

# “White Terror and Ghosts of Kenya”: Postcolonial, Socio-Political Imagery and Narratives of Kenyan Diasporas

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**ABSTRACT:** “White Terror” (2013), a BBC documentary details colonial atrocities in Kenya and thereafter state of emergency. I argue, ghosts (memories) of the atrocities still haunt a few remaining colonial survivors. Socio-political colonial structures were inherited in post-independence Kenya. The documentary based on Harvard’s History Professor Caroline Elkins (2005) research was evidenced in a legal suit of five colonial survivors against the British government for torture. Post-2007 ethno-political conflicts in Kenya can be linked to misappropriations in the 1954 Swynerton land tenure reforms. British occupation of native land sparked an insurgency that resulted in a state emergency (1952-1960), and later turned into struggle for independence. To Kenyans, Mau Mau (largely Kikuyus) were freedom fighters, but inhuman savage terrorists to colonial agents. Geographical annexing of land placed the Kikuyu, a dominant ethnic group close to the colonial capital, while the rest of the tribes were disbursed in the peripheries. In postcolonial Kenya, political and economic disparities herald power struggles between dominant ethnicities, in the case of Kenya; Kikuyu, Luo and Kalenjin. Postcolonial theory was a result of colonial experience, “the testimonies of the third world countries and discourses of minorities within geographical and political divisions of “East and West”, “North and South” (Bhabha 1994). First generational Kenyans survived colonialism, but retain narratives of the struggle over colonial domination. Using a postcolonial and discourse theoretic qualitative methodology for documentary and interviews analysis, this paper traces narratives of postcolonial Kenya and impacts on present day social political challenges.

**KEYWORDS:** postcolonialism, socio-political narratives, colonial imagery, post-independence Kenya

## **Introduction**

Kenya in the 1800s before the arrival of colonialists was a sparse land ungoverned, un-industrialised and idyllic. There were unexplored cultures that determined social and political interactions between communities strewn across the land. Colonial Kenya under the British empire was referred as the White Man’s Country. “White man’s land” was invented as an expression describing 19th Century European colonization of Africa into patchwork of colonies, the exploration and exploitation of resources (Morgan 1963). Galia (1995) argues that the myth of Kenya Colony, functioned through recursive tropes of the picturesque, the transcendent and the primeval that are manifest not only in the writings of colonials themselves, but also in accounts of Kenyans produced in the period after independence. I argue, existing hegemonic and counter-hegemonic narratives on colonialism in Kenya in the public sphere, particularly Western media and academia emanate from knowledge and experience of a colonial past and a modern world. This way, the narratives encompass North’s (2005, 112) submission that development of British institutions in Kenya made a stage for the advancement of structures of impersonal exchange, which acted as foundations of long term economic development. To illustrate, Africa was lucrative with rich raw material essential for the rapid industrial revolution in the West at the turn of the 19th century. Yet, it was derogatively referred to as “the dark continent.”

The aim of colonialism was to import an ideology of enlightenment to illuminate the continent through education, religion, social and economic culture. Under the philosophy of three Cs, civilization, Christianity and commerce, Africans were relegated to bear the colonial presence as forced labourers or conscripted soldiers. Some were pushed in settlements camps or homelands as in the case of South Africa, Rhodesia now Zimbabwe and Kenya (Elkins 2005). The methods were to ensure absolute dominance and maximization of profits from land and labour for commercial purposes. Guha (1989) avers, whereas the European bourgeoisie had come to power by forging a hegemonic coalition with workers and peasants, there were no parallel experiences of power in colonial world. Rather, the main concern of the colonial agency was to exercise

dominance, but not hegemony. The imperial colonial envoys would bring a complete metamorphosis in the way and life of indigenous communities found in Kenya, like many other African colonies. The rhetoric joke became, “whether you were married or lived in Kenya” - a satirical attitude of Kenyan settlers described as promiscuous and morally arrogant (Elkins 2005). Such postcolonial inferences challenge imperial misrepresentation and disavowal of African morality which is not only a form of social essentialization but also enacted geopolitical divisions.

Having established that decisions to determine affairs of Africans occurred without their consultations, we can consider that Africans were confronted with colonial boundaries. For instance, in Kenya, citizens were separated along ethnic lines. Thus, ethnic marginalization continues to bear negative effects on the country’s social and economic makeup. Ndege (2009, 3) avers that in Kenya, colonial boundaries are to blame for negative tenacious ethnic aggression that emerged as communities competed for colonial resources. At the onset of colonialism, Kenya was composed of peoples of ethnic groups and lineages. They shared common bonds through marriages, trade and seldom had territorial warfare. Pre-colonial Kenyans had a traditional political organization headed by chiefdoms and scant kingdoms like that of Nabongo Mumia in the Western part of Kenya. Their religious preserves were connected to nature and deities. The economic activities of the people of Kenya were based on barter trade, mongering, pastoralism and farming. Communities exchanged goods and services to sustain their economic livelihoods. Kenya of the 1800s had idyllic, rudimental, yet, essential social and economic pursuits that were not recognized within the Eurocentric definition of modernisation. However, these activities were essential in sustaining communities and varied regarding geographical placements. Elkins (2005) provides that the Kikuyu suffered a bitter fate of colonialism, when their lands were parcelled out for commercial farming. In the wake of colonialism, land remained an object of contention. Although there were pre-existing ethnic disparities in pre-colonial Kenya, its 44 tribes generated a livelihood dependant on geographical location. All in all, the economic mainstay centered on practices that were connected to the land. For this reason, Africans clashed with the colonial administration when they were forced from their lands into settlements. Suffice it to say, land resource was part of a native livelihood and determined the development of its society. Under the infamous Swynnerton 1954 land tenure plan, the land was leased first for 90 years, and later 99 years, to ensure that no African would have legal claim on land. Since Africans were prohibited from commercial farming, settlers capitalized on cash crops; wheat, coffee, tea, fruits and vegetables exported to Europe and other countries in the West.

The scramble for Africa and ensuing colonial occupancy, replaced established and sustainable development quests among Africans. The agency of colonialism introduced foreign, but seemingly acceptable ways of life. The fact that inhabitants of what soon became colonies of Africa, had lived peacefully within organized systems of practice was ignored. Previously, communities had survived in their natural habitat using available local resources for medicinal value, nourishment, and craft. Migration and settlement were characterized by a continuous intertwining of ethnicities. The movements were mostly in search for pasture and water, fertile land or for trade. Several authors Ndege (2009), Guha (1989), Elkins (2005), Slemon (1990) demonstrate that pre-colonial communities were nothing static, but with colonialism, they gained a new dimension, meaning, and shape. To the natives of the land, the new arrivals came loaded with foreign artefacts; medicines, weaponry and religious vestments.

Initially, their arrival was more like an episode of awe, rather than a threat to their way of life. This was to quickly change, European colonizers fostered an ideology of their racial superiority and a determination to conquer the massive earth surface (Slemon 1990). For those who survived the treacherous journey, their arrival signalled irreversible dynamics to the life of millions of inhabitants of the African continent. The scramble for Africa set in motion the first migration of Europeans to Africa as settlers, colonial administrators, and sojourners looking for adventure. In its search for suitable British settlers, those who would develop the colony’s production and accrue returns used to build the railway line, the British government launched a campaign to attract settlers of British stock to the colony. These were people who could capitalize on the territory’s agrarian

potential and produce cash crops for the world market. Settlers were urged to come and take advantage of the cheap land, abundant labour, and large potential profits. Advertisements in the British local papers enticed who would-be settlers to pick up their stakes and move to the colony.

Settle in Kenya, Britain's youngest and most attractive colony. Low prices at present for fertile area. No richer soil in the British Empire. The Kenya colony makes a practical appeal to intending settlers with some capital. Its valuable crops give high yields, due to the high fertility of the soil, adequate rainfall and abundant sunshine. Secure the advantage of native labour to supplement your effort (BBC Documentary: "White Terror", January 29, 2013).

Thousands of settlers responded to the call and migrated to Kenya in search of fortunes. They came determined to forge a "white man's country". Decades later, this tremendous migration would open counter migrations from Africa to Europe, what we now refer to as contemporary Diasporas. Child and Williams (1997) aver that large-scale immigration of groups from former colonies is a postcolonial phenomenon.

### Literature Review

Scholarly work on postcolonial discourse theory feed on historical material on colonialism in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, West Indies, Asia, and Africa. Albeit, with huge disparities between former colonies in the global South and those in the North. Ashcroft et al. (1995) demonstrate that those in the North, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have in a short span ascended to the same level of social and economic representation to their imperial master, while Africa and Asia are still weighed down with the aftermath of colonialism. It is such disproportions that push people who have experienced colonialism to forge ways that resist imperialistic influence. Notable, through literature, academia, technological innovations and in this study, defining their own social and economic affairs through ideas on migration and development. Simone During (Xie 1997) defines postcolonialism as the requirement in countries or groups, which have been casualties of imperialism, to realize an identity uncontaminated by Universalist or Eurocentric concepts and images.

On the other hand, Xie (1997) contends that postcolonialism assigns an uneasiness to move past Eurocentric belief system, past colonialist's binary structures of 'self and other', and eventually past any form of racism. Some authors Ashcroft et al. (1995), Slemon (1990), and Said (1979) indicate that postcolonial authorship concerns literature in English from nations that were or are still colonies of other nations. The authors equate postcolonial theory to a political and ideological position of critics who undertake this analysis. Conversely, Childs and Williams (1997) have suggested that postcolonialism is much more to do with the difficult encounter of confronting the desire to recover 'lost' pre-colonial identities, the impossibility of doing so, and the task of building a new identity based on that impossibility. Anthony Appiah, a postcolonial critic argues that postcolonialism is the condition of what we might ungenerously call a 'comprador intelligentsia': a moderately small, Western-style, Western-trained group of writers and scholars who mediate the exchange in cultural commodities of the world capitalism at the periphery (Appiah 1993, 348). Appiah's discontent with his "Comprador Intelligentsia" is a critique of African cultural artists who are educated in the West, but use European approaches and insights to interpret indigenous African art.

The artists conjure images they deem suitable to sell to the West, at the same representing a desirable Western world to Africa. Thus, the idea is not to appreciate African art and heritage, but to use it for profitable pursuits, and thereby mimic Eurocentric attitudes. For Aijaz Ahmed, postcolonialism is unacceptable since it clearly benefits colonialism as the organizing rule of other people's histories (Ahmed 1991). Anne McClintock mirrors Appiah's ideas and positions orientalism as problematic. She argues, the concept suggests a commitment to a variety of Western ideas, linear time, advancement, all of which have troubled histories (McClintock 1992). In this paper, postcolonialism provides an impetus for understanding how the migration and development discourse has for a long time perpetuated Eurocentric narratives over African concepts. It gives some possibilities for alternative development strategies devoid of external influences. Postcolonial authors (Edward Said 1977; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak 1986; Homi Bhabha 1983) expose

stereotypes like those found in development constructs. It is in considering such constructs that we begin to interpret the current socio-political and economic challenge that Kenyans grapple with. Post-colonial development in Kenya was disguised in “*Harambee*” functions (pulling together of resources). These were money collecting events, sometimes an excuse to exploit the public and engage in economic plunder. Kenyans understood development as joined efforts to raise monetary resources. Part of the money collected was put to good use, building infrastructure and enhancing services. However, colonial inequalities ensured that only regions with key political representations benefited from the development funds. Furthermore, misappropriation and abuse of resources would result in the marginalization of regions in the periphery, a reflection of the colonial era, where development was concentrated in the capitals which acted as colonial centers. Hence, the cultural indoctrination of development consciousness remains inherent in the historical makeup of residents as well as non-resident Kenyans, referred here as Diasporas.

### **Methods and Materials: White Terror Documentary**

The British Broadcasting Corporation’s 2013 documentary “*White Terror*” was based on the research of Harvard’s History Professor Caroline Elkins (2005). It details the colonial atrocities and thereafter Kenya’s state of emergency in 1952. It was also published as evidence in the case where five Kenyans (one has died since then) through a law firm filed a suit against the British government for atrocities committed by British colonial agents. At the time, what is today considered as excessive was a normalized form of control and domination. Documentary analysis is a qualitative methodology that adopts aspects of discourse analysis. In Fairclough (1995) interpretations, discourse can mean ways of talking about things, or a process in which the social reality is formed. It is an articulation of knowledge and power, of the visible and the expressible.

In a modified adaptation of scientific classification, Bloor and Bloor (2007, 6,7) recommends possible distinctions of discourse as; a) the highest unit of linguistic description phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences and texts; b) as a sample of language usage, generally written to be spoken, in a form of speech; c) it alludes to the communication anticipated in one situation context, alongside one field and registers, such as the discourse of law, medication, or media; d) it can also mean a human interaction through any means, verbal and non-verbal, through sounds, movements, and images; e) discourse could also relate only to a spoken interaction; f) discourse stands for the whole communicative event. These distinctions suggest, discourse happens in a communicative event, which progressively produces expressions of power and knowledge. In the documentary analysis, we utilize visuals and the spoken word. In 2013, John McGhie, a BBC correspondent, held interviews with victims of the British colonial brutality. The documentary was produced following Caroline Elkins ethnographic research in the central region of Kenya, in villages where survivors of the horrors and their families live. Some respondents detail experiences on the concentration camps, hard labour and violent brutality. According to Susan Nyareri, women were not spared, they were caught between two warring factions and the Mau Mau. They were forced to give up allegiances to the Mau Mau fighters. They suffered beatings, starvation and death.

### ***Video Clip: Susan Nyareri***

At night, the Mau Mau would come and force us to give them food. Early in the morning, the security guards would come and force us to produce the Mau Mau, but we had no idea where they were. They had come in the night and left. Once they beat me with the baby on my back. I was to be excused from communal work because my child was sick. They said don’t worry, we have enough hoes and shuffles to bury your child if he dies (Kenya: White Terror 2013; Video Clip, Minute 20).

There are also clips of interviews with some British officials about their direct or indirect involvement in the brutality. In the 8 years during the state of emergency, thousands died. Elkins (2005) argues that the official figure of 10,000 deaths is faulty and estimates, there could be up to 50,000 or more killed. In

2013, the victims of the terror made 6000 dispositions to the International Court of Human Rights (ICHR). They were compensated over 50 million Kenya Shillings, similarly, in colonial times evidence of atrocities led to the closure of the labour camps and independence. However, the lifelong psycho-social effects on survivors cannot be compensated. For example, 82-year-old Mwangi Kanyari who fought in the Second World War. He lost his land and family and went to the bush to fight for reclamation of land, later turned to fighting for freedom.

***Video Clip: Mwangi Kanyari***

I was angry, after coming from the war, the British gave me nothing. They did not even consider me as having been one of them. They never remembered me. I was very angry to realize that for all those years I had just worked for the food I ate. They never paid me anything. I wanted freedom, I wanted that very much. They forced us into a war we did not want. None of us wanted war. When they declared the state of emergency they just started beating and killing us, none of us expected that (Kenya: White Terror 2013; Video Clip: Second 34 to Minute 1.20).

Kanyari was captured and put in the concentration camps as a forced labourer. There, he was tortured and castrated under the British authorities and Kenyan guards loyal to the regime. At the end of colonial reign and independence in 1963, he could not establish a family. Together with his wife Esther Kanyari, they decided to secretly get children sired by another man.

***Video Clip: Esther Kanyari***

They had castrated him in the camps. Since then, I have not been able to sleep with him. He could not give me any more children. So we decided that I should try to have children elsewhere to carry his name (Kenya: White Terror 2013; Video Clip: Minute 27).

John Nottingham a colonial official stayed in Kenya after independence, he is haunted by the colonial excesses and the emergency. He details the brutal savage torture and argues perpetrators must be condemned for war crimes to re-write the mockery of justice.

***Video Clip Minute: John Nottingham***

They described people living on the other side of the forest (Mau Mau) as people who had lost all contact with humanity and had virtually become animals. These were people who had to be totally destroyed. We had to solve this somehow and quickly as possible (White Terror 2013; Video Clip Minute: 3.15...What happened in the Kenyan camps was brutal and savage torture by people that have to be condemned as war criminals. The mockery of justice perpetrated must be re-written. I feel ashamed coming from a Britain that did what it did here (Kenya: White Terror 2013; Video Clip Minute, 39).

**Discussion: White Man's Land: Narratives of Colonial British - Kenya**

The scenario visualized in the documentary affirms that the colonial establishment had placed Africans under a suppressive disenfranchisement. Africans were rendered economically hapless, totally dependent on the colonial system as casual or forced labourers. Kenyans had no choice but to migrate from their rural homes to work in the sparse colonial plantations in the Kenyan highlands, to afford paying a mandatory cash tax imposed on them (Elkins 2005). Suppressed, abused, forced into detention camps, Kenyans were desperate to dispose the colonial regime. Political aggressors believed that those who could speak the colonial language or understand their ways, albeit even rudimentarily, were in a better position to present grievances to the colonial administration in Britain. For example, Jomo Kenyatta who became Kenya's first President, then a colonial political agitator was dispatched to Britain to represent Kikuyu interests. He later would return at the helm of anti-colonial aggression, arrested and detained.

The colonial African is represented as a suppressed "other", the "subaltern", the "oriental", if I may add, "lacking in consequence". Just as in mimicry (Bhaba 1983), the colonized was not

exposed to wholesome education, only what indoctrinated his colonized self, dehumanized his cultural beliefs and elevated European ways as the norm. The pre-colonial African migrant in Europe, like Kenyatta had a glimpse of how the West views him, in other words as; “inconsequential, uneducated, illiterate who requires Western education to be understood”. Hence, the effects of the historical domination were intricate mechanisms in societal structures of former colonies. Of relevance, postcolonialism follows the agency of decolonization which commenced in the late 1950s with the dismantling of structures of colonial control and culminated in 1960s. During the period, most colonized states including Kenya achieved their independence from colonial regimes. Although independence was aimed to give Africans a platform to decide their own affairs, it was not dished out honourably. It came after years of negotiations and sometimes bloody violent revolts. Kenya, for instance, experienced an eight-year-long Mau Mau revolt. To Kenyans, Mau Mau were freedom fighters, while to the colonial establishment, they were inhuman savage terrorists. Kenyans especially the Kikuyu inhabitants of the central region which served as the colonial capital lived and survived colonialism.

They remained with a negative narrative of the struggle over domination. Similar experiences by former imperial subjects’ support Bhabha’s (1994) argument that postcolonial theory was a result of the colonial experience, “the testimonies of the third world countries and the discourses of the minority within the geographical and political divisions of East and West, North and South”. Bhabha (1994) has further argued that postcolonial theory offers an intervention in discourses that endeavour to grant a hegemonic normality to the uneven development, and the differential impeded histories of countries, race, and people groups (Bhabha 1994, 171). This is exemplified in the works of Kenyan Diaspora authors like Ngugi wa Thiong’o (who writes in the Gikuyu language – a phonetic variation referred here as Kikuyu), and political poet Abdala Latiff (who writes in Kiswahili).

The authors have gone as far as concentrating most of their writings in local languages - a rejection of English as a colonial linguistic medium. Their literature targets individuals that remained outside of the white, male, European social, political and philosophical convention. Reflectively, Ashcroft et al (1989 11-13) point out that postcolonial theory emerged out of the failure of a European theory “to adequately deal with challenges and different cultural origins of postcolonial writing”. It is such discomforts that Griffith and Tiffins (2004) see an alternative to Eurocentric perceptions, they argue that postcolonialism is an endeavour by the once in the past colonized to re-evaluate, rediscover and remake their own cultures.

It is additionally an act of re-examining the history of the world, against the insufficiency of the terms and conceptual outlines designed by the west. In retaliation for these disparities, postcolonial authors Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, have introduced a different narrative to illuminate misrepresentation in the literature of elitist capitalist institutions in Britain and America. In their postcolonial discourse, they evaluate ways in which colonial agencies continue to misappropriate the value of the people in former colonies. As literature indicates, contributions of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) makes the central thesis of scholarship on postcolonial theory. In Said’s work, *Orientalism* is used as a euphemism for the term colonialism, a synonym of Western imperialism and racism.

Said (1977) argues that the Orient is fundamentally a portion of European civilization and culture. *Orientalism* exposes culture and ideology as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, lexicon, scholarship, symbolism, conventions, even colonial bureaucracies, and styles. For Said, orientalism generates a style of thought that makes a distinction between the “orient” and the “accident”. It is on this basis that Said reveals inequalities in the representation of the Orient in European literal material and culture. On the other hand, Gayatri Spivak’s (1986) quest to find out “if the subaltern can speak”, shows her concern with the least powerful people in the society, and challenges they face in expressing themselves or entering dialogue with those in power. She argues, because of the position of the subaltern in the hierarchy, they cannot speak for themselves and therefore implores intellectuals to speak on their behalf (Spivak 1986). In Spivak’s argument, it is clear to see that even if the Subaltern gets a voice through the said intellectuals; it can quickly

become a misrepresentation of their values and struggles to owe to different interpretations based on personal beliefs and prejudices. Spivak concludes, the subaltern can only develop a political consciousness, “if they speak for themselves”, but before that is attained, representation is the best option. Another post-colonialist Homi Bhabha (1983) concentrates on the concept of mimicry as a postcolonial phenomenon. Bhabha (1983; 1994) suggests that mimicry is the supplication and optimistic cultural mixing. He draws examples from the doubling that takes place when one culture dominates the other. The dominant culture is seen to encourage mimicry, to the extent that the minority culture assimilates the dominant culture in terms of language, and identity. Mimicry creates a ‘reformed acceptable other’. Using binarism, Bhabha (1994) theorizes that the dominant culture only learns parts of the minority culture that supports and maintains an ambivalence relationship.

## Conclusion

Drawing from these ideas, I conclude, narratives found in postcolonial perspectives of Edward Said (1977; 1979), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1986) and Homi Bhabha (1983; 1994) unearth misconceptions in conventional development theory, as a Eurocentric description of the non-European world. In postcolonial authorship, stereotypes like those instituted in development constructs are exposed to reveal misrepresentations, and loopholes in discourses that demean or undermine social and economic contexts of subjects from developing countries. Albeit, knowledge alone did not give anti-colonial aggressors powers to free themselves from the colonial shackles; revolts and violent aggression was an alternate, replicated across many African nations. Ngugi (1986) suggests that the colonial interphase in Kenya presented two conflicting interpretation of historical and economic development.

Firstly, an imperialistic, neo-colonial thought that the more quickly Kenya misplaced her identity to the West and left her destiny in the imperialistic interests, the quicker was her advancement and development to modernity. Geographical annexing of land placed Kikuyu’s a dominant ethnic group close to the central region and colonial capital, while the rest of the tribes were disbursed in the peripheries. In postcolonial Kenya, political and economic disparities herald power struggles between dominant ethnicities, Kikuyu, Luo and Kalenjin ethnicities. Secondly, heroic struggles of Kenyan and other African people to break free from imperialistic capitalism were precursors to development. For Kenyan nationalists, it was the traditional resistance movements. Particularly, the Kenya Land and Freedom Army (Mau Mau), through the struggles of ordinary Kenyans ousted the colonial imperialists and paved way for self-independence and economic development. Ngugi a Diasporic exile argues that for Kenyans to realize their cultural and economic perspectives, they must relate their experiences to prevailing national economic heritages.

As well as struggles of other people in Africa, the third world, Europe, and the Americas. Ngugi concludes, Kenyans like other Africans must be engaged in global democratic and socialist forces that would eventually lead to a demise of imperialistic capitalism (Ngugi 1996, 102). However, Ndege (1992) illustrates that Kenyan colonization by Britain in 1895, exposed it to a capitalist economy based on merchant capital, promoting trade between Kenya and the outside world. The practice, though positioned as mutually beneficial to colonies producing raw material, and industrialized nations manufacturing finished products, disproportionately benefited developed countries (Ndege 224 in Ochieng & Maxon 1992). Ochieng (1992) puts it more explicitly, that colonial rule elevated Westernization and the capitalist infiltration of African economies. Postcolonial Kenyan political leaders sustained repressive tendencies experienced during the colonial regime. They were dignified as overall decision makers and determined policies for the independent nation. To this end, cultural indoctrination of development consciousness remains inherent in the historical makeup of residents as well Kenyans in the Diaspora. Although Kenya’s development has surpassed the colonial assumptions of the 60s, to the economic restructuring of the 80s and 90s, some colonial perceptions are deeply enmeshed in its development agenda. Hence, postcolonialism is an endeavour by the once colonized to re-evaluate, rediscover and remake their own cultures (Griffith and Tiffins 2004). Through a postcolonial glance, we notice a deficit in public knowledge of Kenyan historical contexts and limited attention on postcolonialism in

scholarly work of African social researchers. This has contributed to deep seated social-economic disparities. In this paper, I attempted to show that postcolonial approach is relevant in the interpretation of current socio-political and economic challenges that Kenyans grapple with. However, with exposure through the documentary and Elkins (2005) ethnological research, we see a path to reconciliation and justice.

In 2013, more than 5000 victims accused the British Government of a series of human rights violations, including rape, illegal detentions and castration. Britain announced a £19.9 million (\$30 million) settlement for human rights violations in Kenya during its colonial rule (BBC 2013). More so, Kenyans in the Diaspora contributions through remittances both social and economic is aimed to change development narratives and situations in the homeland. As social actors, Kenyan Diasporas are aware of the “development crisis” (Escobar 1995), where conventional aid centered development constructed from Western ideological perceptions is limited to addressing sustainable economic pursuits for citizens. Colonial inherent factors such as unemployment, political conflicts, scarce resources, and weak institutions have hindered the much-prized development and caused migration of Kenyans to Europe. To change these socio-economic and political statuses, Kenyans, like other African Diasporas are turning a migration narrative to alternative development thought.

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