

<sup>31</sup> Sangasubana, N. (2011) 'How to Conduct Ethnographic Research', *The Qualitative Report* Vol 16 Number [www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR16-2/sangasubananat.pdf](http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR16-2/sangasubananat.pdf) ., last accessed 28/7/2011, p567. Sangasubana was referring to the work of Angrosino, M. (2007) *Doing ethnographic and observational research* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

<sup>32</sup> Henze, Stanley, Pankhurst, Marsden etc

<sup>33</sup> An early version of Chapter Three, *Back in Time* (September 2008) reads: 'It was here that archaeologists discovered the remains of early humans. Ethiopia was known as the 'cradle of civilisation'.' he told her. As Solomon pointed the mobile phone camera at the picture he took Vicky on a voyage of discovery, travelling back through space and time to see where Lucy, the earliest human, had been discovered. 'She was tiny and wore no clothes as she hunted for food with her family. The land was covered in plants and wild animals which also searched for food and shelter.' he explained.

By October 2010 this was reduced to: "Here is where early humans were discovered. Their bones were found by archaeologists. Ethiopia was known as the 'cradle of civilisation'." he told her slowly, trying to use correct English. As Teddy pointed the mobile phone camera at the picture he took Vicky on a voyage of discovery, travelling back through space and time to see where Lucy, the earliest human, had been discovered. "She was little -she wore no clothes - she hunted for food with her family. The land was covered in plants and wild animals." he explained.

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<sup>34</sup> Maddy, Y.A. & MacCann, D. op.cit described the dangers of distorting history in their analysis of *The Year of the Leopard Song* (1992) by Eric Campbell, p20.

<sup>35</sup> Spurr, D. op cit raised the question of what is authentic, p 49.

<sup>36</sup> The author visited the museum dedicated to the ‘Terror’ in Addis Ababa in 2010 and discussed the period of military government (1975 – 1991) with Ethiopian colleagues and friends of different ages whose perspectives differed greatly.

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.sriettec.org/tah/Summer\\_Institute\\_Documents/Summer\\_Institute\\_2009/LessonPlans/Remembering%20Slavery\\_Revised%203-19-09.pdf](http://www.sriettec.org/tah/Summer_Institute_Documents/Summer_Institute_2009/LessonPlans/Remembering%20Slavery_Revised%203-19-09.pdf)., downloaded on 13/12/2010. This document identifies the pros and cons oral history as in the interviewing of ex slaves in the US in 1930s.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Daniel Ambatchew (2002) ‘From Oral Artifact to Written Literature: Reinventing Ethiopian Folktales’ *Sankofa – a Journal of African Children’s and Young Adult Literature* Baltimore: Sankofa, p10.

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/ramp/html/r9006e/r9006e0k.htm>., downloaded on 13/12/2010.

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<sup>40</sup> The Imperial period ended in 1974 with the imprisonment, and subsequent death of Haile Selassie I, followed by the military regime and the current federal democratic republic, the FDRE.

<sup>41</sup> The Red Terror, a campaign to eradicate Mengistu’s opponents, is remembered in a museum situated in Meskel Square, Addis Ababa. The term was used by many people the author interviewed and appears in literature including this quote from Meredith, P. (2006) *The States of Africa* London: The Free Press: ‘Mengistu next turned ruthlessly against his civilian opponents, embarking on what he referred to as a campaign of ‘red terror’, licensing civilian groups – the lumpen-proletariat of the slums – to act on his behalf.’ p246

<sup>42</sup> This discussion led to a misinterpretation of events which was only resolved after two years when the author unearthed conflicting information which needed to be verified.

<sup>43</sup> Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews An Introduction to Qualitative Research Writing* London: Sage Publications p119-120

<sup>44</sup> The author did not request signed permission to use stories, information or illustrations.

<sup>45</sup> The author was able to meet publishers and illustrators of school text books during her work with the MOE Civics and Ethical Education Department in 2008-2009

<sup>46</sup> The scripts of the two short novels were sent to Michael Daniel Ambatchew, Martha Hardy and Hirit Belai who each gave comprehensive feedback which was used to amend the stories. The story *Back in Time* was sent to a number of publishers including those who specialise in books for reluctant readers such as Ransom Publishing and Badger Publishing. It was also entered for competitions, including Chicken House 2010, and sent to agents. The author has established links with two publishing houses in Ethiopia: Shama Books is publishing *Ten Donkeys*, and Habte Books, has published *Amen at Home*, and both are discussing further contracts.

<sup>47</sup> In the South Omo Valley an agreed payment of 1Birr was made for each photograph to the various individuals in 2005. Other photographs and video clips used as resources for illustrations were taken by the author without payment and sometimes without permission.

<sup>48</sup> Particularly with external sources of loans such as World Bank Funding for children’s book publications.

<sup>49</sup> The coffee ceremony is performed by women in many households across many different regions although it is not a universal practice in Ethiopia.

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<sup>50</sup> Pink, S. (2007 2<sup>nd</sup> edition) *Doing Visual Ethnography*, London: Sage.

<sup>51</sup> Finnegan, R. (1976) *Oral Literature in Africa*, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, p329.

<sup>52</sup> Marsden, P. (2008) *The Barefoot Emperor: An Ethiopian Tragedy*, London: Harper Collins.

<sup>53</sup> The author has illustrated a bilingual storybook about Tewodros written by Hirit Belai.

<sup>54</sup> The history paper was presented to the International Ethiopian Conference, Addis Ababa (2009), the Anglo Ethiopian Society Conference, London (2010) and edited for the Sankofa journal (2011). The paper on storytelling was presented to the International Creative Writing Conference, London (2011).

<sup>55</sup> *Ten Donkeys* has been accepted by Shama Books Publishers.