

TITLE: The representation of youth as a socio-political force in Ngugi's novels

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Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree **Philosophy of Doctorate in English** at the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University

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Date: 16 October 2015

DECLARATION

I, Moagisi Edwin Kagiso Seleka, hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted at any institution for a degree before. I also declare that the ideas presented in this work are authentically mine and where the ideas of other authors are used, they are fully acknowledged using the Harvard style of referencing as prescribed by the institution within which this study was conducted.

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ABSTRACT

The recent upsurge of socio-political activism driven by the youth in North Africa and numerous other states in the Arab World, as well as the abundance of evidence of youth activism in the amelioration of socio-political and economic spheres of South Africa, necessitate an investigation of the manner in which revolutionary thinkers in Africa represent and project youth activism in their literary works. The genre used for this investigation is fiction and story-telling which is one of the oldest tools of social engineering and re-invention among the Africans. In order to investigate the phenomenon above, we have selected seven novels by Africa's acclaimed fiction writer of East African descent, Ngugi wa Thiong'o (Ngugi henceforth) whose works have generated many critical works. He has been internationally acclaimed as a socialist writer whose quest for social justice is unquenchable. His presentation of women has been critiqued with appreciation. However, most of his readers and admirers have subconsciously omitted and overlooked the overabundance of young characters in his works. Not only are they oblivious of the above, but they have also missed out on the trust and confidence that Ngugi invests in the youth as a socio-political force. In the light of this oversight, this study fills a discernible gap and attempts to raise awareness on the positive contribution the youth make towards socio-political change in their societies as mirrored in Ngugi's artistic works. Additionally, it also exposes the dehumanizing milieu imposed by both colonialism and neo-colonialism on the youth and how, in spite of these, the youth remain not only his protagonists, but a force in the socio-political evolution of their societies. The material for this study was derived from Ngugi's seven novels beginning with *Weep Not Child* (1964) to *Wizard of the Crow* (2008). Analysis of the texts follows an approach which, in addition to Critical Discourse Analysis, also borrows extensively from a myriad of the postcolonial readings that are grounded in conflict theory and sociological meanings. This study contributes not only to a change of perception about the youth, but to a re-evaluation of the contribution literature and the arts in general make towards sociopolitical and economic development in Africa and the world. The need for this study is further derived from the observation that many people in the black world testify to and would easily remember the contributions of Martin Luther King Jnr, Malcolm X and Rosa Parks during late 1950's and the 1960's in the struggle against

racism in the United States of America. However, very few of us will confess knowledge of Melba Patillo Beals who after just turning sixteen had to champion the racial integration of Little Rock Central High in The United States of America. This had its own ramifications; a price had to be paid as she also had to endure the anger of the intransigent white racists who still believed in racial segregation. In the light of these gaps and omissions, studies on how the youth are represented in literary texts becomes important.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the following important people in my life: Firstly, my wife, Mmenyane, our son, Kgakollo Harambee for their time and support during the course of this study. Secondly, my gratitude goes to all members of the English department at the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University, current and previous, for preparing me for this degree. It would be a grievous mistake not to thank my parents Mosimanethebe Matthews and my mother Seolebaleng Joyce Seleka whose love for education made them sacrifice many things for the sake of my education. Despite their brilliance being inhibited by their socio-political and economic circumstances of their era in both colonial and apartheid South Africa, they ensured that I am counted among the academics of this my beloved country. I would also like to further give thanks to my siblings and their spouses for being there when my family and I needed them. My greatest gratitude goes to God the almighty for having provided me with strength, health and mental fortitude to pursue my dream.

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1. CHAPTER 1: CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY

The current political revolution in North Africa as well as the involvement of youth in issues of national importance in countries such as Japan (*Times* magazine March, 2011) bear testimony to the need for more research in this age category. More prominent among the reasons for research is modern developments which in modern history have been referred to as the Arab spring, a phenomenon which has led to the exodus of many young Arabs to almost every part of the world. South Africa, as a land of opportunities, is also witnessing the influx of youth from almost all regions of Africa. On the contrary, the history of South African politics also shows youth as being in the forefront of liberation, exerting pressure on the elderly leadership to change strategies. It paints a picture of victimization and heroism of the youth at the same time. This often triggered by generational conflicts and realities which are manifested even in the formation of new parties have broken away from the old ones because of policy demands from the youth wings. An example of this is the economic freedom front whose origin is the ANC youth league's demand for the hastening of the realization of the freedom charter. It is unfortunate, however, that the contribution that the youth have had in the socio-political and economic lives of their communities goes unnoticed. Equally so, the role which literary arts play in illuminating and suggesting direction in matters of conflict, economy, and politics has been ignored. With statesmen and decision makers relegating the arts to nothing but pastime, we witness disturbing political waves on a continent which has been plagued by protracted civil wars. These civil wars have their own socio-economic ramifications on the African people as well as the position of Africa in global politics and economy.

Ngugi himself laments the pervasive marginalization of the arts by the politicians. In *Wizard of the Crow* (2007), one of the novels selected for this study, Kanuiru, a young character who is apportioned the role of an antagonist in the novel, leaves his vocation as an art teacher and joins Aburirian politics with all its Machiavellianism. The result of this ideological floor crossing is the moral void manifest in avarice as it will be shown later in this study. Avarice is decried by common religions on the continent which are

African and the three Abrahamic religions. In the South African literary context, it is also lamented by Percy Mtwa and Aubrey Molefi in their play *Bopha*.

Another lamentable problem suffered by the arts with special reference to Africa is the extent to which literary critics ignore the age group that forms the larger and mediatory role between childhood and parenthood – the youth. As a group that has not produced much published literary works, their role has been sacrificed for another historically oppressed section of many societies, the women. The liberation of Africa has introduced and obviated yet another repressive element which is not only African, but global as well. This social malady is termed gerontocracy. This problem exists partially because the youth, unlike women, have not been able to produce literary works that could represent their voices and, therefore, they are muted by society in spite of abundant evidence of their contributions to national development. Writing on Ngugi has produced works such as a PhD thesis about the presentation of women by Rutere (2009). However, this laudable accomplishment does not demonstrate the totality of the reality and philosophy Ngugi's works stand for.

Secondly, his cast of characters from his earliest novels, *Weep Not Child* (1964) and *The River Between* (1965) to the last, *Wizard of the Crow* (2007), is comprised largely of youth. That is to say, the plots in these novels gain their momentum and vigor due to the presence of youth in them. Suffice it to say, the older characters are there, but largely, their role is to illuminate and compound the status of his heroes and heroines who are predominantly within the category described as youth. In most cases, they are represented as the causes of victimization who at the same time provide a vivid background against which the youth can be appreciated. These young characters are often faced with choices to make in an environment which is hostile to their desire for full development as humans. In both colonial and post colonial settings, the reading of Ngugi's texts provides evidence of their confrontation with forces of dehumanization. While a very few succumb, the majority are represented as relentlessly demonstrating the capacity to fight not only on their behalf, but for the nation at large. A necessary trait which emerges as a special character of their age group is their rejection of the inertia which characterizes their parents. As the youth in the revolutionarizing Arab countries they too begin to question some traditional belief systems and introduce new self-emancipation approaches to their exigencies. The need for this study is further justified by the cultural context from within which the

novels were composed. The Gikuyu culture itself evinces a deep sense of trust in the youth. They organize the youth into regiments which, in addition to being the guardians of moral sustenance among their peers, also serve as part of the national or ethnic group army. Their graduation from an initiation institution automatically inculcates into them an obligation towards their ethnic group in times of war. The dances and athletics competitions, which are a common occurrence among them, are organized by the leaders of the *Riika* (regiment) and are meant to keep them fit for war (Kenyatta, 1979). This study therefore attempts to examine this role and many other inadvertently censored truths about the contributions of the youth to national historiography. The study does not in any way propose that Ngugi does not have elderly characters that are presented as a formidable force in the socio-political and economic lives of their societies. This would be an oversight. An example of such characters is the eponymous character in his novel, *Matigari* (1987). Using flashback as a technique, Ngugi does not allow these elderly characters to develop into heroes without aid from the youth. As a “creator”, his literary provisions sustain his protagonist with the ingenuity of the youth – Guthera. Her role and that of her partner, Muriuki, will be discussed, in depth, later in the study. With the above background as a springboard, it is argued that the selected novels, as well as some of Ngugi’s secondary sources, represent the youth as participants in the social activities, political struggles and post liberation nation building activities of their countries and this frames Ngugi’s fiction under a socio-political strength expressed below:

Literature can have a formidable impact on any people’s development, though it’s an impact that cannot be quantified in the terms to which people have become accustomed (Palmer, 1998:37.).

This observation affirms the notion that literature goes beyond mere telling of stories. It is unfortunate that it has suffered from this myopic view. What is meant here is that literature is seldom accorded its rightful status in the formation of the state as a re-creative force that has the capacity to shape the destiny of a people in all aspects. This oversight could be attributed to its inclusion among recreative arts without paying closer attention to the denotative meaning and form of the word re- create. Similarly, the presentation of young characters in Ngugi’s fiction has not been given the attention due to it. One other reason to justify this study is derived from how Ngugi uses young

characters to explicitly champion the cause of women. One observes that the youth are central vehicles of Ngugi's narrative and ideological oeuvre. It is the youth who tell the stories and convey the strength and timbre of the struggle and revolution. Their narratives, heroics and reminiscences are centralized in order to communicate the socio-cultural urgency for change and socio-political and economic transformation in Kenya, Africa, and, by extension, the rest of the humanity which have been subdued to intra and international exploitation.

This study is therefore carried out to provide insight into this section of society and "re-create" a society in which perceptions about this age group are revised.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to examine the presentation of youth as a socio-political force in Ngugi's selected novels with emphasis on their role as active and holistic participants in the affairs of their societies. The study examines the roles that the youth play in their various societies, especially, at socio-political, religious and educational levels. In addition to obviating Ngugi's confidence in the youth, it also aims to foreground the centrality of youth in his *Weltanschauung* and literary success.

1.2 Problem Statement

Youth as a concept and age group has always been allotted limited space in the affairs of societies. In African culture, for example, in tribal courts only elderly men, and occasionally women, take part in making decisions which affect the society positively or negatively. Even in some of the latest works on culture such as the third edition of *Cultural Studies Reader edited by Doring*, published in 1993 and reprinted in 2010, there is evidence to the fact that the youth are discursively marginalized; they are pushed to the periphery by long-held beliefs and social practice that the adult gaze regulates the world; that is to say, the maturity that comes with age is valorized at the expense of youth. This seemingly universal truth can also be witnessed in the works of poets such as Wilfred Owen's *Anthem for Doomed Youth* (in Smyth and Swacina: 1987) and *Let the Children Decide* by Don Matteredra (Venter, 2001). In addition to the observations by the above mentioned poets/seers, the word "parliament" also has

experienced a subtle semantic shift and has now accrued conceptual elements which include a group of adults, often men. No wonder, there exists this visible exclusion of the youth from major political and social decision-making. It is, however, acknowledged in this study that there is lately an attempt to pay attention to this age group in the world of politics, though it is belated and minimal. It should also be mentioned that this study is not aimed at “sainting” the youth and “demonizing” the elderly characters. There are, however, cases even in national politics where the youth who are leaders present themselves in objectionable ways. It would, however, be a form of a self-imposed myopia to view youth as delinquents because of few such individuals. Similarly even elderly characters do at times behave in objectionable ways but this does not lead to their total exclusion in politics and society. Below we present two examples to show that both youth and adults can be on the wrong side of the moral divide. This will help illustrate the point that power play has always been at the heart of human relations and that the youth are targeted in most cases as their behaviour is interpreted against an ideological prism which is already contorted by ageism. This concern is evident even in South African politics.

The self-imposed shortsightedness referred to above nevertheless exists and has extended to literary and academic works. For instance, critical essays on Ngugi by a significant number of critics do not seem to focus on the youth. Examples in this regard are Cook and Okenimpke (1997) and Robson (1979) and even Ogude (1999), a renowned scholar on Ngugi. In spite of the fact that the plots of the selected novels unfold with the major events involving the youth, there seems to be an inadvertent omission of this age bracket as they become subsumed under elderly characters such as Jacobo, Howlands (*Weep Not Child*), Chege (*The River Between*), and Ezekieli (*Petals of Blood*). Even when discussed, some youths such as Wanja, Nyawira and Wariinga are simply perceived as women and their developmental stage is often ignored. It is this ignored aspect of these characters which makes this study imperative.

The marginalization of youth in literary secondary sources is evident even in some of the major works on African literature such as *African literature and African Development* by Adams and Mayes (1998). In this volume of 313 pages, there is not a single chapter dedicated to the role of youth in the development of their countries.

In contrast, this critically reflective book dedicates two chapters to women's role in the society. Although this is a positive step towards both women and human emancipation, the absence of focused discussions on the youth indicates that there is a gap in the critical and literary works published so far. This silence about the youth among the academics speaks volumes, and it presupposes the existence of gerontocratic tendencies which have lodged secretly in the subconscious minds of a good number of literary critics. This phenomenon like most *-isms*, translates itself into some form of discrimination called *ageism*. Though unintentional, ageism has the tendency to *mute* and obscure the *othered* members of its host societies.

On the other hand, scholarly works on the theme of women have recently been written and published extensively on the African continent. Women have also responded to their marginalization in written works which were supposed to represent them and express their frustrations, and make the other sex aware of their plight, by not allowing "the dominant" and "oppressive" section of the society to describe them and their feelings. Examples of such books include Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous conditions* (1988). Mariama Ba's *So long a letter* (1981) and Bessie Head's *A Question of power* (1973) which have coincidentally been quoted by one of the young female characters in *Wizard of The Crow* (2007), the last of the novels selected for this study. The same character does also mention women writers from India.

There is, therefore, a need for both authors of prose and critics to pay attention to the theme of youth and this is what this study aims to achieve.

Another important work on Africa and its peoples which pays little attention to the youth is entitled *A United States of Africa* which is written by numerous intellectuals from Africa and edited by Maloka (2000). In this collection, there are also two chapters on women and absolutely no chapter is dedicated to the youth. It should be borne in mind that this study is not oblivious to the recent move towards socio-political inclusivity. The study thus acknowledges and applauds efforts by regional organizations such as SADC which is beginning to include the youth in their meetings.

1.3 Thesis statement

Ngugi's novels represent youth as both victims and agents of liberation in their societies.

1.4 Hypothesis

Ngugi's novels represent youth as a formidable force in the socio-political struggles of their nations.

1.5 Rationale

The rationale of this study is to bridge the gap that exists in literary and critical works on Ngugi's works. Additionally, the study intends to present youth as members of society capable of contributing significantly to the socio-political evolution of their societies and to propel them to a more modern and humane world view. The study also intends to analyse the representation of youth as responsible citizens and not delinquents. In doing so, the study also serves as a mitigating factor in generational conflict and re-enfranchises youth into their societies' economies and politics.

1.6 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were:

- to identify the contribution of youth towards the struggle for economic, educational and political liberation,
- to determine the role of youth in pre- and postcolonial nation building,
- to investigate and expose the victimization of youth in both colonial and post-colonial African societies as presented in Ngugi's novels,
- to provide insight into youth behaviour with a view to presenting an objective perception about them,
- to close the gap in scholarly works produced on the author , and finally,
- to determine the extent to which the youth form the core vehicle of Ngugi's literary techniques and philosophy.

1.7 Methodology

In order to determine the re-presentation of youth in Ngugi's literary and critical works, the following were done: firstly, a library search was conducted to explore the writer's techniques and craft with special reference to fiction. These techniques and crafts include the five elements of fiction: plot, character, point of view, setting and themes (Russel: 2001). Secondly, another library search was conducted to engage with relevant literary theories against which a critical analysis of the selected novels was done. This was done in order to interrogate the representation of youth as agents of socio-cultural and ideological change. The final search focused on Ngugi's personal philosophy with regards the commitment of the African writer. The search also focused on the functions of art in African society which was used to situate Ngugi within the philosophy of art as commitment.

The data for the study was derived from the selected novels: *The River Between* (River), *Weep Not Child* (Weep), *A Grain of wheat* (Grain), *Petals of Blood* (Petals), *Matigari* (Mat), *Devil on the cross* (Devil) and *Wizard of the crow* (Wizard). These novels were discussed and analyzed with heightened emphasis on characterization, plot and theme(s). Central to this analysis were also a comparison of both the elderly and younger characters. This was deliberately done to foreground the author's general dependence on and veneration of youth. Supplemental to both online and library search were the interviews conducted with Ngugi himself and Sharon Mbugua, a Gikuyu native speaker residing in South Africa. These interviews yielded relevant information on some of the questions which emerged during the study, but could not be answered by the alternative sources mentioned above.

As a research done under the Human and Social Sciences Faculty, this study further uses an eclectic approach towards character analysis. It takes advantage of the wealth of knowledge provided by disciplines such as: Psychology, Philosophy, Political Science, Theology, Ethics, Psychiatry and Rhetoric.

Among other theories were Psychoanalysis and the stages of moral development. Introduced by Sigmund Freud (Rivkin & Ryan 2008), this theory, according to Miller and Norris (2007), "focuses on the inner workings of the mind by focusing on character

or author analysis.” Booth, Hunter and Mayes (2006) also state that psychoanalytic approaches “...attribute latent or hidden meanings, unacknowledged desires in some person usually the author or source behind the character in a narrative...” (p. 198). This naturally leads to the recourse to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as an auxiliary analytic tool that complements psychoanalysis. It takes into consideration that language is “a window into human nature” (Pinker, 2007) and builds on this very premise to unravel some of the neurotic disorders and laudable characteristics of both the author and his youthful characters.

When applied to Literature, according to (Tyson: 2006:38), literary critics ask the following seven questions:

- How do the operations of repression structure inform the work?
- Are there any Oedipal dynamics - or any other familiar dynamics - at work?
- How can a character’s behaviour[sic], narrative events, and images be explained in terms of psychoanalytic concepts of any kind? The concepts include, *inter alia*, regression, crisis, projection, fear of or fascination with death, sexual behavior (which includes love and romance), as well as sexual behavior - as a primary indicator of psychological identity, or the operations of the ego-id-super ego?
- In what ways can we view a literary work as a dream?
- What does the work suggest about the psychological being of its author?
- What might a given interpretation of a literary work suggest about the psychological motives of the reader?
- In what ways does the text seem to reveal the character’s emotional investments in the symbolic order, the imaginary order, mirror stage or what Lacan calls *objet petit a*? Does any part of the text seem to represent Lacan’s notion of the real? Do some Lacanian concepts form so much of the text that we might say that the text is structured by one or more of these concepts”?is exemple

The second theory of behaviour which was used to analyze Ngugi’s characters is Kohlberg’s stages of moral reasoning, and like the first one, it also involves CDA. In this theory, Walker (1984) posits that human beings develop through six stages which

he categorizes into three levels of two stages each. The stages follow a linear pattern and they include the following: pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional. Stage one which is characterized by egocentricity, postulates that human primal tendencies are suppressed because the individual is afraid of punishment (which in most cases comes in the form of physical harm). This stage is followed by one which is characterized by self-interest. The self-interest stage is characterized by limited interest in the needs of others. It is characterized by the “what’s in it for me” attitude towards others.

The next level which has stages three and four shows interpersonal accord and conformity to social norms. Here the individual is not only conscious of other people’s needs, but s/he is also willing to accept approval or disapproval from them. At this stage, the individual judges his/her behaviour in accordance with the social consequences it may have on his/her relationship with others. The gregarious nature of the individual begins to assert itself with the result that primal instincts are subjected to repression. The fourth stage leads to a more responsible attitude towards fellow human beings. This stage is characterized by obedience to authority and social order. Dictums and social conventions are observed for their importance in maintaining social order.

The third level, post-conventional, is divided into the Social Contract Orientation and Universal Ethical Principles. During the social contract stage, the individual matures into a more altruistic view of life and personal behaviour. S/he demonstrates an awareness of differences of opinion, rights and values. Reaching this stage helps the individual to view laws as social contracts and not impediments to personal freedom.

The sixth and the last stage, Universal Ethical Awareness, postulates a world view which questions the appropriateness of laws and challenges those laws that might not be grounded in justice. This stage is said to be attainable by very few people.

Analysis in this study also makes use of a theory called *The reading process: a phenomenological approach* which is propounded by Iser (1998). This theory postulates that the reading of a literary text should not be confined to the textual world to the verbal symbols which characterize the textual world only, but should take into

account different schematized views against which the text can be read. It rather views textual interpretation as convergence of both the text and what the reader brings to the text. This cognitive exercise accounts for the disparity between the literary text and its various realizations. It also conceives of reading a literary text as, firstly, an act of filling in the gabs that have been deliberately left for him/her by the text. This then translates into what he calls virtual dimension of a text. In this study, this coming together of the literary text and the reader's imagination will be allowed to influence analysis.

The last of the techniques of analysis used in this study is a model propounded by several theorists of text analysis cited in Flower and Booth Olson (2007: 8). This model proposes eight cognitive strategies of which four are adopted in this study. The strategies referred to are, tapping prior knowledge, constructing the gist and revising meaning: constructing the draft. Below are few comments on each of them.

With regard to tapping prior knowledge, the reader usually mobilizes knowledge and conduct a search in the schemata. Among other mental exercises which occur at this level of reading a text are the reader's activation of the schemata so as to access the intellectual store house against which the new information will be processed and stored. The schemata include personal experience file cabinet, cultural expectations files cabinet, and knowledge of genre file cabinet. These are the tools for comprehension and co-composition between the writer and the reader.

During the construction of the gist and revision of meaning and the constructing the draft, some of the following activities occur, visualising, making connections, and adopting an alignment. In a similar manner in which the writer conjures up a vision of what they want to create, the reader also conjures up visions which are stimulated by the coming together of the new stimuli and the schemata.

When meaning is being revised, the reader backtracks, revises meaning, still guided by the schemata, seeks validation for intrepotation, analyses text closely/digging deeper and finally analyses authors craft. The last point informs the inclusion of chapter 3.3 which is character and characterization.

The last of the three which is revising meaning: constructing the draft guides analysis among these is revising meaning: constructing the draft. The cognitive processes involved in this strategy include among others seeking validation for interpretation analysing text closely/digs deeper and analyses author's craft.

The forth of these cognitive strategies used by expert readers is the moment of reflection and relating. The reader is said to be pondering on the personal meaning the text has for him or her. This talks to the subjectivity and utility of a literary text which is inherent in the study of literature. This is so because at this level, the reader begins to summon personal experiences and background knowledge to crystallize their envisionment of the text(s). This is the genesis of the thesis of the study which emanates from the reading of the seven texts selected for this study.

Readers need to be warned that character analysis in this study is inevitably influenced by the subjective views the researcher imposes on the text. This is so because the reader's schemata and the reading process are inextricably tied to one another. The reader is also advised that politics in the context of this study is defined as struggles over or within relations of struggles that take as their objective the qualitative and quantitative changes of relationships.

With the view to minimize researcher's subjectivity on the analysis and interpretation of Ngugi's texts and to create a balance with regard to contending views on theories of textual interpretation, the researcher conducted an interview with the author which was held on the 29 May 2012 at the University of the Free State where Ngugi was invited by the African Studies Department under the leadership of professors Nkondlo and Ejeugu. The contending views on meaning referred to above include the ones by Wimsatt and Beardsley, Hans-George Gadamer, Ricoeur and Hirsch who are all cited in Kaiser and Silvia (1994). A summary of their views is provided below.

According to Kaiser and Silvia (1994), Wimsatt and Beardsley contend that a text does not derive its meaning from what the author wanted to say since the text assumes autonomy from its creator as soon as it leaves his lips or pen. They claim that this theory is supported by Hans-George Gadamer who, in his work entitled *Truth and Method*, advises that the reader does not have to go back to the author for the meaning

of a text. He further emphasizes the importance of the individual and their history at the time when they encounter the text, something he refers to as the historic moment. Inferences which are drawn from this observation branches into four conclusions which are presented in the bullet points below.

- Prejudice, which emanates from the reader's pre-understanding, is inevitable in textual analysis.
- The meaning of a text always goes beyond its author.
- In the process of comprehension a third text is always conceived through what he calls a "fusion of horizons",
- Past meanings cannot be reproduced in the present.

Another theory is by Paul Ricoeur who in his work entitled *Interpreting Theory* postulates that literary texts, owing to their genre, actually prescribe the way they should be read and that their meaning may not be the same to readers who read them earlier and those who read them after a substantial period between their time of reading and that of the initial readers. A recent example of this is the re-interpretation of Joseph Conrad's work, *Heart of Darkness*. In an inaugural lecture presented on the 18th of April 2013 by Professor Haripersad Sewlall at the Mafikeng Campus of the Northwest University(RSA).I this lecture, Sewlall disputes the claim that Conrad's work needs to be looked at as a racist piece. Influenced by their time and space, Sewlall, being a South African Indian, and Achebe, a Pan-African native of Africa from Nigeria, the two literary experts' reading and interpretation of the same text authenticate Ricoeur's claim. His position is further substantiated by the saying: 'We often hear and see things not as they are, but as we are.'

Concurring with this interpretation, this theorist further arrives at four inferences which are listed in bullet points below.

- A text is semantically independent of the intention of its author.
- Literary texts prescribe a code for interacting with them.
- Each reader will read their situation into the text, and new readings no-matter how contradictory, are nevertheless valid and they can be richer or impoverished.

- Once a text has been produced, it is liberated from its situational context of production and can therefore open up a new world of meaning.

The fourth and the only dissenting view presented by one of the theorists above is from E.D. Hirsch, a onetime professor of English at the University of Virginia. In his view which is influenced by Emilio Beti, an Italian historian of Law, the meaning of a literary work is the prerogative of the author. The author's intention is the only reliable norm for interpreting texts correctly.

His view precipitates the following points:

- Linguistic signs represent the meaning intended by the speaker;
- the author's truth intention provides the only genuine discriminating norm for ascertaining valid or true interpretations from the invalid and false, and finally,
- guided by the legal background, he contends that meaning is that which is presented by the text and that meaning as presented by the linguistic sign whether written or spoken is determinate, and that
- text meaning is immutable, but only its significance can and does change, and that if meaning forms the symbols on the text was not determinate then there would be no fixed norm for judging if the text was correctly interpreted.

1.8 Organization of the study

This study has been organized into seven chapters. The first chapter which is the introduction is divided into eight subheadings which are; contextualization and problem statement, purpose of the study, Hypothesis, rationale, objectives of the study, methodology and concepts. The second chapter is the literature review and is also divided into subheadings which are: youth politics and apartheid South Africa, youth, politics and apartheid South Africa, Youth in Kenya activism in post liberation Kenya, Ngugi's young characters as perceived by scholars prior to this study, insights from interviews held the author prior to this study, Literary production as a domain in youth studies and general survey of youth activism in History.

The third chapter is entitled background to author, study and authorial craft used by writers of novels. It includes the following: Ngugi's brief biography, art/the artist and

society, characterization and synopses of the novels selected for the study. The fourth chapter is the beginning of analysis. It is entitled character naming, the youth and activism during colonialism. It is followed by chapter five whose title is, Youth as victims of post-colonial betrayal and then the last chapter on analysis which is entitled youth as agents of social re-construction. The last sections of this study are appendices which are an interview with the author and a list of Gikuyu names, adages and their definitions which were compiled with the help of Ms. Mbugua, a Gikuyu native language speaker.

1.9 Definitions of key concept(s)

Definitions on Youth as an age group

Several attempts have been made to define youth as an age group. Among them are on by Honwana and De Boeck (2005) who define youth as a stage of transition between childhood and adulthood, and as the period when childhood gives way to adulthood. They state that the concept is culture specific. That is, the definitions are not the same everywhere; they vary across and within societies and cultures over time.

A working definition of youth which will be adopted in this study is the one which has been adopted by the United Nations which accepts anybody who is forty years and below as youth. This will be adopted despite it being contrary to the ANC Youth League which has limited this category to the age of thirty five. In this study, the categorization of characters as youth relies on the information which emerges from the interactions of the characters in the novels.

2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The involvement of youth in the socio-political affairs of nations is not an invention by Ngugi, but a universally observed occurrence. This chapter discusses the literature reviewed for the study. The first section of the chapter discusses the role of youth as a socio-political force as presented in nonfictional works. Emphasis is laid on youth in Africa with focus on the youth in South Africa, during and after the era of apartheid. Survey on the youth in this country is foregrounded, firstly, as this is the country where the study is conducted. Secondly, evidence of youth's agency from this country dominates this section as the country is famous for its youth activism on issues of socio-political and economic justice during both the apartheid and post-apartheid eras and thirdly, this country is viewed as the primary beneficiary of the study. The review then proceeds to examine the socio-economic roles of youth as perceived by scholars who have researched Ngugi's works prior to this study. These views include the perceptions about youth from countries even outside Africa. The review then focuses on the representation of youth in Africa and finally zooms on into Kenya. The section critically focuses on the subjective views derived by Ngugi's readers and literary critics his works.

2.1.1 Youth, politics and apartheid South Africa

The role of youth in socio-political and economic development in Africa is recorded bountifully in South Africa, the country where this study is conducted from. Their role is outstanding among most of their peers. This could be so because their country was the first to be colonized, and the last to be liberated. According to Mashabela (2006), the 1976 riots in South Africa are indebted to the youth. This landmark which is so famous in the history of the struggle of the country owes much of its vitality to individuals such as Tsietsi Mashinini, Kgotso Seatlholo and Onkopotse Tiro. The impact of the youth could be heard in the songs which compared Voster, the then prime minister of the apartheid South Africa and Mashinini, the Soweto SRC chairperson of the time. The songs heap praises on Mashinini while Voster is ridiculed. Sung in Sotho- Tswana, the translated version of the song states:

*Tsietsi le Voster
ba Ngola ditlhathlobo
Tsietsi wa phasa
Voster ke setlatla*

*Tsietsi and Voster
Are writing a test,
Tsietsi has passed
And Voster is stupid*

This song by the youth is counter propaganda. When analyzed against the *pseudo* scientific findings of Verwoerdian Apartheid system, it actually reverses the assertion by Verwoerd's "rented" scientists who claimed that young black boys out-race their white counter parts in intellectual development during the formative years. These intellectuals of the apartheid establishment further claimed that as soon as these Black boys reach puberty they begin to show signs of intellectual retrogression.

Tsietsi, a former member of the Student Christian Movement, like Cyril Ramaphosa and Frank Chikane, also became a force to reckon with. Like Ngugi who dumped his Anglican name of James, Tsietsi also decided to reject his European name – Donald, in 1972. Despite their initial complaints against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction, they also ended up singing about the land as Kiarie in Ngugi's *Weep Not Child* which will be discussed in depth in chapter four. Mashabela (2006: 101) comments that the youth had become a force against the racist regime and that their influence was pervasive. He further mentions that the disruption of the economy led by the youth is reported to have been the worst in decades of South African history. Its impact was dramatic and incomparable. It was so threatening to the state that the police force ended up shooting even nine year olds such as Lena Monamodi. Students' passion for socio-political reparation erupted into riots and, in a similar manner as the Mau Mau in Kenya, the South African youths went to the extent of bombing the houses of those who sold beer during the march. As a result several houses were set alight. These incidents are captured vividly in the musical entitled *Sarafina* by Mbongeni Ngema (2006).

As Guevara (1993) states, participation in the struggle for liberation does not only involve physical confrontation but a re-orientation of the psyche of the oppressed and marginalized. The arts as touted by Ngugi have also been used as vehicles of conscientization. Swartz (2009:4) conducted a study in which she found out that Kwaito music in South Africa has contributed to recreating black youth identities and economic opportunities since the end of Apartheid. It has been one of the artistic platforms around which socio-political issues have been addressed. She further claims that “many of the young people in her sample not only enjoyed the music but also aspired to producing their own records” (2009:41). Although there is a substantial body of academic writing about black South African youth, her observation is that South Africa’s recent turbulent past shows how South African youth have been variously described as heroes or villains, the lost generation and the marginalized youth. Township youth have been classified as an amorphous, violent, and criminal mass. However, there seems to be very little evidence of this zealotry when it comes to representing them as an age group of positive socio-political contribution, and this is the view which this study wishes to alter.

Badat (2009:1) accords honour to black youth, after observing, “...that students, black students in particular, played a vital role in the struggle for liberation and educational transformation”. He, however, laments the fact that there has been a dearth of scholarship on students’ struggles and resistance. This is another reason why this study has to be conducted. He is disturbed by the little attention that is given to students’ activism and militancy in a country that has a rich history of militant youths. Though he is mainly concerned about the youth in South Africa, his observation shows that there is a need to research on the youth globally, and this study specifically focuses on how their struggles are represented in Ngugi’s novels.

Besides Hector Peterson who was the first young person to be shot in Soweto during 1976 uprisings, the next famous young activist around the same time is Steven Bantu Biko whose ardent pursuit for justice and equality in South Africa forced the South African government to kill him on 12 September 1977 (Wilson, 2011:11). He too, like Njoroge in *Weep Not Child* and Karega in *Petals of Blood*, was expelled from school, Lovedale, because of his political activities. This was a selfless young man who grew up refusing his mother to buy him clothes when attending a party. He was more

concerned about his mother's struggle than making himself look better. He had a quest for socio-political justice, and had a questioning mind which included questioning the church, the school and every institution without any reservation. In his own words, addressing the South African Students Organisation (SASO), Steve Biko (1976: 56) insisted,

We have a responsibility not only to our selves, but to the society from which we spring. No one else will ever take the challenge up until we, of our own accord, accept the inevitable that ultimately the leadership of the non-white people in this country rests with us.

The above observation is supported by Jansen (2012) who observes that the youth are products of their ideological awareness. For instance, he cites Joyce Hickson and Susan Krieger (1997) who identify six ideological templates, which are responsible for shaping the minds of young Afrikaaners and insulating them against racial tolerance. Their list includes, the Afrikaaner Broederbond, the federation of cultural organization, the Dutch reformed churches, and the South African media and, in particular, the state broadcaster, Christian National Education (CNE) and school text books. He also reports that the Afrikaaner youth still show the lack of a "naturalness" of wanting to relate with other different people. For instance, he cites an instance of his colleague whose mother once stared at him disapprovingly because he was fraternizing with an English-speaking girl while he was still attending school. In the context of the Anglo-Boer conflict, the youth's behaviour could be perceived by some Afrikaaners as demonstrating lack of solidarity with the historic pain of the Boers. Jansen further recalls and records that, "every year, I would encounter at least one heartfelt story from a black student and a white student who had found love together" (2012: 228). The students, particularly the white ones would confess that he should hold their confession as a secret because their parents would kill them.

In his dealing with youth, Jansen also records the bravery of the youth which is manifest in their audacity to comically express their dissatisfaction with corruption in new South Africa. It is unfortunate that these Afrikaaner youths have not as yet freed themselves from ideological manacles of right wing politics. However, Jansen records an incident on the 22nd of February 2007 at the University of Pretoria in which the

white right-wing students held a vanilla cupcake sale where race determined the price of the confectionery. For Whites, Indians, and Coloured students, the cakes were sold at five rand each, while Black students paid only two rands. Students with ANC membership received theirs free, but had to put money into a “corruption” box. This act of mockery may seem racist, but when judged against precipitating acts of corruption in the post liberation era, the youth may be the “gad flies” that Ngugi (1998) talks about in his *Penpoints, Gunpoints and Dreams*.

2.1.2 Young Whites reject apartheid

Following from the observations of Jansen, it would do us good to mention two more heroics of the white youth in South Africa which needs to be recorded in this study - those of a woman who is recorded as Hettie V. (1989) in an anthology entitled *Lives of Courage: Women for a New South Africa*. This is a young lady who dropped out of university and followed politics in order to fight Apartheid and its concomitant evil of military conscription. What makes her even more sheroic is her rebellion which defies all the State Ideological Apparatuses which could have imprinted her with the ideology of racial superiority? Firstly, she was brought up in a typical Afrikaaner home where her uncles were members of the Broederbond. Secondly, she was at a formative age, a member of the Voortrekker Youth Movement. In South Africa of her time, it would be easier to form part of a minority whites who opposed apartheid if you were English, but for an Afrikaner, it was at the risk of outright rejection and automatic labeling as a renegade. Her passion for social justice led her to read materials which influenced her to take sides with communists such as Fidel Castro and the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, whose pictures she hung on the wall of her bedroom. Her resolution to choose justice over racial and blood line is evidence to the extent to which the youth can formidably provide leadership in socio-political aspects of their societies. In this study, an attempt is made to show a similar re-presentation of youth in literary works by Ngugi wa Thiongo.

In more recent times, this quest and altruistic attitude of the white youths towards fellow human beings who are darker in complexion is witnessed in the lives of the granddaughter in law of the famous Hendrik Verwoerd, Melanie and her husband, Willem (Verwoerd, 2013). In her *memoire*, Melanie recounts her ordeal which includes rejection and denouncement by family members after joining the ANC in the

1990s. This is the era when war against the unbanned movement was still raging, at least, in the hearts of a good number of some intransigent Afrikaners. What makes these youths even more adorable is their ability to “betray” their “heritage” as grandchildren of the man who is renowned as the architect of apartheid.

The next researcher whose findings on youth resonates with the thesis of this study is Forde. According to Forde (2011) the youth are necessary transformational agents in South African politics. She contends that the African National Congress Youth League was started as a power structure within the ANC. She cites Walshe who believes that the youth league were “...a disciplined pressure group which would give direction and vigor to the fight for African freedom from within the continent”. (Walshe, 2011.106). This scholar on youth further argues that the agitations of the youths including that of Julius Malema, the expelled ANC Youth League president, have always shown that the youth can think progressively. In order to support her view, she cites the confession of Joe Matthews, the son of Z.K. Matthews who is one of the renowned intellectuals whose lineage is still influential in the politics of South Africa. Forde presents Joe Matthews’ testimony about an element of admiration with regard to Malema’s militancy in the words, “That’s what we did. That was the tradition.” It is, however, unfortunate that many people foreground the “rough edges” of this youth’s personality which can be, as Joe Matthews, described as “disrespect”. Those who are quick to judge him through a gerontocratic lens choose to ignore the importance of his militancy in the face of social injustice, especially, as perceived by the youth who has insight on socio-political realities from a closer range. Justification for the preceding statement is derived from the fact that Joe Matthews’ lauding of Malema is probably derived from the youth’s agitation for wealth re-distribution. This is captured in his socio-political position as encoded in Malema’s statement:

You see, people are afraid of the word socialism, and you must not pronounce it a lot. It will scare them. I might have houses; I might have watches. That’s what the economy of the system dictates now. But if we’ve got the economic system that says that everything we have, we need to bring together and share among ourselves; I will be the first one to surrender (cited in Forde, 2011:1).

Central to the citation above is the explicit confession of an ideal the current ANC has divorced itself from. It is the very cause of the view that it has betrayed the freedom charter. The word socialism which is key to this confession is probably the rationale behind Forde's labelling of him an inconvenient youth. The title suggests that youth are actually needed, but not as thinkers and reflectors on their realities.

Another contribution of youth movement at higher education level revolves around the name Cyril Ramaphosa. Evidence of his activism is recorded in his biography which is compiled by Butler (2007). In this biography, Ramaphosa, the current deputy president of South Africa and a contemporary and comrade of Barney Pityane, Libon Mabasa, Frank Chikane and Onkgopotse Tiro at Turfloop, is reported to have started his war against social injustice when he was still at the aforementioned institution which is now the University of Limpopo. Established by the apartheid government for the Blacks of South Africa, the university's faculty membership including the rector was overpopulated with Whites. Ramaphosa and Chikane are reported to have behaved in a manner similar to that of the characters Kihika, Waiyaki, Muthoni and Nyambura as well as the biological brother of Ngugi, Good Wallace, who rejected the interpretation of the Bible as provided by the missionaries whose emphasis was more compatible with the wishes of the colonial enterprise of civilizing the natives. This re-interpretation of the Bible which is counter-hegemonic resonates with Mzwakhe Mbuli (1989) and Bob Marley's observation that freedom starts with the emancipation from the chains of mental slavery (Marley, 1980). The contribution of the above mentioned youths provided a new perception about the Student Christian Movement at the University of the North, which by that time was prohibited from holding its worship services on campus by the student body who viewed it as an appendage of the apartheid regime, a view similar to that of Marx and Engels (1947) on religion.

In the same biography, Butler mentions the admiration that Ramaphosa had for another youth whose radicalism and ingenuity terrorized the white racist establishment both at academic and political level. This was so serious to the extent that the apartheid government had to assassinate him. This youth is Onkgopotse Tiro. According to Ramaphosa, Tiro shattered the illusion that racial inequality was theistically ordained by the creator of humanity. Seizing the opportunity during a graduation ceremony in which guest speakers were traditional leaders of the native

reserves euphemistically called homelands, Tiro forthrightly challenged the establishment of Bantu universities as well as their being dominated by the Whites both in the administration and faculty membership. While the speech excited the students, the university totems were greatly perturbed, and they, with immediate effect, expelled him from the university. The most lasting impression he made on Ramaphosa, as confessed by Ramaphosa himself, occurred when he had just represented the black students at a graduation ceremony and there and then got a banning order. This happened, while he was being escorted out of the university at the behest of Professor J.L. Boshof, the university rector at the time. Ramaphosa remembers that Tiro could not help but inform the White rector who had expelled him from a black university that, "For we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth." Butler (2007:28). He is further quoted to have prophetically exhorted his comrades in the words 'No struggle can come to an end without casualties'. Subsequent to this, Tiro was assassinated by the apartheid regime through a parcel bomb while in exile in the neighbouring country, Botswana. This, according to Butler, happened two weeks after he had been expelled from the university.

This section would be a partial representation of South African youth activism if it omitted the life of one of Africa's political icons, Thabo Mbeki (1964). The assertion above is based on the level of warfare he launched against apartheid at international level. On the 13 April 1964 a twenty two year old Mbeki, delivered one of the most daring speeches. In this speech, whose audiences were the United Nations, Mbeki showed commendable audacity to confront the major players in the United nations such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, France and West Germany for the support they were offering to a regime which, to him, was acting out its uncivilized and barbaric treatment on those who justly demanded the right of the blacks to be treated as humans. Mbeki's forthright and brave speech whose aim was to find support against the decapitation of some liberation leaders including his father ended with a warning to the super powers as he said: "Today, we might be but weak children, spurred only by nothing other than the fear and grief of losing our fathers. In time yet we shall learn to die both for ourselves and for the millions." This statement by the youth is an explicit commitment to the plight of the elderly and the nation at large by the youth. It is an expression of an unrelenting spirit for freedom and has been

demonstrated even by Hector Peterson. Several of Nguigi's youths in both colonial and post colonial novels exhibit this level of commitment to their nation.

2.1.3 Youth, politics and post-apartheid South Africa: insights from the ANCYL political school

This section of the study surveys the literature on youth activism in South Africa after 1994. While providing some grounds on research on youth, its history provides challenges and generational conflicts which illuminate the nature of youth and support the thesis of this study. The bulk of the material is derived from the documents of the political school of the ANCYL for the years 2012 and 2013. The first of these by this youth organisation is the inquiry on the cynicism of youth on elections. In their findings, it has been found that some youth do not want to vote because politics is no longer relevant to them as all what politicians want is a good car, a mansion for a house, food and a cut of investment which will grow those proceeds. They claim that they themselves do not benefit in any way. The third of the findings is that expectations have been ignored and that politicians are mere charlatans and since their hope was the ANC, they eventually are left with no party to vote for. The conclusion reached by those who conducted the survey is that there is dictatorship among the elites. Part of the cynicism expressed by the interviewees is indicative of their naivety with the type of liberation and how it was stained.

To quote the words of Prof. Kondlo, the onetime rector of Turfloop where these expression of disenchantment led to upheavals (Kondlo: 2015). According to him, this happened at the time of his rectorship which coincided with, Dr. Nelson Mandela's period as the vice chancellor of the university. The management resolved to invite the state president to come and address the students. According to Prof. Kondo, in his address to the HSS Faculty at the North West University – Mafikeng Campus, his response to one question, the Professor indicated that the state president did enlighten the striking students about the nature of South African liberation which has some limitations. Among some of the words he used was to remind the student body that South Africa's liberation was not preceded by their coming out of prison with flags of victory hoisted in the sky, but it was a compromise. Key to his response is the descriptive word 'compromise' which the Professor took verbatim from the president. This is a loaded word and it has its ramifications and multiple layers which bear witness

to the possibility of autocracy which the youth political school concluded on the basis of the survey. One would as a result argue that politics and knowledge on the origins of the country's liberation and its destiny as a reserve of elites. This inevitably leads to conflict in which the youth, as an age group that is more concerned about the future may begin to demand some changes in the policies. Indeed such changes in policy issues have been demanded by the youth. Below follows an attempt to investigate, further, the outcomes and propositions of the ANCYL with specific reference to poverty alleviation.

The statement above is validated by the document mentioned above, as in their poverty alleviation, Young Communist league (YCL) "the YCL believe that without young people participating directly today, we will leave our future in wrong hands" (P3). The question is who are the wrong hands? This redirects the reader into an important view by Twala (2004). In his article entitled *The African National Congress Youth League's role as the "Kingmaker": A moment of Polokwane Blues*, Twala investigates and by extension appropriates the success story of the ANC as a liberation movement to its youth wing. In this article, he cites a statement made by Mokoditloa Eliakim Moemi, one of the leaders of the ANCYL prior to the Limpopo Conference. Mokoditloa insists that:

The organization has been described as a reservoir of leadership for the ANC as many of the great leaders were drawn from among the ranks of the ANCYL. It has also been Considered as a preparatory school for the ANC because most leaders were trained and prepared in the traditions, as well as practices, of the ANC within the ANCYL before they were ready to assume the leadership reins of the ANC itself... The ANCYL changed the political approach of the ANC in the mid 1940s and also assumed the role of 'king maker' in the ANC during the 1949 conference of the ANC by successfully lobbying for its chosen candidate to become ANC President against a popular incumbent.(p.154).

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This statement by one of the leaders concurs with the view that it is the ANCYL that has had influence on the direction of the ANC. It is only sad that even this youth leader does not acknowledge the fact that they are as equally, ANC, as the elderly people in it. His approach is ironical in the sense that, while they can direct decisions as to who becomes the president, they do not see themselves as the leaders in their own right, playing the role that they should be playing in the now, and not in the future. They, like the elderly members of their society are also trapped into gerentocratic ways of seeing the youth. This runs in contradistinction to the fact that they are a force in the present stage of development. There is however, empirical evidence which suggests that they have indeed been a powerhouse in the ANC and that the ANC is actually what it is largely because of the activism. For instance, for the ANC to be militant, which was a necessary shift, credit should be given to this wing. It is the youth who in the 1950's found it necessary to change tactics. Among these leaders was the first general secretary who also became the first president of the free South Africa, Nelson Mandela. It was, however, unfortunate that the president of the time A.B. Xuma as well as the leader of the elderly movement saw them as "out of line hotheads". Despite this victimisation through labelling, a shift of paradigm was effected by the ANCYL.

Like the Mau Mau in Kenya, they also vowed to promote among others, education, cultural and moral values among African youths. They consciously wanted to infuse Black ideology. It was however unfortunate as Xuma did embrace their ideology. Consequent to that, the youth league decided to find an alternative leader who having conceded to their demands, became Dr. J. S. Moroka.

According to Twala, "The ANCYL were impatient with moderate tactics and the failure of the ANC to develop into a mass movement." (p. 158). This impatience of the youth is visible among Ngugi's youth. Through the character Boro in *Weep Not Child*, it is

even expressed in the phrase “to hell”. One of the characters, Kihika in *A Grian of Wheat* bears the name which the author himself testified that in its definition it means one who is impatient for change (see appendix B). On the contrary, Xuma would often refer to them as kinder gardens. This exaggeration of their description is indicative of his attempt to mute them using ageism as a tool. This generational conflict is a fixed and normal aspect of society. It is even evident at the time when Nelson Mandela himself had come of age and then reprimanding Peter Mokaba who after 1994 still believed in militancy as expressed in the slogan “Kill the boer, kill the farmer” but would not reprimand Jacob Zuma with his other version explicitly asking for the war machine in his famous song, “Mshini wam.” While Mandela did not withdraw from his militancy while he was youth, Mokaba apologised.

In recent times, the ANCYL (2012) continue to spearhead change and decide who should lead as president. Evidence of this is derived from this very study in which Fikile Mbalula who during the Polokwane Conference explicitly stated:

We monitored all their (the leadership of the ANC) moves. We knew all their moves, where they met on a daily basis, their strategies and tactics. In fact, some of the people who they thought were in their camp, were actually our own people. We knew all the people who supported Mbeki and those who supported Zuma. That, for us, made things easier in terms of lobbying. We knew they were going to target Gauteng, but they didn't have any chance...We would have expected the president to play a role that unifies rather than him being at the centre of the contest. We always thought there was a general understanding in the movement that the President must rise above all of us. He can't impose himself as the leader of the ANC. It should rather be the members of the ANC who call for him to stand again. It is clear members have had enough of him and now want Zuma to lead the party. People say he has brains and experience, but we believe no leader is indispensable in the ANC. We have produced giants in this movement. This is the ANC of Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu. Mbeki and Zuma are not the first leaders and will not be the last. That

is the point we must understand. If we inculcate the mentality that they (Mbeki and Zuma) are the alpha and omega, we are killing the organisation and misleading society. (Twala: 2014: 166 -167)

This conflict between the elderly and the youth is a permanent feature of this mass democratic movement and it is riddled with controversies. The controversies emanate from oppressive gerontocratic tendencies as well as what Mashele and Qobo (2014) referred to as *kleptocracy*.

The current crop of the ANCYL operates in an elitist type of environment which has a number of tricks to destabilise it. Speculation on this situation blames the ideological shift which precipitates from the nature of the South Africa's negotiated freedom. For reasons understandable when viewed from a global perspective, in this settlement, which is the antithesis of Mugabe's second Chimurenga, the South African ANC leadership became less militant and this inevitably slows socio-political and economic reform which has resulted in the cynicism expressed by some young voters as we have seen earlier. Until then, there was stagnation the youth were a little dominant. The most eminent of youth activism took place in June 1976.

He cites Starker who states that the youth in the 80's saw themselves as having a sense of power and vision for the future. They saw themselves as leading the older generation to freedom (Saphetha, 2004: 3). This view is repeated both in word and deed in Ngugi's novels especially *Weep not Child, The River Between, A Grain of wheat and Petals of blood* (In an interview between Mr. Mandela and the publisher: The revolutionary students movements theory and practice (21. September. 1968).

This youth demonstrates an awareness of global youth activism. He gives examples of youth exploits internationally, among them are the Mexican Youth against Zedillo who wanted to reduce students and introduce fees at universities. In Indonesia, he continues, it is the youth in collaboration with the workers who ousted Sharto, and that in Peru, the Fijumuru government was also ousted through the power of youth. He also cites what in modern history is referred to as the Arab spring where the youth in Iran were unfortunately attacked by Muslims fundamentalists when they demanded reforms and the liberalisation of the theocratic state (p.7). Yet another example close

to home, is the youth in Zimbabwe who demanded withdrawal of their troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He cites another instance of global consequence which is indirectly referred to in the novels selected for his study. He has observed that in Nigeria, it is the youth who led campaigns against the IMF and the World Bank. In Tunisia, the youth did it too.

In South Africa, inactivity resulted from the success of incarnates of leaders such as A.B. Xuma who pushed the youth to lose interest in politics and relegate the young people to alienation in politics. This problem is lamented by Antonio Gramsci as we shall see later. They are blamed for this irresponsibility by individuals such as Mankahlana. It is, however, unfortunate that Mankahlana has lost touch with them and all he can do is to label them carefree. This contradicts reality as the ANCYL has probed into the cause of youth's unwillingness to participate in elections.

This youth's view is, however, supported by Oliver Tambo who once said, "A country that does not value its youth deserves no future." It is unfortunate that youth have only been regarded as transitional stage on the way to adulthood (p.11). True transitional capacity has unfortunately been pathologized instead of perceiving their transitivity as a capacity for change among society.

The conflict referred to above arises from the knowledge which is not generously shared by the elders of the ANC and the younger ones. For instance, when the Mandelas and other CODESA stakeholders view liberation as a compromise whose implications are not overly shared with the masses, the youth and the masses are sent into despair as information is deliberately withdrawn from them. For instance, the ANCYL and SASCO just like Karega in Ngugi's novel, deem it as their responsibility to realign themselves with the tenets of the struggle prior to liberation. In their own words, this zeal for commitment to the freedom charter is expressed in one of their statement during the ANCYL and SASCO bilateral in June (ANCYL: 2012). The youth stated it categorically that they, were extremely disappointed at the ANC discussion document on education which is simply a cut and paste of progress reports of the governments' education department. They also declared that they were extremely worried that there was no concrete and coherent plan on how free education would be

realised. All these were part of their explicit demand for an accelerated process of implementing the Freedom Charter.

There is, however, some level of awareness with regard to the value of youth in politics. In a speech presented by Kgalema Motlanthe while still deputy president of the ANC, Motlanthe (2012) expressed his concern at the cynicism shown towards the youth. To him, this is not supposed to be the case as it contradicts the fact that Sisulu was 28 years when he joined the ANC. He commented that “today we may take it for granted that the youth at 28 are informed and knowledgeable. He further commended Sisulu for defying the odds and leaving a legacy.

The ANCYL has publicly declared its economic vision and imperatives even in public forums of national importance. In an article entitled, *A youth generation with a mission: Reflections on the ANCYL 24th Congress*, the youth expressed a more militant approach to their commitment to the Freedom Charter (ANCYL 24 National Conference: June 2011). They boldly expressed their mission in the theme “Youth action for economic freedom in our lifetime”. This was a clarion call to the ANC not to delay the implementation of the Freedom Charter, clause number three which states that the people shall share. (Saunders & Bundy 1989; 388).

The youth interpreted the first of the clauses not only as an expression of a sharing of the habitat, but a belonging in which no aspect is ignored. They demanded a visible change in terms of people benefiting socially and economically as well. To them, the first clause was all inclusive: sharing the land also meant sharing what the land produces. They took the initiative in that very congress and produced a document they called *A clarion call to economic freedom fighters: A programme of action for economic freedom in our lifetime*. In their reflection on the socio-political *status quo*, the league complains that, “Nearly two decades after the end of apartheid, vestiges of apartheid and economic patterns, ownership and control remain intact despite the attainment of political freedom by the ANC-led liberation movement and that Political freedom without economic emancipation is meaningless (Mashele and Qobo, 2014: 10).

One can deduce it even from the name of the document that, this is the militancy that necessitated the systematic removal of Julius Malema. A good number of members of

the ANCYL felt that Malema's battle was not actually his, but that he was simply becoming the mouthpiece of the ANCYL, something which qualified him to their leader. Of the steps proposed by the ANCYL, the first one which probably caused a rift between the elderly members and the ANCYL and probably the necessity for disbanding of certain branches, is (1) Expropriation without compensation. It ran in contradiction to the negotiated settlement. Even the second and the third to the fourth, were all provocative to those who entered into a lesser militant arrangement with the former oppressors. This situation led to the formation of the EFF which is the most revolutionary party in South African democracy today.

2.2 Perceptions by Scholars on youth

Durham(2000) laments the fact that youth are ferred to in stigmatizing terms as this assigns the youth the stigma of non-autonomous actors.What worries him the more is the capacity of this view to obscure the importance of youths as a socio-political force in their societies. This view is similar to the one that is used to analyze the behaviour of the South African Youth League of Julius Malema, the ex-president of the African National Congress in South Africa who has recently been banned from the party. After expulsion, he together with other ANCYL members who felt betrayed formed a formidable breakaway party that seeks to fight for economic freedom in South Africa as the Economic Freedom Front (EFF). It is imperative at this point to mention that one does not make any judgment on Malema's political activism as it would be against the spirit of academia to pass judgement before ensuring that one has heard the truth from him as well.

Another observation by Durham is that the youth are caught up in a situation where they have to battle with disenchantment of states immersed in a fast globalizing world which has reduced their countries to neocolonial states. He contends that the youth are, as a result, supposed to contend with global forces beyond their control. He further laments the fact that "Youth have certainly not been absent from the anthropology of Africa, but attention to them has been sporadic and too often secondary" (p.114). This is another justification for the rationale of the study. This anomalous situation is often blamed on British anthropology which often casts the youth in a peripheral role. Against the ritual peripheralisation of the youth in traditional western anthropology,

Durham insists that the youth are particularly sensitive to transformations in the economy as their activities, prospects and ambitions are contextually directed by transformational projects that destabilize nationalist politics and poetics.

The scene of the story in which Boro in *Weep Not Child* (to be discussed later) exclaims to hell with the prophecy is a case in point. In this scene, Ngotho's reaction to his socio-political and economic world is manifest in his collaboration with the forces of colonialism/imperialism as they attempt to recreate the inertia which has psychologically paralyzed the older members of the society. On the other hand, Boro demonstrates the agentiveness of youth as self-creating agents. This territoriality and self-preservation is lamented by Camino, (2000:14). According to him, the active involvement of youth highlights their value and provides an opportunity to erase negative stereotypes against them. Bennell (2007) concurs as he observes that the youth are a valuable resource for the advancement of societies. He adds that they are often the leaders of socio- political agendas and can lead also in community development. Their value is naturally derived from the generative power which normally sets in at this period of their physical and political development.

Concurring with Camino and Bennell above, Nduka (2008) notes that the youth have generative power which should be properly nurtured and exploited for community development. In history the assertion is exemplified by the record of Alexander who has gone into historical records as Alexander The Great. According to Jowett and O' Donnell (2012), Alexander who succeeded his assassinated father, Phillip of Macedonia, and conquered the arch enemy of Greece, was only twenty at the time when he accomplished the unity of an empire which has contributed enormously to the intellectual evolution of the human species. This is despite the new findings which discredit some of the evidence that the Greek civilization was stolen from Africa. Among other intellectual exploits that are credited to this young emperor's name are that he is reported to have been the first strategist to study the psychology of his enemies (certainly an idea his father never explored), as well as the preservation of his empire by introducing *erotic imperialism* (the system of proselytizing a culture by marrying or engaging in sexual intercourse so as to produce offspring who will ideologically lean towards the powerful sex, i.e. the paternal side, and *morganatic* marriages (marriages whose major goal is not romance but diplomacy and security)

with the females of the conquered members of his empire and thereby reducing the possibility of future revenge and spatial cessation. In order to achieve that, Alexander married Barsine the daughter of King Darius whom he had assassinated and then arranged marriages for 80 of his officials and about ten thousand of his soldiers to the Persian women. Credit should, however, be given to his father for finding him a private tutor, Aristotle, and an important lesson to be learned from this youth's biography is that the youth who do not exhibit this kind of direction and the commitment to both the self and national development are a product of failed parenting and statecraft. This is also suggested by Nduka above.

The challenges faced by the youth in community development is that they are excluded from participating in traditional and modern systems of governance and they are seen as children who do not have a role to play in the development agenda of their communities (Gobeli, 2005). Youth, as part of local people in every community, are also experts in their own domain and their expertise should be used in any development venture. This is recommended by Swanepoel & De Beer, (2011:76) who insist that people can make better decisions within the framework of their own understanding of their situation.

Another challenge to youth development is observed by Swanepoel (1997) who states that poverty; lack of self-sufficiency and self-reliance make it extremely difficult to get the youth to participate in development efforts. He adds that illiteracy also causes inferiority complexes. These facets normally induce fear and this makes the youth think that they cannot make worthwhile contributions. What compounds this problem is their customs and traditions which can be obstacles because people feel obligated to follow them even if they work against development. Among such beliefs are submission to traditional leaders and inferior position of women and young people. But customs and traditions are not obstacles *per se*; on the contrary, they are valuable resources. They tend to adapt themselves to suit the times. However, where people keep them static, especially, in poor rural areas, they can hinder development (Swanepoel, 1997). Ngugi's youth are equally immersed under these troubled real life conditions.

The role of youth in altering the socio-political space of their societies is also evident in the political change experienced in a modern day superpower, the United States of America. This happened during the most historic elections of 2008 which some journalists named "the year of the youth vote". This is the year in which America attained its credibility as a nation which believes in equality and the emancipation of the Blacks, a race which was introduced to the country through the misanthropic act of slavery. We turn to Caroline Kennedy, the daughter of John F. Kennedy who made an important confession to an audience in Washington on January 28, 2008. In her own words, Ms. Kennedy states: "They (her own children) were the first people who made me realize that Barrack Obama is the President we need," (cited in Von Drehle, 2008)

This sub-section of the survey focuses, firstly, on an activist from the communist ideology, Guevara (2003), a Latin American and then to some of the renowned scholars of the west in youth studies. This medical doctor whose activism as a guerilla includes fighting for the liberation of the African people in countries such as Zaire, now The Democratic Republic of the Congo, views youth as agents of socio-political and economic change. In his address to the Young Communist League of his country on 20th October 1962, Guevara charged the youth with the responsibility of being the vanguard of all revolutionary movements, the first to be ready to make all sacrifices demanded by the revolution whatever they might be. He told the students to be the first at work, the first in defense of their country (p.159). He further told them that the highest honour comes with the ability to defend one's country, and that the country cannot be defended with weapons only. This will emerge in chapter 4 where youths such as Waiyaki, Njoroge, and Gatuiria resort to the defence of their country through education.

What this means here is that some of Ngugi's characters such as Waiyaki and Njoroge who are labeled lesser revolutionaries as compared to those who took up arms in the quest to liberate the country are not absolved. This is true in the sense that every government, be it oppressive or *biophilic*, needs think tanks. Antonio Gramsci, as cited by Bourdieu (2008), concurs with the assertion above as he insists that every civilization needs intellectuals. Every revolution needs intellectuals and when anger and war are gone; it is intellectuals that begin the new and eternal phase of the struggle

for survival among humans. Guevara also warned the youth that the highest honour is that of being able to defend the country. He emphasized this point by stating that the revolution of his country fell into the hands of young people who played their role by defending the institutions created during the Cuban people's struggle. This is made possible by his observation that the country cannot be defended with weapons only. Guevara insisted that the youth must also create: "youth that does not create is an anomaly" (p.183). Guevara added: "We still see how the young-heroes almost like in the novels, who can give their lives almost hundred times over for the revolution and can respond as one to whatever specific task they are called upon to accomplish. Nevertheless, the youth sometimes do not show up at work because they have a UCJ meeting, or they stayed up too long the night before - discussing some initiative of the youth organization" (p.163). This real life possibility about the youth living up to this socialist icon is also evident in one young female character called Wariinga in *Devil On the Cross*.

Among other things, Che Guevara addresses the youth on commitment to work and self-discipline as these are the "creators" of a perfect society. Guevara charged the youth in the following words: "You have to build a future in which work will be man's greatest dignity, a social duty, a pleasure given to man [sic], the most creative activity there is. Everyone will have to be interested in their work and the work of others in society and daily advance man's social dignity" (p.162) It was a conviction that he needed the young communists to be committed to.

2.3 Views from scholars on African youth

We begin this section with a household name in African literature Soyinka (1976:5), who laments the exclusion of youth in post-liberation Africa in the following words:

The often acknowledged poverty of leadership and vision of the older generation of African leadership is similar to the repeated platitude that the future belongs to the youth.

Soyinka seems to reject the notion of youth as leaders whose leadership is suspended to some indefinite future.

Two other scholars of note on this subject are Beckman and Adeoti (2006:5) who raise their objection against the manner in which the youth's role is devalued among nations. Acknowledging their potential, he refers to the youth as a wasted generation. His choice of the passive "wasted" presupposes an agent that emasculates the youth. As usual, the passive voice does not hold it obligatory for the speaker to state the name of the agent. In this case, it can be deductively concluded that these authors implicate their generation for the "wasted" state of youth. These authors cite Soyinka who poses five illuminating questions which follow in the bullets below:

- What becomes of Africa tomorrow?
- Who are the agents of transformation?
- Will today's error be allowed to stifle the prospects of recovery?
- Is it possible to construct a genuine future from the fragile foundation of the present?
- What role will the youth play?

Though all these questions are important, the last of these questions is the most relevant one for this study. This question derives its relevance from the fact that this study attempts to investigate the role of youth, but then approaching it from the literary discipline using the works of an author who according to Beckman and Adeoti (2006) as a writer of fiction is an intellectual champion of African development.

In addition to believing that youth can play an important role in the development of societies, Beckman and Adeoti also claim that the youth in Nigeria have been a thorn in the flesh of the Nigerian neo-colonial and autocratic regimes (p.6). Informed by their observation, Beckman and Adeoti advise that the voices, views, and visions of young people themselves still await to be heard and considered and laments that little is remarkably known about them. This view is supported by Caputo (1995) and Gottlieb (2000). These scholars contend that children and youth, in Africa as elsewhere, have often remained our 'silent others', our voiceless infants.

O'Brien (cited in Everett and Sisulu, 1992:2) takes it further as he insists that the youth are often constructed from the outside and from above as a 'problem' or a 'lost generation' in 'crisis' (O'Brien, 1992:2). Their faith in the youth is, however, strong for

they believe that despite all the difficulties they face, young people in Africa are actively participating in social, economic, and political developments and, in the process, constructing their own identities. They are often viewed simultaneously as creative and destructive forces. It is their contention that indeed, youth have been at the forefront of major social transformations, whether in politics, economics, religion, popular culture, or community building.

2.4 Youth activism in post colonial Kenya

Kenya, the country where the material for Ngugi's realistic novels is acquired also has a record of youth activism, especially, in an era where adults are lulled into loyalty to colour in the face of national crisis. This country which provides both the setting and the material, was a robust and commonplace feature. Atieno (2007) states that the youth of Kenya believe that Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Arap Moi and Mwai Kibaki are not the true heroes of Kenya, but they see themselves as the true heroes instead. According to him, these youths see themselves as true champions against anti-tribalism and other socio-political and economic problems such as lack of employment and economic marginalization. Atieno (1976) further sympathizes with the youth, as he contends that, it is the youth who still lament the death of Dedan Kimathi who was assassinated by the colonial regime with the approval of Jomo Kenyatta.

Another observer is Kehinde (2004) who represents youth as victims of post liberation Kenyan society. He observes that once they finish grade 12, they then join the masses of frustrated Kenyans with the result that they become vulnerable to various forms of moral decadence. About these youths, this researcher insists that, "before long, these young people will end up in the shanty towns of the capitals and become social parasites. Their days are spent writing job requests which pile up in all the administrations. Some of them join the underworld" (Kehinde 2004: 233). In the novels selected for this study, the young people referred to here are represented as the Wanjas, Wariingas and Kimathis and they are discussed fully in the fourth chapter of the study.

One more informative study on Kenyan youth as a socio-political force was conducted by Musila (2011), a compatriot of Ngugi who writes about the youth in Kenya. In her

paper entitled *The Redykyulass Generation'S' intellectual interventions in Kenyan public life*, Musila records the audacity of the youth to use the arts to break the silence imposed by the regime of fear. According to this scholar, Redykyulass which is the stage name for a trio of Kenyan comedians-Tony Njuguna, John Kiarie and Walter Mongare, who use parody to mitigate the gravity of fear the state has inculcated among its citizens. The trio also ridicules the Kenyans for their silence in the face of tyranny. In her study, she cites the Kenyan film maker, Judy Kibinge (2008) who observes that this youth initiative is not only geared towards contributing to breaking the cowered silence in Kenyan public culture, but [that] they also heralded the dawn of critical engagement with state machinery through political satire. This form of activism is also represented in Ngugi's novels.

2.5 Literary production as an indicator of youth activism

In this last but one section of this chapter we investigate literary evidence of participation of youth in matters of social justice in their societies. History shows that, while still within the category called youth, some great authors contributed significantly towards the literature which has the potential to ameliorate social relations. This is evident in the production of literary texts and some biographical snippets shared below. Among the literary geniuses of Europe are individuals such as Thomas Mann, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Vladimir Mayakovski and Hugo von Hofmannsthal (Heiney & Downs, 1974). According to Heiney and Downs, Von Hofmannsthal had a peaceful upbringing and began writing poetry and drama at an early age. They record that two of his best plays appeared before he turned twenty. The reader is here reminded of Ngugi's argument with a school mate, Mbugua, who told him that he too could write a novel when Ngugi had been made to believe that he had to acquire a special licence in order to write. This point provides an argument that it is only under abnormal conditions that the youth cannot operate as a socio-political force when under the control of a *biophilic* society. That is to say, a society which interferes with their entomological development. It supports the hypothesis of this study which implies that

the youth are capable of contributing enormously towards the intellectual wealth of their societies. This is only possible when society does not stunt their intellectual development.

Another instance of socio-political activism using literature is by the German, Thomas Mann, who has been the most read among the great authors of his time. He determined it when he was an adolescent that he was, just like Ngugi, also going to become a writer. Like a good number of Ngugi's younger characters, it is around this very stage of development that he developed a profound contempt for the respectability of the middle class. He, like Ngugi, also had a penchant for the depiction of the enthusiasm, fervour and desperation of youth. Percy Bysshe Shelley is yet another renowned poet and apologist who managed to divorce himself from his oppressive class and started to write revolutionary poetry, most significantly his poem, "Ozymandias". The fourth of these individuals is Vladimir Mayakovski whose activism started when he was a child. His contribution towards issues of social justice is more manifest in his revolutionary poem, *The Twelve*. This youth is reported to have had his underground socio-political activities drawing him to the attention of the state security apparatus even before he reached fifteen. Resulting from that, he was sentenced to eleven months for taking a job with an illegal printing company.

In the light of the above biographical snippets discussed, it can be inferred that youth activism and leadership in society should not be postponed to a later stage when their energy shall have diminished.

2.6 General survey of youth activism in History.

Many more examples of youthful determination can be made. For instance, Karl Marx was only 26 when he wrote *The Communist Manifesto* (Jacobus, 1992). Vladimir Lenin was 33 when he led the Russian Revolution; John Langalibalele Dube was 16 when he boarded a ship to the US – a country he did not know; Pixley ka Isaka Seme was 24 when he wrote his *The Regeneration of Africa*, on which most of the thinking around the African Renaissance is based. Nelson Mandela and Oliver Raymond Tambo were 32 and 31, respectively, when they spearheaded the anti-apartheid programme of action in 1949. Most, if not all of them, valued education as the foundation for future revolutionary action and success. Their view of education is represented in Ngugi's youths such as Njoroge, Waiyaki and Karega. This evidence runs counter to the allegation that more than seeking humanity, Ubuntu, and the upliftment of the lesser members of their societies, the youth are often taken in by the culture of materialism.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter surveyed the literature on youth as a socio-political force among various nations. The bulk of the material in the survey was derived from South Africa. The survey includes discussion on youth activism during the era of apartheid South Africa and then proceeded to the post liberation era. In these eras, the youth have portrayed a penchant for socio-political justice. This has, however, caused conflict between them and the elderly members of their communities. The survey then probed into youth as activists from Latin America. This section dwelt more on the ideas which express the hope that Che Guevara has on youth. Next was the general survey of youth activism in History. It includes views on how youth role played major Historical political changes such as the Arab spring and the crowning of the first Black president of the United States of America. The last three subheadings of the review are an overview of insights from interviews held with the author prior to this study, Ngugi's young characters as perceived by scholars prior to this study, and finally youth activism in post-colonial Kenya which is the country where the novels selected from this study derive their material from. The literature surveyed so far show abundant evidence to the fact that the youth are an indispensable age group that should not be waited for until old age before they can be allowed to contribute to the socio-political and economic lives of their societies.

3. CHAPTER 3: BACKGROUND TO AUTHOR, STUDY, TEXTS AND THE AUTHORIAL CRAFT

In order to create a background against which Ngugi's younger characters will be analysed for their socio-political contribution using the psychoanalysis, this chapter provides some secondary data which has a bearing on the author's literary production. It serves a subsidiary role to the main chapter which is chapter-analysis. The data is further provided with the intention to assist a reader who is not familiar with Ngugi and his works to possess some level of acquaintance with the author, his work, its possible communicative purpose as well as the craft normally used in the weaving of its genre. In the chapter, an attempt is; therefore, made to provide the reader with a brief summary of the following: Ngugi's biographical details which have a direct bearing on his writing and therefore having the capacity to illuminate some of the arguments posited by the study, the role of literature and the arts in a society, which includes views from the West, Africa and Ngugi himself. The third section is a summary of Ngugi's biography including his philosophy on literature and its role within the African situation as expressed in his critical works. The chapter closes with comments made on some of his characters by some literary critics who wrote before this study was conducted.

Ngugi was born James Ngugi to a landless family in Limuru - Kamirithu - in 1938. His father was a polygamist who had four wives. His parents were not Christians in a colony which propagated Christianity as part of its mission to civilize Africans. Four tragic incidents happened to him from his childhood to adulthood. First, it was the separation of his parents in 1947. His mother had to raise him and his siblings alone. Inevitably, Ngugi was thrust into poverty which later made him vulnerable and created eternal scars in his soul towards Christianity. One incident he still finds difficult to forget is when they were once invited to the house of their landlord on a Christmas day. As children from a non-Christian background, on that day, Ngugi and his elder brother laughed during prayer for the food which was also enticing. The landlord's wife remarked that she would not want her children to associate with children from poor families. He recalls the mountain of the slices which looked very alluring to them as children, and that they were eager to get on with the job of demolishing the mountain.

But then she told them to pray. Ngugi and his brother opened their eyes and looked at one another, and they read the thoughts expressed in each other's face. They laughed in the midst of prayer, and they were heavily reprimanded by the lady of the house. Ngugi reports that in her anger, the land lady pointed out the difference between the religious upbringing of her children which made them possess good manners in God's presence and that of peasants, which made them possess terrible manners even in Godly presence (Sicherman, 1990:pp18-19). This incident has probably influenced one of the scenes in *Weep Not Child*.

The third major incident was the death of his deaf elder brother. This brother was murdered by the British colonial forces during the era of imperialism. His death is "represented" as that of a younger character called Gitogo in *A Grain of Wheat*, and the last which is the worst was the raping of his wife in a liberated Kenya while watching - a deed which is suspected to have been motivated by political malfeasance. His wife shares the name Njeri, with his character in *Weep Not Child* and she is the one who initiated Njoroge's going to school. In the real world Njoroge becomes Ngugi. Njeri initiates the beginning of formal education for Ngugi and this becomes Maangau independent Gikuyu school. The writer then proceeded to Alliance Missionary School and eventually to Makerere University in Uganda. At Makerere, he read the works of Conrad. Ngugi then proceeded to Leeds University in England where he encountered the works of Karl Marx and Frantz Fanon which are regarded as the inspirational source of his first novel. It was after his enrollment at Leeds that he took a revolutionary stance towards his identity and changed his name from James Ngugi to Ngugi wa Thiong'o. His third novel, *A Grain of Wheat*, then followed.

Among the other heart-wrenching realities of Ngugi's life was the social engineering by the colonial architects whose aim was to expose the natives to poverty. These are some of the events which keep resurfacing as scenes in his writings which are auto/biographical. The Kenya of Ngugi's childhood was subjected to what the British did to the natives in countries such as South Africa: natives were evicted from the economically viable lands to the rocky and barren native reserves where their agrarian economy could not be sustained. Subsequent to this strategy (which resembles the South African land Act of 1913 and the Irish potato famine), poverty of the natives was established and they were coerced into a labour force for their imperial masters.

His “rebellion” against the political *status quo* of Kenya started while he was still at Alliance Secondary in 1955. That is to say, while he was still seventeen of age, he challenged the education system which was preparing the natives for servitude in the country of their ancestors. Between the years 1954 and 1956, two incidents which ran directly in contra-distinction to his ideology and political terrain occurred. Firstly, he underwent circumcision and his elder brother Wangui joined the Mau Mau, a guerilla movement fighting for the restoration of Kenyan land and freedom. Ngugi was not oblivious to the fact that the education system demonized native liberation activists and glorified white imperialists. This could be the reason why he had to redefine this youthful movement – a possible rationale for disturbing the hegemony of meaning created against his fellow natives.

While still at Alliance, Ngugi was aware of the hegemony of the colonial government which led him to argue with a school mate, Kenneth Mbugua, that it was not possible for a native to write a book as the powerful gatekeepers would not allow its publication. Among other works which influenced Ngugi’s ideological stance and literary genius were Charles Dickens and Robert Louis Stevenson which were introduced to him by a teacher he remembers as Samuel Kibicho. He also read imperialist novels by Rider Haggard, particularly, *King Solomon’s mines*, as well as liberal writers such as Allan Paton. The similarity of the setting in Paton’s *Cry the Beloved Country* and *Weep Not Child* attests to the observation above. The symbolism between the consequences of this ecological disturbance, and the subsequent corruption on the lives of the young characters, for example, Steven Khumalo and Boro or Ole Maasai, in the two novels raises awareness towards the gerontocratic origins of youth delinquency. Ngugi further admits to having stumbled into Leo Tolstoy, especially *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace*, works that impacted on him immensely. His quest to write also experienced stumbling blocks. His first attempt to publish was rejected by a government sponsored publisher in 1956.

Ngugi’s first encounter with African and Caribbean literature started while he was at Makerere. Before then, at Alliance, his principal was passionate about writers such as Rudyard Kipling who to him was an emissary of the imperialist order. The writers’ works he got exposed him beyond the authorized syllabus of literature at Makerere: he encountered *Things fall apart* by Chinua Achebe’s, *In the Castle of my Skin* by

George Lamming and Peter Abraham's *Tell Freedom*. These raised his consciousness as he realised for the first time that Africans had been writing for way too long than he had ever imagined and this led to his awareness that the African writer had been *muted* for too long. His ideological position hardened at Leeds University where he added to his readings works by socialist writers such as Frantz Fanon and the political literature of Karl Marx and Friederich Engels. This latter pair overtook his interest on Fanon. He became an avid reader of both Marx and Engels. Among their works were, *The German Ideology* which enlightened him on the plight of the working class (to be later mirrored in *Petals of blood* through Karega).

As a distinguished African writer, Ngugi's novels cover three important eras in the history of African writing. First, his second novel *The River Between* is set in an era which is referred to as the advent of colonialism. His second novel, *Weep Not child* is set during the heyday of colonialism and *A Grain of Wheat* straddles the era of colonial struggle and liberation. His last four novels selected for this study, which can also be classified as literature of cynicism are entirely set in the post liberation Kenya, and they include *Petals of Blood*, *Matigari*, *Devil on the Cross* and *Wizard of the Crow*.

Ngugi's post-colonial writings inevitably led him into conflict with the new African leaders, the comprador class, who took over Kenya from the British. As a writer committed to the struggle of the peasants, Ngugi turned his passion of art against the avariciousness and power-hungry disposition of the native rulers. Like Ken Sarowiwa of Nigeria, Paulo Freire of Brazil and many others, he too was charged with treason and he was sentenced to one year at the Kamiti maximum prison. This imprisonment ironically afforded him an opportunity to compose, his more revealing, *Devil on the Cross* which he published in 1980. He joined the team of actors at Kamirithu.

Early in his life, Ngugi had invariably demonstrated serious concern for issues of social justice and youth development. He has always been concerned with the youth; for instance, he initiated the forging of unity among the youth of the new villages after forced removals and when he was still at Alliance (1982:76). In his memoir entitled *In the house of the interpreter* (2012), Ngugi reports that he used to do a door to door outreach looking for the youths in Kamirithu. He does explicitly state that this incident heightened his admiration for the youth. It can, therefore, be inductively concluded that

youth socio-political activism is not an imposition of the *muse* in to his art. The assertion above is expressed in his own words as he states; "... I began to see the buoyant spirit of youth rising." All this, he does in Kamirithu, the new foster village.

Among some of the memories Ngugi cherishes the best is the conviction by his activist brother, Good Wallace, who always insisted that there is no difference between the struggle and biblical suffering of the Israelites under Pharaoh and how they eventually got their exodus from tyranny. This real life experience is represented in the character Kihika who always carried the bible and the innocence in Njoroge which made him believe that Jomo was Moses and the people were the children of Israel. Ngugi further remembers that when he returned to Alliance on 5th September 1957, he had established a performance group to improve the social life of the new village (Ngugi, 1982:125). One of the sad experiences was the imprisonment of his elder brother, Wallace whom he always referred to as Good Wallace. This and many other incidents may have led to the literary stance which he has adopted. The stance referred to is neatly expressed in the words:

I believe in the social vision. I believe that a writer must not aim to entertain people only, but also to change society for, the better.

He further adds that as a writer in school, "I was concerned with trying to remove the central Christian doctrine from the dress of western culture, and seeing how this might be grafted onto the central beliefs of our people" (p. 27). In yet another interview conducted with him by fellow students at Leeds University, Gonzalez and Williams as cited in Marcuson (1967), Ngugi mentions that his writing did not happen in a vacuum. He adds, "I have read literature, listened to stories and have seen boys and girls growing up" (Pp.25-33). It is evident from this personal concern that his fiction is a production of the subconscious response to the plight of the young. Ngugi currently lives in the United States as a political refugee and is appointed as a distinguished professor at the California University of Irvin.

3.1 Literature and Society

3.1.1 Introduction

This section of the chapter focuses on African and the rest of the former colonized and neo-colonised views of revolutionary writing. It presents the views of some accomplished writers. These views are included to situate Ngugi's novels within the category known as realism. Those individuals include Chinua Achebe, Leopold Senghor, Badat and Amiri Baraka. It further discusses the philosophical orientations of these writers and the roles they play in revealing discrepancies in how African and Third World people are perceived and how their writers react towards the stereotypes of their imperial masters.

Writing from a third world country, Ngugi's art is a manifestation of a deliberate attempt to give voice to all the citizens of neo-colonial states around the world. The philosophy of art he subscribes to views the artist in analogous terms with the organs of the human body with each part playing its role for the sustenance and preservation of the whole body. This view is presented by Wimsatt and Brooks (1964:457) who in their view remark:

The painter of our time will live our life, with our own habits and our own ideas. He will take the feelings he gets from the look of things in our society, and give them back to us in pictures where we recognize ourselves and our surroundings. It will not do to lose sight of the fact that we ourselves are both the subject and object of our art. Art is the expression of us for our own sake.

Dirlik (1983) takes this view to a more radical level as he insists that:

In literary creation and theoretical research, there should be no restricted areas. But I have faith that before beginning to write about the topics, incidents and characters that interest him [sic], a patriotic writer, a progressive writer, and in particular a communist writer will necessarily consider how best to arouse the people's revolutionary spirit and raise their moral and aesthetic levels; he will certainly be aware of the heavy burden

of responsibility he bears towards the nation and the people (1983: 791).

According to Onoge (1985:44) as cited in Beckman and Adeoti (2006), the idea shared above fits in well with Marx's view that "Every literature is a commitment to a particular political ideology and every writer is a writer in politics" (Marx, 2006: 32).

3.1.2 Third World View of Revolutionary Writing

The Third World view of revolutionary writing is vividly represented in Mao Tse Tung's talk who states:

In the world today, all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art sake, art that stands above classes or art that is detached from or independent of politics (Guggelberger, 1985:50).

As a revolutionary leader of the People's Republic of China, *baptized* in the revolutionary traditions of Russia, Mao Tse Tung asserts that literature is a tool for liberation. It depends on whose possession it is found. Literature, to him, is partisan and therefore, it becomes a blatant show of social detachment for a writer to decide not to represent the agony of the people in their writing. Not only should the writer show, but they should also re-enkindle hope and show writers the exit routes out of their misery.

This view of art resonates with the criterion laid by Leopold Senghor (in Maulana Ron Karenga, 1970). According to Senghor, literature should have the following three text intrinsic features: It must be functional, collective, and committed (also see Gates, 1997:478). This criterion by Karenga agrees with the Maoist view that, "There is no art for art's sake. Art must be of use to the people." It must be a tool that people use to express and share their views and sentiments.

Still on theatre, Neal (1997:1561) asserts that as a literature within the Black arts movement, it should eschew protest literature. In his own words, he insists that:

Our theatre will show victims so that their brothers in the audience will be better able to see that they are the brothers of the victims, and that they themselves are blood brothers. And what we show must cause the blood to rush, so that pre-revolutionary temperaments will be bathed in this blood, and it will cause their deepest souls to move, and they will find themselves and clenched, even ready to die, at what the soul has been taught. We will scream and cry, murder, run through the streets in agony, if it means some soul will be moved to actual life understanding of what the world is, and what it ought to be. We are preaching virtue and feeling and a natural sense of the self in the world. All men live in the world, and the world needs to be a place for all of them to live.

This view also surfaces in the way it presents the youth. Based on this view the chapter on analysis has been deliberately divided into sub sections with two of them showing youth as victims of both colonial and post liberation regimes.

Another view is derived from Karenga (1997: 1973) who also insists that Black literature,

Like everything in the black community must respond positively to the reality of revolution. It must become and remain a part of the revolutionary machine that moves us to change quickly and creatively. We have always said and continued to say that the battle we are waging is the battle for the minds of black people and that if we lose this battle, we cannot win the violent one. It becomes very important that art plays the role it should play in Black survival and not bog itself in the meaningless Western world.

Chinweizu and Madubhuti (1997) add to this conviction as they state that art must destroy anything which might impede our development and positive self-esteem. This assertion is also adhered to by Ngugi who writes in order to correct the distorted history and image of the African. This he does with some scenes like the scene at the barber's shop in the novel *Weep Not Child*.

Yet another revolutionary view on Literature and its role is derived from Amiri Baraka (1997) who insists, "Revolutionary theatre must EXPOSE (sic) show up the inside of

these human skulls, look into black skulls...it must crack their faces open to the mad cries of the poor. It must teach them about silence and the truths lodged there; it must teach that the holiness of life is a constant possibility of widening consciousness” (1997:190). He takes this conviction further in his poem *Black Art* in which he crudely denounces poetry if it does not address itself to socio-political issues. This is also true with the dialogues by a number of the youths in Ngugi’s novels selected for his study.

3.1.3 The African View of literary art

At the heart of this review on literature and the arts is the conviction that African scholars perceive their art as revolutionary. It is for them the word that should bring order to the chaos created by the imperialist ideology. We will then start this section by focusing on the ideas of an ideologue that has had direct influence on Ngugi - Chinua Achebe.

The words of Chinua Achebe in a television interview with Lewis Nkosi and Wole Soyinka in 1964 also express in vivid terms mind-set of a revolutionary writer. When asked about his views on what persuaded him to write. Achebe states that:

I decided to become a writer in order to correct the African past which Joyce Cary’s work had epitomized (Guggelberger, 1985:23).

Achebe forthrightly continues in another instance to express his mission as a writer as he states:

I would be quite satisfied if my novels, (especially the ones I set in the past), did no more than teach my readers that their past with all its imperfections was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God’s behalf delivered them. Perhaps what I write is applied art as distinct from pure. But who cares? Art is important, but so is education of the kind I have in mind. And I don’t see that the two need be mutually exclusive (Guggelberger), 1985:21).

It is evident from the quotations above that reaction and reconstruction are central concepts to the mind of a revolutionary writer. The anger that accrues in the troubled soul of a member of the oppressed who is artistically talented will always result in a

piece of writing that aims at healing the wounds, providing crutches which, when health is restored to the 'body', will then become guns pointed no longer on the self, but the foe of the people as would have been described by their artist. The assertion above is also supported by Leopold Senghor (cited in Munroe, 1978:45) who categorically states:

It has proved virtually impossible for the contemporary African writer to avoid reflecting, nor has he sought to do so, the fundamental transformation taking place in the Africa of his generation, even when he has not personally been involved in politics

The above statement evidently shows that the fundamental problems of the people should be the passion of the writer.

Writing from the standpoint of an African in the Diaspora, Killam (1969) contributes to this view of literature as he angrily states that: "The American mainstream has come up with a crop of literary nitpickers, most of them entirely without testicles. So now, they want to castrate the Negro writer, too. Is this the stream Herb Hill?" He continues:

Artists are forever at war with society, and if the artist is a black man in the free world, he is doubly at war and the war's consequences are especially dangerous for him. But he must fight in any event for the consequence of temporizing is fraught with even greater danger.

He further cites Ernest Hemmingway as interviewed by *Paris Review* on the advice he could give to young writers. In his reaction, Hemmingway insists that writers need two things - a sense of justice and a built-in shock proof shit detractor (p.37). His view of the writer's vocation resembles that of Ngugi to be discussed later. He is convinced that: "Writers must be searchers for the truth; men and women whose life's mission is to explore the truth of man's relationship with man." In this study, Ngugi's novels do exactly that. They interrogate the relationship between the new rulers of Africa and the electorate. They also probe into the relationship that the society has with the youth. He further charges the writer with responsibility as he demands that: "It is up to the writer to create a new vision for mankind. He must forever be asking questions. He

must forever ask the unaskable.” He vows that “I am a writer, first of all, and precisely because the world stinks and I want to change it” (p.39). In addition to this, he expects to see the existence of memory in writing. That is to say, writers must not pretend some form of *amnesia* by failing to show their past.

Heiney and Downs (1974) however, warn that writers often suffer for their opposition to totalitarian regimes. As Ngugi puts it in his *Pen Points and Gun Points*, they are constantly at war with the governments which always demand stability even at the expense of justice and change which are inherently part of the human species. This is further concurred to by Mann and Shelley. To Mann, “The artist is the epitome of genius, demonism and disease; to him, bourgeoisie happiness is denied. But he achieves the higher more ecstatic pleasures of creativity” (p.11). Like an Andromesian child of Ngugi, the writer can even look under the clothes of the emperor to see what’s hidden there. Hence, his belief that: “In a sense, he, the artist, becomes god through his creative power.” This very power eventually elevates him to the position of a superhuman who cannot be subjugated in all spheres of his/her being. This is why Mann has a special respect for the artist especially the writer. This is evident in his view of the artist as a being above the rest of humanity. What the reader must also note is that being above the rest of humanity means being above even the rulers. This has been proven by the supremacy of characters such as Kamiti, Nyawira as well as Gatuiria as they surpass these elderly characters with their art. As artists, they show some superior awareness concerning socio-political affairs of their societies.

Yet another view of literature is provided by the East African philosopher, Okot P’Bitek (1986:41). In his work *Artist the Ruler*, P’Bitek views the artist as the only person with the role to socialize what could otherwise become a being without humanness. Drawing from antiquity, he claims that the artist does this by using his voice to sing his laws and rules to the accompaniment of musical instruments such as the nanga, the harp and the twisting of his [sic] body to the rhythm of the drums. He further claims that humans cannot be kind without the creative work of the artist which constitutes the mental pictures which guides men’s lives. He emphasizes his point by citing John Dewey who postulates that, “the sum total of the effect of all reflective treatises on morality is insignificant in comparison with the influence of architecture, the novel, drama, on life becoming important...” (P’Bitek, 1986: 4).

The assertion above is authenticated by Smith (2005) who insists that language is a powerful device which has the capacity to create any mood envisaged by the writer. Smith also submits that memorability of most characters depends on their vicissitudes, that is to say, they must all face up to some kind of conflict from global threats to personal dilemma and they must also exude an ability to learn to how to handle them. He further contends that practically, all characters in fiction are driven by the conflicts they face and the resolutions they make in the face of those conflicts. This observation will be useful in attempting to show how Ngugi arouses emotion in favour of his youths and how he represents them as a socio-political force which deserves attention in both real and fictional worlds. An awareness of this factor and many others mentioned above will contribute to an understanding of how these youths become a force in their society.

3.1.4 Ngugi's views on creative writing

Approaching literature from the stand point of an African and a citizen of a former colony and then a neo-colony with some of his compatriots acting as middle men in the furthering of oppression against their own people, Ngugi's views on literature are informed by revolutionary fervor. From a personal experience and victimization by the realities of both Colonialism and neo-colonialism, Ngugi inevitably eschews a more socially engaged literature. He provides one more dimension to the definition of writing which is even broader. About revolution, he has this to say: "The African writer we are talking about was born on the crest of this anti-colonial upheaval and world-wide revolutionary ferment." (Ngugi, 1990:12).

He views creative writing as a product of anti-colonial sentiments surrounding the life of the writer; it is virtually a measure of how the writer embarks on a mission to show disapproval of the forces that suppress the colonized and oppressed people.

The view above is also substantiated by Ngugi's assertion that:

The writing itself, whether in poetry, drama or fiction, even where it was explanatory in was assertive in tone. It was Africa explaining itself, speaking for itself, and interpreting its past. It was an Africa rejecting the images of its past as drawn by the artists of imperialism. (Ngugi, 1990:12).

In the context of this study, this belief is expressed by Ngugi through the youth. They seem to be the ones who are more concerned about this image of Africa which needs restoration. This is more evident in *Weep not Child*, *The River Between*, *Petals of Blood* and *Wizard of the Crow*.

Like Amiri Baraka and Karl Marx, Ngugi views literature as partisan, and he contends that commitment should be pivotal to any Third World writing. It follows then that revolutionary literature should expose imperialism, oppression, exploitation and all their legacies irrespective of who the culprits and perpetrators are. To him, literature should function also to demolish the hierarchies, which are both intra- and inter-racial and level the social plateau for an egalitarian society and equal access to the resources.

Ngugi's presentation of certain issues in his writing is a direct result of what he found through his engagement with the literature of people who were negatively portrayed in Africa and other less developed nations. In fact, his engagement produces and reflects a literature that is anti-colonial and anti-imperialistic. In justifying his position, Ngugi mentions the perceptions of two philosophers who put their intellect to use in favour of colonialism and its degradation of the African people, and these are Anthony Trollope and David Hume. In his *Writers in Politics*, he cites Trollope's degrading description of the African as he states:

"He (the native) is idle, unambitious as to worldly position, sensual and content with little..." (Ngugi, 1981:14). Ngugi states that this mental outlook is also found in David Hume. With these two viewed as great thinkers in their world, it becomes evident that colonialism was not just a physical action of usurping native lands but it also had its own ideologues whose duty it was to sear the conscience of their fellow nationals into unbridled savagery. In order to reverse that, the writers of the oppressed nations should also view their duty as that of ideologues. He adds that such stereotypical racial prejudices necessitated the genesis of a literature of reparation, combat and restoration. Some of Ngugi's younger characters are bent into interrogating and exposing these "inventions" of the western ideologues.

Ngugi (1997) further believes that literature works through influencing the emotions and the imagination of the reader. He laments western literature which, according to him, assaults the consciousness of the reader and therefore positions itself as a powerful tool which can negatively alter the consciousness of the oppressed. He, like Achebe, also claims that he decided to write in order to undo the intellectual harm inflicted by writers of the Western world on the consciousness of the African and the third world citizens at large. Among those writers notorious for the misrepresentation of the African identity is Karen Blixen who, according to Ngugi, describes Africans in derogatory terms. This is not surprising since it is the ideological orientation of the colonizer to first dehumanize the colonized in order to justify his unbridled savagery and ultimate subjugation of the native. In her book entitled *Out of Africa*, Blixen (1952) is reported to have unabashedly stated that his tolerance for Africans was made possible by the love for the African animals (p.57).

Ngugi decries the *megalomania* in European thinking which brands Africa a liability of the European world. In the long run, this mindset apports the occident the right to heap abuse on the native of Africa. With views such as these about Africans, Ngugi has inevitably been provoked to invent stories with the deliberate intention to counteract this contorted outlook.

He further states that he writes in order to correct the African image distorted by explicitly racist writers such as the ones mentioned above and liberals such as Allan Paton who present African characters sympathetically and yet gives them the role of an object acted upon by circumstances. Paton's characters are devoid of the necessary anger typical of the oppressed. Ngugi's view of the African writer is that his creative ability should help the African to seize History and reshape the images of the native people which have been distorted. Its communicative purpose should without any sense of remorse be intentional in demolishing the harm caused by writers such as Edward Blyden whose works recite the triumphs of the colonizers and celebrate the history of the degradation of natives of Africa.

In addition to the above, Ngugi further charges the African writer with the duty to destroy the legacy created by the intellectual hegemony of imperialism in the world. He believes that even if writers are not able to create a new world, they will be able to

create a foundation for it. He explicitly categorizes African literature within the same class as the Mau Mau who took up arms in 1952 and challenged the real colonizer and embarked on a new anticolonial struggle that was driven by young soldiers who were also dubbed the Freedom Boys of the Forest. Their mission was not only military, but was accompanied by an intellectual dream of social reformation which challenged the people to give up drunkenness, prostitution, fear, self-abnegating and social practices that were self-harming (p.21).

Among other things advises writers from the neo-colonies is that their literature ought to be combative. This caution arises from the fact that he is totally aware of literature as a vehicle for the transmission of Black Consciousness, a philosophy whose thrust is to counter the negativity with which the Black person has been portrayed by writers of other worlds. He therefore, suggests that with its capacity to influence emotions and the imagination of the recipients, literature should be regarded as a formidable weapon towards the altering of consciousness. Such combative literature could be used to reverse the damage done by the artist of the western world. (Ngugi, 1997:10)

Among the damages insinuated by these writers is the demeaning question which asks where Africa would be without Europe. As a “seer”, he has come to realize that it is the colonist’s interest to foreground the negative image of Africa by mentioning tribal wars and famines. Such artists, according to him, cannot accurately paint the African experience. His point of view arises from the fact that those artists are the ones who were singing the praises of imperialists when the African artist was singing the History of the African’s degradation. Their triumphs were literary records of the colonized people’s humiliation. It is on the basis of these findings that Ngugi touts the literature which exalts the resistance and achievements of the oppressed. He therefore insists that literature should rather sing the exploits of the liberation movements, the oppressed and their military wings such as the Mau Mau. In his own words Ngugi (1997:21) asserts that “the body of the resistance literature affirmed the right of the people once again to seize the initiative in History”. This is the standard by which he judges the the relevance of the writer.

Ngugi’s view on African literature does not accommodate an artistic product which does not explicitly foreground resistance. This belief has lessened his veneration for

Alan Paton whom he admired earlier on in his career. According to him Paton fails to craft revolutionary characters. An example is the acquiescence of Paton's Steven Khumalo who is acted upon by the environment and does not act to change his situation but rather divert his anger into crime. In South African theatre, this literary conviction is expressed in the play *Sarafina* by Mbongeni Ngema's younger character (anonymous) who is tired of his people saying, "Please Mr. Boer beat me again; I say fight!" Ngugi wants a consciousness that is at war with the western world. He further views African literature as an essential part of those cultural forces that should destroy the hegemony of imperialism in the world. The socio-political and economic value he attaches to African writers is evident in his avowed belief that it is the artists of Africa who even if are not credited for creating a new world must still be credited for initiating its construction. This idea by Ngugi is probably derived from Fanon's observation that "... the ruling African elite are having an incurable wish for the permanent identification with the bourgeoisie representatives of the mother country" (p.18).

His view of literature has led him to two conclusions which are firstly, the containment of a people's images about themselves in History, and secondly, holds that literary creations are part of the human quest for freedom. This literature is an attempt at black consciousness which he defines as an affirmation and awareness of one's self-identification in a world that has defined it negatively. Ngugi explicitly puts more premium on the ends to which literature is being used as he insists that, "The political criterion of the excellence of art is the art which serves the struggle of the people against their oppression" (p.33).

This writer still laments the contradiction he observes with his compatriots who have suddenly gained political power. Once this has happened, they seem to adopt the same attitude that was evident among the the colonists. The result is that, their relationship to his art starts to assume an adversarial nature which precipitate the observation below. In his reaction to that, Ngugi states:

When I ...used to write plays and novels that were only critical of the racism in the colonial system, I was praised. I was awarded prizes, and my novels were in the syllabus. But when towards the seventies, I started to write in the language understood by the peasants, and in an idiom understood by them and I started

questioning the very foundations of imperialism and of foreign domination of Kenyan economy and culture, I was sent to Kamiti Maximum security prison (Ngugi, 1997:53).

Ngugi further regards the arts as a form of knowledge of reality acquired through images. As mentioned above, there is no neutrality with the images. He views the image given to humanity by the arts as nothing but an attempt to engineer a pre-determined vision of the world. The above realization by Ngugi has led him to conclude that literature should be an instrument for the creation of what he calls a truly historical consciousness while at the same time exposing and repairing the damage caused by colonial writers with more particular attention paid to the denigration of Kenyan national identity. As a result, Ngugi has always given attention to the condescending and uncomplimentary depictions of the Kenyan and (African) by such imperialist writers as Karen Blixen, Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling (p.97). However, Ngugi like Achebe, does not advocate for a complete rejection of human progress. In other words, he advocates for cultural blending and not assimilation. This view is explicitly captured in the words that follow:

I mean we must not preserve the past as a museum: we must study it critically, without illusions, and see what lessons we can draw from it in today's battle field of the future and the present. But to worship it - no-...I don't want to worship in the temples of the past without tarmac roads, without electric cookers, a world dominated by slavery to nature (p. 147).

Having demonstrated this articulate view through his writings, Ngugi has this to say about post-colonial literature especially in the political and economic milieu dominated by despots:

Our pens should be used to increase the anxieties of all oppressive regimes. At the very least the pen should be used to "murder their sleep" by constantly reminding them of their crimes against the people, and making them know that they are being seen. The pen may not always be mightier than the sword, but used in the service of truth, it can be a mighty force (p.27).

The words Ngugi uses above are actually intertexts of the tyrant who is the eponymous character in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. These are the words that echoed in his ears immediately after assassinating the justly king Duncan. The words were initially said by MacBeth referring to himself in the third person, and they eventually became part of Ngugi's philosophy on writing. At the time when he said them, he had just resumed the position of rulership which was going to be sustained through fear. This philosophy informs the view by Ngugi (1983:27) that the African writers' role is that they should form an essential part of the anti-imperialistic army of intellectuals. This resonates with Fanon's description of Ngugi's literature as the literature of combat. His particular political context which has even gone to the extent of victimizing his wife has led him to use literature as a weapon. He is not oblivious of his dilemma as he forthrightly confronts those who are responsible for the demise of many Kenyans who critique postcolonial corruption. Ngugi (1983) like an Andromedean, lives up to his personal conviction as he confronted both the first president of Kenya and his successor: "You rule by fear and you are ruled by fear. Both Kenyatta and Moi's regimes were afraid of their armies and police forces and so relied on secret military and defense pacts with foreign powers." (p. 25). These pacts are manifest in the cave scene in the novel *Devil on the Cross*. His young characters who in this work are regarded as a socio-political force are pitted against these beastly rulers as symbolized in the attire of one of them (The Ruler in *Wizard of the Crow*).

His view of literature is also concurred by the poet and the first president of Senegal Sedar Senghor who observes that: "...it has not proved virtually impossible for the African writer to avoid reflecting, nor has he sought to do so, the fundamental changes taking place in the Africa of his generation, even when he has not personally been involved in politics." In *Pen points, Gun points and Dreams*, Ngugi sees the artist as a necessary element in the society as art is always at war with the state. He elevates art above the state as he makes claims that art breaks down barriers between people, whereas the state erects them. Another justification he makes in support of the statement is a personal observation that art precedes the formation of the state (p.390).

Another illuminating observation of writing by Ngugi is found in the chapter, *Art at war with the state: writers as guardians of the post-colonial state*, (Ngugi, 1998). In this

chapter, he claims that art preceded the state and that the two are perpetually at war with one another and that they also compete for the sole ownership of the human soul. Their war is fought with contrasting weapons. He contends that while the state uses force to elicit obedience, the artist uses the power of the word. Ngugi believes and he gives evidence to the fact that society has always been held together by culture and that the arts as part of culture performed that aspect of holding the various members of the community together through a variety of ways. Among others Ngugi insists, it is through the power of stories, songs, poetry, and dances and sports that the pre-colonial society managed to inculcate its values and norms into its constituents. In this instance, Ngugi validates his assertion by citing Okot P' Bitek and Kenyatta who comment on songs and sport as activities which had this socializing and organizing element. This view concurs with Percy Bysshe Shelley's which describe the artist as an unacknowledged legislator of the world.

His view of art and the artist's role in the society further postulates four features of art which are the godlike, the Socratic, the Andnesian child and the voice. Under the godlike aspect of art, Ngugi approaches his task of describing the artist from his linguistic background in which the equivalent of the English word Artist is *Mumbi*. This word is a cognate of the Setswana word *Mmupi* which means the creator. In his language, just like in Setswana, the word has several senses beginning with the literal sense of the artist as the creator. In the two Bantu languages mentioned above, the word then lends itself to several senses. The first one is the creator which refers to God the creator of the universe and the other one means art in the creative sense. The two languages also simultaneously use the name as a synonym of God. Hence, the god-like aspect of art. There is therefore a very close relationship between God the creator and the artist as creator: the artist collaborates with the creator of the universe by mimicking His creation. The literary artist comes even closer to this collaboration as he/she follows in the use of the word to bring into existence that which was not there. Ngugi cites the book of Genesis and the Koran to show how words brought the material world into being. It is through the word that Ngugi believes that the artist can bring order to human affairs as the word in the book of Genesis brought order to the universe.

The second aspect, the Socratic, is derived from the rejection the enquiring spirit possessed by the ancient philosopher, Socrates. Regarded as the most intelligent man among his contemporaries, Socrates rejected the accolades and travelled around asking people questions which finally helped him come to grips with his own ignorance and then finally concluded "the wisest of people are those who realize with respect to wisdom that they are worthless" (p.14). His inquiry even into the forbidden renders him a criminal and gets him accused of defiling the youth of Athens and he gets killed. It is this inquiring spirit that Ngugi sees in Art which makes it Socratic in nature. According to him, art might not have answers, but it does not cease to ask questions and thereby open the mind to real life issues. When given a chance to defend himself, Socrates cannot help but express his purpose in society in the metaphor of a gadfly. He continues to explain it in these words, "It seems to me that God has attached me to this city to perform the role of such a fly, and all along I never cease to settle here, there and everywhere, rousing, persuading and reproving every one of you" (p.15). Through this metaphor, Ngugi sees the artist as the conscience of the society. He views him/her as a prophet and this resonates with Shelley who claims that the Romans saw the poet as *vates* or a seer, in English. With Ngugi, firstly perceiving his artistic gift this way, as well as the reality he draws from his everyday society, he cannot help but present that reality in a cautioning and reprimanding manner. This very presentation then naturally has the youth playing an agentive role. Ngugi is therefore inevitably channeled into "populating" his work with the youth as an active and larger member of every society. The material he uses to create a story cannot be taken from anywhere but from the lives of his people in which the youth are aided by their energy, time and curiosity. The very attributes of the youth mentioned above are responsible for destabilizing the hegemony of the ruling classes intellectually and politically. Added to this militancy Ngugi's youth disturbs the privileges of the neo-colonial states.

The third role of the artist according to Ngugi is that of the Andersenian child. This view of art is named after the 19th century Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen who wrote a story in which he talks about a young child who decided to tell a story the elderly people were 'ideologised' to distort. In this story, the elderly members of his society were asked to tell what they had seen after seeing the king /ruler naked. When all of them reported that they had seen the king wearing beautiful clothes, the young

child told the story as he had seen it and what his eyes told him. Innocently and without any fear of rebuke, the child told his hearers that he had seen the king naked. From this story, Ngugi draws an analogy between the writer and the child. The role of the writer in every society then takes the nature of the child in expressing truth as is empirically encountered. Ngugi's Andersenian child possesses the purity of heart which compares to the proclamation of, like an amoral child, the writer does even have the awkward habit of peering under the clothes of any emperor to see what could be hidden there" (p.2). He brings to the attention of the reader the fact that even in ancient times Plato did insist that "If anyone at all has to have the privilege of lying, the rulers of the state should be the people, and they, in their dealings with either their enemies or the citizens, maybe allowed to lie for the public good". In contemporary History, Ngugi cites two incidents in his post liberation Kenya and Russia. In Kenya, he remembers the 1990 arrests of the Musicians who made music on the massacre of the dwellers of Muoroto in Nairobi and the government orchestrated tribal wars of the Rift Valley province. In both incidents, the government had the audacity to say such incidents never occurred despite them being seen on national and international news. The artist therefore, with his questioning, audacity and the innocence of the child he possesses is therefore indispensable to humanity if it is to be preserved.

The last of these is the voice. According to Ngugi there is a perpetual war between the state and the arts. While the state is viciously attempting to *mute* the voice of the people, art is rebelling by giving voice to the silence created by the state. In Ngugi's own words, the artist's quest is to restore the voice to the land and give back the primordial right to humanity. He calls this aspect of art, the Advard Munch aspect. Advard Munch was the Norwegian painter who was famous for creating sculptures, which were forever screaming. Ngugi illustrates this point above by citing three cases, two in Kenya and the other one in Russia. In Kenya, he claims, the neo-colonial state under Arap Moi attempted to impose silence on the population as a whole by firstly, banning the right to organize, second, banning the discussions of politics in public places. Additionally, they also enacted a decree to ban music being played in cars and on public transport. Another example is of the Russian novelist's case, Leo Tolstoy who was applauded by Lenin for his novels which gave voice to the silence created by the Tsarist regime.

Like Baraka (1960) above, Ngugi is also quoted by Kathleen Greenfield insisting that: “Our pens should be used to increase the anxieties of all oppressive regimes. At the very least the pen should be used to “murder their sleep” by constantly reminding those of their crimes against the people, and making them know that they are being seen. The pen may not always be mightier than the sword, but used in the service of truth, it can be a mighty force’ (p.27).

The ideas discussed demonstrate that African writing is reactionary. It focuses on socio-political and economic issues of the writer’s society. It mirrors the reality of the peasants and supports their struggles. In this section, the various views on the literary arts in society were discussed. In the discussion, an attempt was made to draw views of literary philosophers from various continents including Africa and the diaspora. The philosophies were an amalgamation of critical views on the contribution of literature towards the amelioration of human relations. It eventually culminated in a thorough discussion of Ngugi’s philosophy of art. This was done to provide a background necessary for the categorization and the ideological stance he chooses in his novels. The next section provides yet another aspect of background information deemed necessary for the purposes of analysis in chapter four. It can be surmised from the discussion above that an artist is a gregarious being infinitely tied to fellow human beings. It further shows that it is not only his characters who are experiencing conflict and that his vocation predestines him/her to a life of war. Commitment to art is synonymous with a declaration of war against the forces of retrogression and scarcity. It is a rebellion against forces that impede and obscure human freedom and the beauty of the human soul. Conversely, repression of this passion is tantamount to the murder of the human essence - the creative spirit which is demonstrated in mimicking the creator. In its crude sense, repression is tantamount to reducing humans into savages and beasts, a reality Ngugi demonstrates in his novels selected for this study.

3.2 Character and characterization

As indicated above, in order to create a background against which character presentation is conducted, in this chapter, an attempt is made to put the two central concepts into perspective. The rationale behind this is to provide the reader with techniques used by writers of fiction and plays including films to create their

characters. This also provides insight into the writer's techniques employed in the creation of characters who convey their mission of changing the world. In this study; this portrayal will be the center of focus towards demonstrating that indeed Ngugi's youths are a socio-political force.

We begin this discussion with Booth, et al., (2006: 119) who define the difference between a character and characterization. To them a character is someone who appears or acts or is referred to as playing a part in a literary work, whereas characterization refers to the art of representing fictional personages. It is dependent on action or plot as well as narration and point of view. They cite Huxley who defines character as, "The sum of tendencies to act in a particular way." He provides another sense of the word "character" which denotes that which reveals moral purpose, exposing the class of things a man chooses or avoids. In other words, the study of character does not fall too far from humanity's moral choices in the context of their society and realities. These moral choices inform the thesis of the study as it postulates that the youth are a force in society and politics. He has also concluded that character analysis is the most exhilarating activity of human entertainment. This is made possible by the fact that unlike gossip, which reveals the names, literature is able to accomplish that without mentioning names. It is also referred to as destiny. In literary circles the creation of a character is viewed as a fictional representation of a person; it is a psychological depiction of a person. According to the authors above, character and characterization are two different phenomena. This is supported by Isaac Bashevis Singer who they cite as saying that: It seems that the analysis of character is the highest human entertainment.

From the definition and contrast above, we now proceed to how characters are created. According to Kirsznner and Mandel (2004), the creation of character involves the creation of false biography. In the light of that, he also states that novels are populated with people, their emotions and actions, and all that the writer does is to give them space to make their own stories. It involves going around in disguise and avoiding stereotypes. For example, it must avoid characters that are meant to be absolutely good.

Characterisation is also viewed as the way the writers develop their characters' traits to the reader. They are portrayed through a range of techniques which include among others: their actions, reactions to situations or to other characters through their physical appearances, their speech and gestures and expressions and even through their names. This is what gives the inclusion of the preliminary sections of the fourth chapter their rationale. The portrayal of character through names is common in fiction and plays. For example, the eponymous character Maru in Head's novel *Maru* lives up to the idiomatic expression *Maru ga se pula, musi ke one mollo*. This Setswana idiom means that while clouds are never rain, smoke is certainly fire. The milieu within which the story is set as well as the imagined reader of the story including the communicative purpose of the story connive to give the name *Maru* several layers of meaning and the character finally lives up to the name which connotes uncertainty as well as hope. Another name is that of Njandini in the play *Bopha* by Aubrey Molefi and Percy Mtwa turned into a movie by Danny Glover. In the play, the names of the characters resonate with the roles they eventually play in the plot of the story. For instance, Njandini which means "bloody dog" is given to a police officer who is irretrievably oblivious to the political realities of his own people, and all he stands for in the sociopolitical struggle of his country is the repressive law which he does not question, but can only defend. His son, the younger character whose name primes the reader towards the role, is Zwelakhe which means "his land". As the youth and as the hope of any society, Zwelakhe is apportioned the role of the defender of the land. His reigning concern is the return of the land usurped by European settlers in South Africa. His father can only "bark" at his own people in order to appease his white master.

Characterization also occurs through the use of words. This assertion derives its authenticity from Pinker (2007) and Louis MacNeice (1987). This is even truer in novels. According to Pinker, words are the window into the human soul. MacNeice puts this observation in vivid and more poetic terms as he states in his poem, *Prayer Before Birth* that, "My words as they speak me." What he actually communicates here is that words are not only objects of the speaker, but they also are agents which reveal the speaker's inner world. They provide the reader with access to the state or nature of the speaker's soul and *psyche* which is the source of all human traits. It, therefore, becomes imperative that character analysis and categorization of the youth as socio-political force scrutinize the use of words by the character who is being analyzed, other

characters on him or her and the narrator in the case of third person narrative. The point made above makes more sense when read against the example of Bessie Head's portrayal of Morafi. The name lends itself to several senses, among which are, one who takes away gluttonously, a gold digger or/and an avaricious person. This name gives him an ill-omened role in the novel. Head further describes him physiologically as having eyes that were escaping his skull as if they were constantly looking out for something to steal. Characters are; therefore, created by the author who gives information to the reader about the character through the narrator, be they, first or third person and informs the reader about the attitudes of the character, experiences and thoughts that influence and inform a character's reactions. This then calls for more attention on the manner in which words are used on Ngugi's younger characters.

The physical appearance of the characters contributes to the attitude expectations that the reader automatically develop when characters are first presented to, his ear or eye depending on the medium. This normally comes through a description of the looks or costume. These may cue the reader on the personality/character and or social status of the character or actor. Costume, to borrow from the language of theatre refers to the clothes the author decides to put on his/her character. It provides a clue to the forms of behaviour the character is likely to engage in. For instance, if you were to have a stranger coming to your house with a gun on his waist one would react differently from the same man if he had come with the same gun but wearing a police uniform. The author also makes value judgments on them, and, thereby, positions the reader in relation to the character. It is on the basis of this that characters must appear to us as real people since they must be like ordinary people we see on daily basis. Costume must therefore present them in a manner we are accustomed to seeing them on a daily basis. On seeing them, similar attitude should be evoked.

They, therefore, are divided into round and flat characters. The round characters, in particular, need to be complex so as to make the story interesting. They are regarded as the lifeline of the story. These are the writer's tool for luring the reader to get involved with the story and this is achieved when the reader begins to identify with or reject the characters. A seasoned writer provides satisfying information about the behavior of the character. It becomes a sign of ingenuity for the writer to apportion

both greatness and victimization to the character. At times, the “wounded pigeon” role is awarded to the protagonist, while at the same time “stealing away” their capacity to deal with the situation. This, normally, exacts *pathos* from the reader.

The division of characters into flat and round is further acknowledged by Kirtzner and Mandell (2004). As a matter of fact, round characters are the ones the writer wants the reader to follow or shun. They normally carry the communicative purpose of the novel. In this study, it is the youth who are mostly represented as round. This supports the thesis as it suggests that the youth are the most important characters in his novels which have already been categorized as committed. The literary theorists cited above define flat characters as the ones who are not fully developed whereas the round ones are the ones who are fully developed. Major characters are normally fully developed and they are often complex. That is, they metamorphose with time, they are not static. These are characters that normally hook the reader and draw empathy and thereby coerce the reader to dig deeper into the story, and to find more about the root of the character’s behaviour. On the one hand, these scholars insist that as real people, these characters should not be perfect as we will see with Njoroge in *Weep not Child*. On the other hand, the minor characters are normally used as foils for the development of the major characters. A writer sometimes provides support and or contrast by highlighting the behaviour of the major character. Some of the flat characters are stock and they are caricatures. They further classify characters as either dynamic or static. Dynamic characters grow and change. Their change is necessitated by their reactions to various situations in the story. An example of this is found in *Cry the Beloved Country* by Allen Paton, the stock character would be Arthur Jarvis’ servant who comes, only, to identify the murderer and then disappears.

More insight on this phenomenon is found in studies by Koontz (1981). Famous for his *Frankenstein*, Koontz advises that if a novel is to have any chance of reaching a wide audience, it must have a lead character, with heroic qualities. He should command their interest and make them incessantly look out for him. Koontz further advises that, once in a while, the plot needs to put the lead character in a no-win situation which requires them to do something immoral in order for them to survive. In the context of this study, this is revealed in the discussion on some of the youth in *Matigari* and *Petals of Blood*. Yet another character has been “tailored” in this mode is Maru who is already

mentioned in *Bessie Head's novel*. These situations are termed the moral dilemmas by McComiskey (2000). In order to win Margaret Cadmore over and to protect her from *sexploitation* by his "promiscuous" friend, Moleka, Maru has to do two immoral things. First, he has to put an act as racist and ill-treat Margaret Cadmore junior. In his real heart of hearts, he hates it when his own people berate all the Basarwa people including Margaret. His dilemma is that, he does all this because of philanthropy and activism which he carries out in favour of the oppressed. Secondly, he also has to betray his friend, Moleka, as he casts spells on him to cause him to have sex with Dikeledi which is apparently well calculated as it results in conception. He then later forces him (Moleka) to marry her, and thereby ensure that Moleka will not lose the moral high-ground to compete for Margaret against him. In so doing, he is able to punish Batswana for racism against Basarwa and he also manages to marry a selfless woman with a richer personality than a good number of Batswana (p.139).

Yet another insight on characterization is provided by Kane and Byrne (2008). According to them, studying fiction is a way of meeting people and the work of the novel is to introduce characters that will appeal to the reader. It should introduce the reader to strangers, people they have not seen and associated with before, and lure them into loving them. By inference, the author should assume the role of what in the world of escort agency is called a pimp. It should; however, be borne in mind that one can still enjoy a work of fiction without round characters. Kane also believes that studying character is similar to studying a person and this then makes character study a field called personology. He then proceed to lead the reader into an awareness that character behaviour is often influenced by primordial drives, gender, history, country and culture as characters are human beings brought into existence by words. It is these words which evoke certain images and attitudes towards the characters-word picture. The attitudes which are conceived in the minds of the writer are transplanted into the reader's consciousness through the medium of words. The reader reacts to the transplant in accordance with their personality. With this in mind, the two literary and composition theorists then assert that, "It is the skill of the author to bring to life in words, a person who does not exist, and to make readers take an interest in, and feel as if they really met that person." (p.69). This is the strategy Ngugi has mastered in the portrayal of youth as a socio-political force in his novels. This will be dealt with in chapter four.

In addition to the above, we insist that characters are created according to the author's imagination and intention. This then means that characters are central to the communicative purpose of texts and the words they speak as well as the words used about them are what we eventually refer to as characterization. The communicative purpose of the writer simultaneously carries the writer's ideological leanings and also serves as a persuasive tool for the writer. Kane and Byrne intone that the writer and the reader are two people whose worlds create texts, hence the subjective analysis of texts in chapter four. There is, therefore, justifiably two subjective constructions. They also provide an inventory of the attributes of the character which include, emotions, thoughts, likes and dislikes, habits or things that a person is likely to do (p.69). This then suggests that humans are complex and their study should not follow a simple monolithic observation. An inference derived from this preceding statement is that conclusions made on them (characters) should, therefore as a matter of caution, not be arrived at hastily. It is also noteworthy to state that characters as humans force the readers to make value judgments on their behaviour and thereby either like or dislike them. This can lead them to justifiable rewards for them. They are also able to draw pity from us. They surprise and amuse us as Dangarembga's character, Nyasha, in *Nervous Conditions* does at the beginning of the novel with the statement: "I was not sorry when my brother died" (p.1). While this story begins with a punishment deserving note, the reader ends up sympathizing with the narrator as the story continues. The story does that by tracing the life of the character from childhood to the time when the morally sanctionable utterance eventually leaves her lips. It is only then that the reader begins to find justification why a sibling would react that way to the death of a brother.

Collier and Leighton (1997), provide yet another insight into the phenomenon. According to them, Characters are used to build a world in which the author decides rewards and punishments. This will be fore-grounded in chapter four. Characters should be imbued with traits that make them memorable. Their names should also carry a certain amount of information about what they are likely to do or not. It is their beliefs and names that should make them differ with other characters and inevitably cause conflict in the story. One of their functions is to provide focus for story reading. This idea is supported by Tompkins (2003) who states that characters are developed in four ways which are: appearance, action, dialogue, and monologue.

Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (2003) also provide a very important perspective on character studies. Their approach is defined from the study of character as a person. According to them, "Personology is defined as the branch of Psychology which focuses on the study of the individual characteristics and differences between people. It covers essentially the same ground as every day knowledge of human nature, namely these abilities which enable us to say that we know someone well" (p. 5). This is the interest of literature as mentioned in Wimsatt and Brooks earlier in this study. This theory is the outcome of purposeful and sustained effort to develop a logical and consistent conceptual system for describing, explaining and predicting human behaviour and has the following aspects: ideas about what motivates humans to behave the way they do, reflections on the nature of and causes of behavioural problems or psychopathologies. The theory further postulates that human behaviour is a highly complex phenomenon that is determined by a wide range of interdependent factors. Among them are: biological nervous system, environmental stimuli, social factors such as people's expectations, spiritual and psychological factors which include emotions, motivation, habits, attitudes, opinions, religious convictions, values and goals (p.9).

Another attempt to define the two concepts using contrast is by Gill (1995) who differentiates character from characterization in the following words: a character is a person in a literary work whereas characterization is the way in which character is created. He further states that it is the words that the author uses that engender a particular and predetermined attitude towards the character. They; therefore, become the central tool in his attempt to position the reader either for or against a particular character, his/her beliefs and deeds. Character identity, according to him, is the way the character appears, converses, acts, is named, and the thoughts going on in the character's head. He also states that characterization entails the method whereas character is a product. Ngugi has resorted to this strategy in making his younger characters appeal to his readers.

From the above, it can be surmised that characters are; therefore, creatures of the author whose *omnipotence* and providence empowers him to decide to subdue certain of their characteristics while simultaneously elevating others. This is how characters are made interesting. This observation is responsible for our reaction to them as

though we are reacting to real people. The author; therefore, creates characters to predetermine our reactions. As normal human beings in the world of fiction, they live and grow; they have aspirations, hopes, innermost feelings, disappointments, and struggles and as clay in the hands of the author-maker/creator, they eventually turn into what their creator and his communicative purpose predestine them to be. A.J. in *Wizard of the Crow* is the archetype of that character; his mission is to sing eulogies for the youth.

Characters are therefore represented in two major ways which are telling and showing. In telling, the reader is explicitly told about the character whereas in showing, the reader is expected to make personal inferences from the data presented. It, therefore becomes the duty of the reader to fathom what they are being told through the speech/words created for them to say by the author, the inner and undeclared thoughts, how they approach problems and challenges, their appearances, how much is told or shown about them. All these carry symbolic and moral overtones. This naturally provides the author with a license to predetermine the reader's response. The assertion above can be inferred from the way in which the character, Morafi, has been represented in Head's *Maru*. In this text, Morafi which means one who takes away, a thief. Physically he is said to have eyes which were protruding as if they were forever looking for something to steal. This shows that appearance suggests the character's personality. Another aspect could be the social standing of the characters.

We return to one of the luminaries in characterization Burroway (1982) who further contests that human character is the foreground of all fiction. This scholar insists that successful characters are the ones which the author has made us to care about. He quotes Aristotle who states "A man is his desire; his character is defined by his ultimate purpose, bad or good. Thought is the process by which a person works backward in his goal to determining what action he can take towards that goal at a given moment" (p.111). Burroway also claims that appearance prompts the first reaction to people. All they wear and own bodies forth a certain aspect of their inner selves. The picture of Gandhi who is often photographed wearing a calico is a case in point; it foretells of a selfless predisposition of the soul.

One more interesting dimension of characterization is revealed by Cassil, (1975). According to him, a great number of characters have been drawn from real life, that is, the life the author has interacted with. Cassil continues: "Biographers delight in telling us which members of the family, which friends, and which enemies were observed as models for great authors. In *Anna Karenina*, he continues, Kitty is drawn from Tolstoy's wife. Heathcliff, in Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, is drawn from her brother Branwell (p.153). This observation holds true for Ngugi as it is more evident when some of his novels are read alongside his memoirs and biographies. It further authenticates the claim that Ngugi's writings are more biographical and his characters are people he lived with including his brothers who were activists. He himself like Head who is represented as Margaret Cadmore in fiction, is also represented by Njoroge and perhaps even Karega, which is what authenticates Rimmon-Kennan's (1999) observation as he adds to this interesting section of the study by opposing the idea of treating the character in isolation from their context. Rimmon-Kennan's then postulates two theories of human communication which are, Semiotic and mimetic. The mimetic postulates that characters are modeled on the human perception of human beings, and in this case then, they become real humans for the reader. This is the rationale behind the choice to use an eclectic approach for character analysis by drawing from various Social Sciences.

Three other literary theorists who provide some insight into this aspect of literary craft are Wall, Paul and Thompson (2007). This trio raises another important aspect of characterization which concurs with Ngugi's view that fiction relies entirely on the written word as it is presented to the reading eye (p.6). In their observation, writers are shaping worlds and that is done with words. They further claim that the beginning of any work of fiction is an announcement. We use an instance in one of the texts selected for this study which is *Weep Not Child*. In this novel, Njoroge is inserted into our mental space with the object of allotting him the area of sympathy in our *psychic* space. The author "drags" him to his intent, which is to expose the unjust system of colonialism. His costume, his words and family/socio-economic and location as fabricated for him by the author, all coerce the interactive reader into visualizing an innocent and vulnerable child which inevitably draws the reader's sympathy. He is presented as a poor child on the fringes of the wealth of his country. The biographical data presented on him in the first page is enough to draw the reader into sympathy in

favour of Njoroge, and well-wishing for him becomes spontaneous. In other words, the readers assume the position of protecting him. This occurs at the subconscious level though. Thus, it makes sense to conclude that Fiction explores its realities through the probing and exposition of its characters. In this instance, the author will at times deliberately begin with an incident which will incite the reader. An example of such incidents is Wanja's story whose brilliance is subverted by the unbridled lasciviousness of some elderly male character. Hence the reader's liking of the young woman and the desire to keep track of her and see poetic justice served on her aggressors.

Another strategy of creating real characters is a universal principle which may be invoked in order to manipulate the reader. This is referred to as Tone Conspiracy. With this strategy, the writer attempts to situate the reader in the mind of the character. This then justifiably defines fiction as "...the exploration of reality in words by means of invention and portrayal of characters (Wall, Paul & Thompson 2007:15). The attributes of character include the following salient features: appearance, gestures, speech /silence, action/ inaction, mode of interaction with others, beautifulness or weirdness, attentiveness to others/disregard of others, boldness /timorousness and talent/inability (p.16). A few of these are discussed below.

We begin here with speech as one of those aspects of characterization which is not just an object of the speaker, but another way of knowing the speaker better. Speech becomes an element of characterization in that every time a character speaks or thinks in fiction, that person's identity or trait is being expressed. They continue to mention other aspects of character which are that diverse, variegated and even polarized. It is further susceptible to distortion alteration and can be broken or crystallized by external factors such as the effect of action upon it. They further mention narrative techniques as a strategy for characterization. The technique includes character by report and by exposition.

Additionally, the author uses words to create characters; they might be the words of the speaker or the words of other characters about the character. He/she will put his words in the character and thereby conjure a whole world through a couple of expressions. An example of this in *Petals of Blood* (1977) is when the author decides

to throw into the reader's consciousness, in a gossip like manner, the word "Masonry." The word is deposited into the reader in association with the already negatively named member of parliament, Nderi wa Riera. With regard to whoever reports, reports are given their authenticity by the ethos of the reporter. That is to say, as they read at the critical level they will act like judges and thereby rely on the credibility or reliability of the witness/reporter. This then brings us to a conclusion that whoever reports about a character is important. His or her relationship with the object of discussion determines the extent to which his/ her report can be deemed valid. In the next section we continue with another attempt at creating yet another aspect of background necessary for character analysis. In order to facilitate some degree of flow on the reading of chapter four, we will now present the summaries of the novels selected for the study so as.

3.3 Summaries of selected novels

3.3.1 Introduction

The texts summarised below form the data of for this study. The rationale for including the summaries in this study is to help the reader who has not read them to have a clue of what the texts are about. They include, *Weep Not child*, *The River Between*, *A Grain of Wheat*, *Petals of Blood*, *Matigari*, *Devil on the Cross* and *Wizard of the Crow*. The summaries focus on the main characters and the plot. That being said, we now focus on the novels with the view to also demonstrate the centrality of youth in his characterization.

3.3.2 Weep Not Child (1964)

This is Ngugi's second novel though it is the one published as his first. In this novel, Ngugi tells the story of young Njoroge, the youngest of Ngotho's sons. Also in the story are two families, the Howlands and the Jacobos each with a child who plays a significant role in the unfolding of its plot and the development of the protagonist's character. Njoroge, the main character in the story, is a visionary who wants to acquire education as a tool he could use to liberate his family and country from colonialism and its accompanying evils. However, his life is circumscribed by a series of situations which run counter to this ambition. In the first instance, he is a son of a tenant, that is to say, his parents do not have land of their own on which to build their home. His

father, a polygamist with two wives is a labourer. First, as an Indian's employee and second as Mr. Howlands' farm labourer, the father's salary cannot send all the children but Njoroge to school. His country and family are both immersed in conflict. The conflict involves Boro, his elder brother, who fights against the colonial government and his father who has accepted working for Mr. Howlands on the land that is supposed to be his by inheritance.

The adversarial political climate in which Njoroge's dream has to find realization is from time to time mitigated by children from rival families which are the Howlands and the Jacobos. The children, Stephen and Mwhiki, become Njoroge's solace, especially during the height of the struggle against colonialism and the fierce resistance of the Mau Mau guerillas. Njoroge's life becomes collateral in this crossfire. His brilliant performance, regardless of his family's poverty and the anti-racial upheavals, finally earns him a place at Siriana, a highly esteemed secondary school in the whole country. His career gets intercepted by the racial and imperialist turmoil mentioned above. His dream ends up being aborted by the colonial regime with the aid of the missionary principal. His dream is not the only loss but he also loses his future sweetheart Mwhiki with whom they had already fantasized on marriage reconciliation, liberty and posterity.

3.3.3 The River Between (1965)

This is Ngugi's first novel though published second. The novel is set in Kenya and captures the transition from a serene pastoral and communal life which is interfered with by the advent of *The Scramble for Africa*. It records the various stages of colonialism beginning with the coming of missionaries carrying the Bible and then culminating in land seizure by the compatriots of the missionaries. The story opens with the whites already approaching the land and Chege, the father of Waiyaki, the protagonist who falls within the category of youth, cautioning the tribe about the invasion of the land by the people he metaphorically calls "the butterflies." The aftermath of this incursion is the conflict whose heart is the accusation that one of the boy's fathers has converted to the missionaries' religion, a thing perceived as a betrayal of the tribe and its traditions. It is this conflict between the boys, which is symbolic of the ensuing conflict between the ridges Makuyu and Kameno divided by the river Honia. The conflict becomes necessary as it brings forth Waiyaki to the fore

and presents him as the hero and redeemer. Descendent from Mugo wa Kibero, the seer, and trusted by Chege, the tribe's sage, Waiyaki takes it upon himself to lead the tribe into freedom and he aims to achieve this through education.

Central to the story is the clash between Christianity and indigenous religions, and Euro-Centrism versus Pan-Africanism. This is explicitly expressed by Chege who when charging him to get education from the white also cautions him to "avoid his ways" (the white man's ways) and remain true to the ways of the tribe. Waiyaki does not forget about the ways of the white man. His personality and views inevitably bring him into conflict with Kabonyi, another young character like him. The clash between Christianity and traditional religion revolves around the misunderstanding of the missionaries, and their adherents at the institution. The conflict manifests more within the family of Ezekieli, a converted preacher who cannot see the difference between Christianity and Europeanization. Livingstone, the white missionary from England who is oblivious of his own Elizabethan *Chauvinistic* tendencies compounds the situation. He hardly notices any good that can come out of initiation as an institution of transition. All he sees about it is that it is a mutilation of the body and a pagan ritual he must destroy. He expresses his abhorrence of the cultural institutionalized practice by banning pupils who came from families which still adhere to this institution from his school. His convert, Ezekieli, takes it to a more misanthropic level by withholding fatherly love from his children Muthoni and Nyambura who are Christians and yet find nothing wrong with initiation.

3.3.4 A Grain of Wheat (1967)

Set in Kenya as a sequel to *Weep Not Child*, *A Grain of Wheat* marks another transition in the political history of Kenya as it straddles the end of colonialism and dawn of liberation. The novel celebrates the heroic deeds of the Mau Mau and the subsequent hope that is brought by independence. While celebrating the heroism of Mau Mau guerillas, the novel also depicts the treachery that has always existed during the struggle. This is the moment of leadership inauguration which unfortunately neglects patriots and Mau Mau cadres. The leaders immediately "devolve" into a comprador class and dissent is voiced by characters such as Gikonyo while others such as General R assert the cynicism of the end of war. The hero in this novel is Kihika whose death is caused by betrayal. On the one hand, characters such as John Thompson

see the transition of the politics of Kenya as the beginning of a turbulent life as they were agents of colonialism. For him imperialism has always been the act of mercy in favour of the Arabs and the Africans. The plot of the story unfolds with ironies which include Mugo acting as the betrayer while on the contrary he is thought to be a hero. Mugo was a victim of a dysfunctional family. His parents were dead and he was raised up by an abusive aunt. This made him vengeful and did not want to get involved in politics. He feels coerced and he avenges by selling Kihika out to the British. On the day of celebration, Kihika's mother and sister Mumbi realize Mugo's betrayal and forgive him. Mugo himself accepts retribution in the form of death for having exposed Kihika as the killer of Robson, a white settler who embodied the cruelty with which the aborigines had to be subdued.

3.3.5 Petals of Blood (1977)

This novel is a sequel to *A Grain of Wheat* and is set in Ilmorog, an imaginary village deserted by Nderi Wa Riera, the M.P. The novel is set in the postcolonial era of Kenya's history. It mirrors the coming into being of the postcolonial betrayal that the reader has been warned about in the preceding novel. This betrayal which manifests in the form of neo-colonialism has the natives of Kenya -both the oppressed and the historically impoverished being further oppressed by their own people who have inherited the role of former colonizers. Following a circular plot, the story begins with the arrests of the very important young characters who are Abdullah, Karega, Wanja and Munira. The first three are arrested in connection with the murder of Chui, Mzigo and Kimeria who have become the new comprador class inheriting the position and opulence of the former colonizers. They too, like the colonial rulers whose privileges they have inherited, are responsible for the exploitation of the working class.

Led by Wanja and Karega, the people of Ilmorog rise against their situation and they take it upon themselves to restore their political rights and dignity. They begin to demand their share of the liberation struggle won by their Mau Mau guerillas. The fruits of the liberation struggle which have been usurped by the comprador class are demanded. While the three youths are patriots, the new agents of oppression represented by Chui, Kimeria and Mzigo are subjected to poetic justice and their deaths become a model of what should be done to the oppressors. Though not the only round character, Karega champions the struggle of the betrayed, the down

trodden, and the working class globally together with other young characters such as Waiyaki, Njoroge, and Kihika. In the novels which precede this one, Ngugi clearly marks the path of his struggle for the reader. He introduces Karega as a child of Miriamu, a single mother and a *Muhoi* (tenant) just like Ngotho the father of Njoroge in the second novel. He too has a brother by the name of Ndugire. The brother is a guerilla and he is also remembered as having cut the missing ear of Ezekieli who is the landlord of his mother and the future lover of his younger brother. His career is held back by the backslidden politicians such as Chui and Reverend Kamau who later on calls himself Jerod Brown. Karega and Wanja become the agents of the rebuilding of Ilmorog. They watch its hijacking by the *nouveau rich* and they avenge it with Wanja, the female youth playing the mastermind.

3.3.6 Devil on The Cross (1980)

This novel is Ngugi's sixth and was written during his 1977 *litre de catchet* (imprisonment without trial). It is written as a satire against power abuse and betrayal of the post liberation Kenya. In this novel, Ngugi foregrounds the lives of Wariinga and Gatuiria in Kenya. The two youths come from two unequal families and are faced with a myriad of choices circumscribing their lives. The novel chronicles the life of Wariinga who from the very beginning is visited by a vision in which the Devil is chased, driven out of the village, caught and crucified by the people and left out of the village to die on the cross. Ironically, the leaders of the people timeously come back to worship the devil. The protagonist, Wariinga, faces a mixture of fortune and misery. Her life begins as a child of impoverished freedom fighters, who is cheated out of school like Wanja. She gets impregnated by a man old enough to be her father and finally left for further exploitation by the promiscuous men who have become a common menacing feature in the new dispensation of Kenya. It is this failure to control one's sexual appetites by men which is blamed by Wariinga for the demise of countless Kenyan girls. Wariinga's consciousness is raised to the point of avenging herself, an act that finally leads her into killing her sexual abuser.

3.3.7 Matigari (1987)

Like *Devil on The Cross*, *Matigari* was also written in Agikuyu and then translated into English by the author. Through this novel, Ngugi relays the outcry that those who have fought for the liberation must be given the rewards of the struggle. The novel is a

lament of the unabated presence of the departed colonialists who are now ruling the country through Kenyan nationals who have been raised above their own people and are now regents of the former imperialists. The protagonist in this novel is the eponymous character, Matigari, who returns from the forest after many years of guerilla warfare which led to the overthrow of the British. He has spent the days of his youth in the war and now he comes back into the civil society girded with the belt of peace. He comes home back to a civilian life and is eager to resume a new life in which he too will reap the benefits of liberation. To his surprise, nothing has changed. The workers and the freedom fighters are ignored by the new regime and he decides to alter the situation. In his diagnosis, Matigari perceives the problem of his new Kenya to be the absence of truth and justice. He then goes around asking people where truth and justice can be found. His question disturbs the authorities and they employ a series of tricks to silence him. These include, among others, a mislabeling with the aid of the media, both electronic and the press as well as prisons. He is also declared a mad man by the state and its propaganda machinery. However, Matigari is nevertheless seen as a refuge by children and the young boy. Muriuki as well as the young lady Guthera become his comrades in his mission of re-liberating Kenya from the comprador class and their masters abroad. These two are his major source of support and sustenance.

3.3.8 Wizard of The Crow (2007)

This novel is set in an imaginary country called Aburiria. It is a satire on the neo-colonial ruler whose name is only called The Ruler. The story begins with the ruler presented as a power maniac, a misogynist and megalomaniac who has subjected his wife to some sort of solitary confinement and house arrest. He has a strange ailment which has become a concern for most of his observers. The concern results in several theories attempting to explain the cause of his ailment and *neurosis*. Obsessed excessively about his security, the ruler has deployed his sons to some strategic positions in the defence force of his country. He has also surrounded himself with ministers who are no less than paranoiac sycophants. In order to appeal to him as deserving ministerial positions he has offered them, three of them, travel to London to undergo plastic surgery in which their ears, eyes and tongues are enlarged. The ruler also wants to build a tower which he calls Marching to Heaven. The project needs funding but it is not approved by the prospective funders who are the global banks.

These actions by The Ruler and his cohorts lead to the rise of two young revolutionaries who are Kamiti and Nyawira. Empowered with magic and the arts, the two youths become a formidable challenge to the ruler and his plans. Kamiti, the impoverished graduate uses his sorcery to the benefit of his people. Nyawira, who was turned away from her bourgeoisie life of over indulgence to become a rival of the middle class which has produced her, is his *comrade*. Together, they become a solution to the ruler's problem which is over spilling and leading to moral decadence, human degradation and rapid economic decline. This problem is called "white ache".

In all but one of the texts summarised above, evidence shows that the protagonists in Ngugi's novels are mainly youth. The texts themselves are revolutionary in as far as their communicative purpose is concerned. Their intended messages are embodied in the experiences, actions, beliefs and observations of youth. It may, therefore, be inferred from the composition of these texts that with the youth being the embodiments of the revolutionary ideas of the writer, they also become agents of that revolution. They are the reality that the author has seen. His painting of a revolutionary society has acquired its material from the reality which is youth driven. In so say, it becomes justifiable to infer that these summaries point towards the representation of youth as both victims and activists in a society that needs socio-political amelioration.

3.3.9 Conclusion

Discussed in this chapter are the following, Background to author, Literature and society, character and characterization, texts summaries and authorial craft. Background to author records events, experiences and perception emanating from them. These factors are held responsible for the author's ideological leanings and authorial schemata which consciously or subconsciously provide him with images of youth as both victims and protagonists of social justice in his real world. The next aspect of focus in this chapter is summaries of novels selected for the study. The summaries range from *Weep not Child* to *Wizard of The Crow*. The protagonists in these novels are youth except for Matigari who also survives as a protagonist through the support of the youth and where they experience impediments, the elderly characters are often implicated. The last section presents the strategies used by creative writers to represent characters. It contributes towards the understanding

requisite for accessing authorial intent and making inferences on character representation.

4. CHAPTER 4: CHARACTER NAMING, YOUTH AND ACTIVISM DURING COLONIALISM

4.1 General introduction

Drawing evidence of youth activism with the intention to demonstrate that youth are a socio-political force in Ngugi's novels cannot be done as a matter of *isogesis*. This is to say, character profiling and analysis as well as promoting the reading of youth as activists in Ngugi's novels should take into consideration the fact that the youth also construct their identities in a social context which has predetermined plans about them. Analysis in this study will therefore be done such that it recognizes the assertion above. The reader is advised that though this study focuses on youth as a socio-political force, elderly characters constitute part of the discussion. However, they do not enjoy the status of the characters of focus who in this study are the youth. They only feature as agents whose presence in the fictional works create a comparative background against which the youth have to construct their identities and have their natural abilities and traits put to test. These elderly characters provide, on a number of occasions, an adversarial socio-political environment necessary for the background against which the activism of the youth takes place. This is done with the view to authenticate the thesis that the youth are indeed represented as an important force in the social and political affairs of their societies. This chapter is divided into five subsections which are further divided into subsections for the convenience of the reader. The sections include the activism of youth which directly speaks to the thesis of this research. Among the points of discussion in this chapter are character naming as an attitude-engineering strategy, 4.2, Character naming as an attitude-engineering strategy, 4.3 The general socio-political and cultural portrayal of youth in some of the selected novel, 4.4 The effects of colonialism on youth and finally, 4.5 the contribution of youth towards the liberation of Kenya.

4.2 Character naming as an attitude-engineering strategy

Doing both Critical Discourse Analysis (Goatly, 2000: 54-58) and Close Reading of a text requires an investigation on the names the author gives to his characters. In an attempt to delve into this aspect of Ngugi's representation of youth as a socio-political

force, an attempt is here made to investigate the meanings in the names of his characters. This is done with the view to investigate his naming as a likely source of communicative purpose which in the thesis of this study is the representation of youth as a socio-political force. Investigating Ngugi's texts for the socio-political activism of the younger characters prompts the reader to invest in this part of speech because of its pragmatic power. In his work entitled *Critical Reading and Writing*, Goatly states that nouns, as a word class, form a more powerful tool of classifying things and people, and has the potential to arouse pre-determined attitudes and actions on the psychic space of the addressees. An example here is the name "Jigger" which Ngugi uses so as to arouse negative attitude towards some elderly politician. By implication, a character who bears this name/description is automatically condemned to death when the reader's schemata comes into contact with the text. Contrary to this life threatening classification through naming, the novelist decides to call a younger character Nyambura which means "she of rain". Relying on the schemata of his readers the author passes moral judgement on some characters. Making some indispensable and others disposable; some, worthy of death and others the *sine qua non* of peace and human progress.

In this study, this will be achieved by probing into the meanings of the names of his characters. An attempt will further be made to draw evidence on his naming of characters which in various African cultures is loaded with wishes, histories, beliefs and attitudes. The aim of this discussion is to unravel the perceptions Ngugi generates towards those characters. In addition to the probing of names as an attitude engineering strategy towards an individual, a group of people or an entity, it is worth discussing some theory on naming before entangling ourselves with practical interrogation of the names themselves.

The first theorization on names is by Strauss (1994) who contends that language as a super-ordinate/hyperonym of words, including names, is a kind of behaviour. He further argues that to name a thing is to categorize it. He cites philosophers such as John Dewey and Arthur Bentley who in their book *Knowing and the Known* claim that naming is an act of cognition and is part of subjugating the known to the cognition. This is probably an inference from the book of Genesis in the Bible when Adam, the ruler of the fauna and flora named all the living beings. This inevitably classifies and

evokes attitude and certain forms of behaviour towards the known. Strauss further insists that, "... what a thing is, you place it in terms of something else". He further contends that, "...the idea of locating or placing is implicit in our very word for definition itself: to define or determine a thing is to mark its boundaries" (p.74). His argument follows a belief that once you name a thing, you are contemporaneously providing a directive for action and evaluation. He insists that by naming an object, it is as if the named object states, "You say I am this, and then act in an appropriate way towards me." (p.75). In order to expound his idea further, Strauss provides an illustration of his assertion by using an analogy of a person who in the dark, lifts a glass which to him/her is of milk, but then just before it touches the lips, the person's nostrils are assaulted by the smell of a liquid which is classified as not being edible. Naturally, this naming which is descriptive and categorizing emits a reaction which withholds action. From this, an inference can be made that attitude withholds action which has always been latent until naming occurs. In the context of this study, we begin with the premise that every reader does harbour aversion of persons or characters. Before encountering the names the author has 'cloaked' his character with, attitude, be it positive or negative, is suspended. However, as soon as the author or the text introduces a name into the reader's conscience, one of these latent attitudes, depending on the schemata of the reader is categorized and an appropriate feeling towards the name is released. This might happen consciously or subconsciously.

He further argues that classifying as an action directs overt behaviour and eventually arouses a set of expectations towards the object of classification. Evidence of this assertion can be derived from the movie *Hotel Rwanda*. In this movie, through the naming of the victimized section of the nation as cockroaches as well as the use of the name *Kaffir* which the Dutch borrowed from the Arabs, negative attitudes towards the inhabitants of Africa by the Arabs and Europeans respectively were engendered, and consequently allowed the savagery of the Afrikaners and the Arabs to go unbridled against the aboriginals of Africa. In the same manner, the naming of characters by Ngugi primes his reader along the direction of the role the characters are likely to assume in the struggle between virtue and vice, social degradation and upliftment in his novels which we have already categorized or rather described as committed and realistic. Additionally, it also directs the reader as to which characters to aspire to and which ones to hold in contempt.

Among the elderly characters whose names will be focused on are: Livingstone, Jacobo, Juliana, Ezekieli, Miriamu, Chui, Fraudsham, Kimeria, Big Ben Mambo, Matigari and Howlands, while the list for the youth includes: Mwangi, Kamau, Waiyaki, Mugo, Mumbi, Wariinga, Muthoni, Nyambura, Guthera, Gatuiria, Kamiti, Nyawira, Joseph, Abdulla and Karega. The reader is made aware of the fact that the youth will not be discussed lengthily here since their names will also be dealt with in chapters 4, 5 and 6. As per the sequence in the list, we begin with Livingstone. Historically, this is the name of a well-known missionary in Southern Africa. His name has not accrued negative connotations as it is not directly associated with atrocities of imperialism. Appearing in both *Weep Not Child* and *The River Between*, the name does not, however, escape pejorative interpretation and has probably intrigued Ngugi with its morphology. His vocation as a missionary seems to bear witness to Kenyatta's observation that it was responsible for teaching the African people to pray with their eyes closed, which on opening, the land had been taken (Wapman, 1988). Analyzing it according to its form, the name is a compound made up of the adjective "living" and the noun "stone". Looking at the role this missionary eventually plays in the life of Njoroje in *Weep Not Child*, he is represented as being devoid of feeling. His reaction towards what the police are doing to Njoroje, qualifies him to be described only in metaphorical terms as a "stone" which is "living" and therefore, his name-Livingstone. This then disqualifies him as a person in a mission of love. He is totally devoid of both sympathy and empathy. All that he is concerned with is the 'disappointment' Njoroje has wrought on him and the charges he unfairly lays against him. Compared to youth, who saved the life of the character who helped in the assassination of her own brother Kihika in *A Grain of Wheat*, he does not exude the kindness that was in Mumbi. This youth could spare the life of the betrayer when it was within her power to do that but the missionary here chooses to be passive and not to breathe a word in favour of the innocent youth.

The next set of names includes the following characters, Juliana, Jacobo, Ezekieli and Miriamu which are all biblical names, except for the first one. Jacobo is the corruption of the name Jacob who is not a morally upright character in the Bible. He is known as a cheat who cheated his own brother by snatching the blessings of his position as a brother. Though Ezekieli is the corruption of Ezekiel, a good prophet in the Bible, what is common and derogatory about the names is that they all subscribe/classify their

bearers as objects of Social Darwinism. The names are symbolic to the alienation of the self. In his *memoir* entitled *Something New and Torn*, (2009) Ngugi goes into great length explaining the construction of identity which labels the African or subjugated body of the subject for the convenience of the oppressor, and as a symbol of “the creating” of others in a manner which dislodges them from their memories, a crucial part of their identity. With these names tagged on black bodies, they rather evoke Eurocentric memories while simultaneously eliminating native ones. Since names are part of language, and language is a reservoir of memory, it follows then that names become one of the tools of identity reconstruction. A classic example of this is Rev. Kamau who changes his name to Rev. Jerrod Brown (*Petals*). With this change of name which is played on minimal pairs, he inherits the attitude of the former colonizer towards his own people/race. He then becomes worse against his fellow nationals. In addition to his *human- un-kind-ness*; Ngugi has also created proximity in his name choice to that of Herod. In order to make the point on the claim above clearer, we will make reference to a character in the movie, *Courageous*. In this movie, there is a character by the name of Javi. As a Spanish name, the “J” in this name is pronounced as “H” so that his Latin or Spanish name is articulated as Havi. With the naming of Rev. Kamau, through spelling conspiracy, he manages to evoke a negative attitude towards him, and hence the role he later plays in the story which is the assassin of the dreams of his own people as Herod killed the young ones.

Another name of an elderly character whose morphology is suggestive of the writer’s negative attitude is that of the principal of Siriana (*Petals of Blood*), at the time when Karega gets expelled from the school through the help of Chui. His name is also a compound made up of two nouns, “Fraud” and “sham”. Fused, this name becomes Fraudsham. Both nouns forming this compound are loaded with negative senses. According to one Thesaurus by *Reader’s Digest*, some of the synonyms of the word “fraud” include misrepresentation, duplicity, subterfuge and sham which is the final lexeme of the name. The synonyms for “sham” include fake, pretence; counterfeit, forgery, bogus, deceptive and imitation. The principal of Siriana is; therefore, represented as an outright regent of vice, and that is achieved through naming only. The inclusion of “sham” as one of the synonyms of fraud means that he is actually or doubly so, a hopeless case of disappointment. Contradicting his vocation, he is posing as a light bearer and yet he practically stands for darkness. By extension, this could

even border on the fact that his bright complexion does not actually represent light the symbol of the sun and the source of life. His moral choices, though not culpable, classify him with the deployees of imperialism with its *necrophillic* impact on people of African decent.

In the last of the novels selected for this study, Ngugi plays with proximity of sounds to invent a weird elderly character whose name automatically causes aversion towards him on the reader. Using proximal sounds, in (*Wizard*), he creates a minister with the name Big Ben Mambo as one of the ruler's ministers. Ininitialy, the name of this character was Benjamin Mambo, but then Ngugi conveniently cuts the first name to Ben and then adds Big before it. Ngugi uses this phonetic manipulation to generate stress conspiracy that can altogether induce pejoration on the name of the elderly character under discussion. Through this strategy, the name of his elderly character Big Ben evokes the non- theistic creation concept- Big Bang as propounded by Charles Darwin (Darwin, 1859).When applied to the names of both his elderly and younger characters, this insight will show how the author seems to be prejudiced towards his younger characters.That in itself justifies the thesis of this study.

According to this theory, there is no deity which originated life. By way of implication, this theory asserts that there is no need to subject ones-self to the moral injunctions of any religion or culture or deity. With this, Big Ben (Bang) is entitled to the benefit of natural selection, a view held by the superior race to "numb" their conscience and let loose their savagery against lesser fortunate races. The result of this meta-physical choice has been manifest in both the Trans sub-Saharan and Trans-Atlantic slave trade and their successors:colonialism, neo-colonialism and apartheid.He too as an heir of their world view is an accomplice of the *nouveau rich* who now without any sense of remorse are exploiting their own people. Not only, is he represented in beastly and amoral terms befitting any other animal, but he is also given a surname Mambo which is the initial/first name of a slang name Mambo Jumbo. Ngugi cunningly leaves out "Jumbo" to this negative character name. The word mambo itself casts a more negative shadow on this elderly character as it means a woman priestess who is responsible for death in some occultic organization (Price, 2006).

We now turn to the last two other names which are Nderi wa Riera and Hawkins. Coincidentally, these two names have something in common. They both, though, by way of implication evoke an element of the predatory, amoral and carnivorous birds in their personalities. On the one hand, Nderi wa Riera as it can be learnt from the conversation with the author and Ms. Mbugua who is a native speaker of Gikuyu the researcher consulted on some of these names, means “hawk of the sky”. Symbolically, he is the one who only lands when there is something to snatch, and he will be gone thereafter only to land again during the next elections. On the other hand, when analyzed on the basis of its morphology, the name Hawkins, suggests two lexemes which are, Hawk and then kin(s). With “hawk” already explained, we derive a similitude between him as a human being and a kind of species called “hawks”. He is in nature, a next of “kin” to hawks; therefore “Hawk like” in nature. In the next section, we investigate the ideological assumptions which are prevalent in the milieu under which texts of choice for this study have been “woven”. Focus will be on the cultural manifestation of the attitude of the society towards the youth.

Among some of the names for his younger characters who will be discussed here are: Boro, Muriuki, Karega, Kiarie, Kihika, Abdulla. In English, the first name, Boro, has the sense of *gutu* or pills. In the novel *Weep Not Child*, this is the name of the younger character whose contribution towards revolution can be said to arouse the desire for an existential approach towards the socio-political exigencies of his people. He heals his father from the inertia that has stopped him from fighting against the evils wrought on him by colonialism. The next name is Muriuki/Mriuki which means to revive. Appearing in both *Petals of Blood* and *Matigari*, this is the name of one youth who has become a victim of hunger to the point of collapsing at school, and in the other novel, it is the name of a character whose role preserves the life of the eponymous character, Matigari. The name, Karega, means “the rebel” (*Petals of Blood*). In a neo-colonial state, rebellion which characterizes his name is a necessary and ethically acceptable reaction to the life threatening socio-political conditions of the peasants in ilmorog, and by extension, the whole of Kenya. Karega is, therefore, a rebel with a good course. The name Kiarie which also appears in *Weep Not Child* means, “Please speak.” In the political meeting held in Kipanga (pp.56-57) whose aim is to incite the natives to withhold the services from the imperialists and to arouse them into a revolutionary action, Kiarie does exactly that. The next name is Kihika which appears in *A Grain of*

Wheat. According to the author himself, this name means, "he who is in a hurry." His name is indicative of the impatience of the youth with regard to socio-political reform. It calls to memory, the urgency with which the African National Congress Youth League demanded change in the late 1940s. Apportioned to the youth, its pragmatic value expresses a plea that somebody has towards the youth in general. It expresses hope on them as agents of change towards the situation the speaker cannot bear any longer. This is a demand which brought about radical transformation with regard to presidency and the general approach against racism in South Africa. The last of these names is Abdulla (Petals of Blood) whose name is infused with positive implications. The name means "servant of God". In this novel, this youth is empowered with some ecclesiastical connotations. The name expresses judgement on the character. To Ngugi, this youth together with whatever he does, the author wants him to be known as the servant of God. Comparing the meanings given to both the elderly and the younger characters above, it becomes evident that Ngugi is prejudiced in favour of the youth and they therefore become the hope for a socio-political change he envisions as the end product of his writing.

4.3 The general socio-political and cultural portrayal of youth in some of the selected novels

4.3.1 Introduction

In order to demonstrate that Ngugi's faith in as far as the socio-economic emancipation of the oppressed lies with the youth, this section of the chapter is an attempt by the researcher to highlight the general attitude of the author towards youth as it manifests in the comments and observations on them by some elderly characters. The rationale for including this chapter emanates from the fact that, as this study focuses more on character analysis, a close reading of Ngugi's novels provide textual evidence on youth as a socio-political force in ways that do not confine evidence to younger characters who are selected for discussion. It is the researcher's view that excluding those sections of the texts will deny the reader a great repository of evidence which supports its thesis. Among other factors to be discussed in this sub section, focus will be put on the *sobriquets* and idiomatic expressions, comment on the youth by other characters which illuminate the role of youth in both colonial and post colonial

struggles for survival. It is after this discussion that individual characters will be singled out for thorough analysis.

4.3.2 Sympathy with youth

The first general reference to youth in both empathetic and heroic terms appears in *Weep Not Child* (1964), the first novel to be published by Ngugi. This author's arrival into the world of literature explicitly introduces him as plaintive voice representing the plight of the youth. Before he tells the reader his story, Ngugi goes out of his way to borrow a poem from Walt Whitman. The lines of this poem are quoted below for the convenience of the reader. This poem does not form part of his narration, however, he uses it as an introduction to his novel and perhaps his preamble as a *vates*. As part of his craft, the poem is interpreted to have the purpose of priming and inviting his reader into fellow feeling with his protagonist, the young Njoroge and the rest of the youth in all his succeeding novels. The stanza from that poem reads this way:

*Weep not child
Weep not my darling
With these kisses
Let me remove your tears
The ravening clouds shall not
Forever possess the sky
They shall not forever be victorious.*

As a preamble to his seemingly mission to speak on behalf of the youth, the propositions in the lines of this stanza address the weeping child, and reading it against the novels, interpretation tempts the reader to add hyponyms to the super-ordinate word "child" which appears in the first line of the poem. The subtext that is generated by the reading of both the poem and the novels strongly suggests that Ngugi's recipients of sympathy to be are, among others, younger characters such as Njoroge himself, Wariinga, Wanja, Joseph, Abdulla and many others.

Further evidence of Ngugi's predispositions towards youth as heroes can be inferred from his insistent use of the poems by Walt Whitman. As if to say that his words to pay tribute to youth are inadequate, in his fourth novel, *Petals of Blood*, Ngugi foregrounds

a poem with the motif in the first one he has used in *Weep Not Child*. This poem resonates with Ngugi's personal experiences on the cruelty that was meted out to the Mau Maus in his *memoir*. In the poem, Whitman paints an equally heart wrenching picture of youth as victims. Their victimization nevertheless renders them heroes as they die as martyrs. Whitman states that:

*Those corpses of young men,
Those martyrs that hang from gibbets-those
Whose heads are pierc'd by the grey lead,
Cold and motionless as they seem, live elsewhere
With unslaughter'd vitality.*

*They live in other young men, O kings!
They live in brothers again ready to defy you. (P.261)*

The poem is explicitly written to express the plight, the vitality and the immortality of youth activism. While represented as victims, they are also represented as immortal enemies to Kings, be they imperial or local, colonial or post-colonial. This explicit representation of youth as a force against unjust kings supports the thesis of the study.

Having said that, we now proceed to the general representation of youth as a socio-political force in Ngugi's novels with more attention paid to how Ngugi wants to represent and alter perception towards the age group he has already been interpreted to be sympathetic towards. The first specific reference to youth in heroic terms appears in the same novel, *Weep Not Child* (1964), which is his first novel to be published. As a committed writer with a clear sense of direction, which is to *re-store* the dignity of the youth, Ngugi re-defines the name Mau Mau for his readers. In an interview with him and the researcher (Ngugi 2012), explains that this nickname is a coinage of contempt which was invented by the British imperialists who had occupied Kenya prior to the organisation of a well-coordinated national reaction to the evil of imperialism (see appendix A). Because of its derogatory nature, the coinage would obviously not be used by Stephen Howlands whose consciousness had been freed from the *provincialism* of his father and his European peers. With time, the *nomenclature* which is cloaked in negative attitude got used to identifying/describing the guerilla fighters.

As a re-inventer, not only of the youth, but of his nation as well, Ngugi views it as his duty to remove the pejoration on the name Mau Mau. Among his duties is to orient attitude towards the name Mau Mau (p.68), with the view to re-endear it to his reader as a guerilla and therefore a philanthropic and patriotic movement. This is one of the various manifestations of a committed writing Ngugi is known for. The use of this movement helps Ngugi to demonstrate Freire's (1970) conviction that violence is seldom initiated by the oppressed. The Mau Mau as known by the British, are terrorists, but Ngugi uses words to engineer a new attitude towards them. In this battle for meaning, Ngugi consciously attempts to induce an altered perception of the youth and would rather have them re-labeled Freedom Fighters. Additionally, he summons the aid of the vernacular to de-estrane the youth by affectionately calling them *The Ihii Cia Mutitu* (p.68). Translated into English, this phrase means Freedom Boys of the Forest. The writer's intention is deliberate here.

Writing in English, Ngugi decides to switch codes, and appropriates to himself some "home-ground" advantage in the battle for the *psyche* of the Kenyan nationals. The choice of the code is well calculated. Its aim is to persuade them in a language that identifies him with them. To the reader who does not speak Gikuyu as their native language, Ngugi also deliberately presents a hurdle which, in a way, forces a pause to the reader as they grapple with the meaning of the new concept dropped into their vocabulary/consciousness. Naturally, this word inhibits the excitement with which the text has hitherto been read, but then demands some contemplation on the part of the reader so as to enforce some level of *logic*. The use of the word then becomes one of the very many strategies the writer employs to position his reader positively towards the revolutionaries.

At this stage, it would be convenient for the argumernt which is being posited in this study, to draw the reader's attention to the author's craft. To accomplish that, we deviate a little and focus on the key word "strategy" as used in the assertion above. Analysed on the basis of its etymology, the word sheds some light on the point which is being made here. The *Miriam Webster Dictionary* defines strategy as a compound noun borrowed from Greek. In full, the word is *strategeia* and it has two root words, "*stratus*" meaning an army and "*agein*" which means to lead. According to this

dictionary, the word means “The science and art of military command aimed at meeting the enemy under conditions advantageous to one’s own forces”.

Having said that, then it can be categorically stated that writing as an art is also not devoid of the manipulation requisite to victory in a literal sense of the word “war”. The war referred to in this context is the wish of the novelist, to win the reader to adopt a particular position about his subject. In the light of the above, we now attempt to draw a link between the reader and the writer in the next paragraph.

The act of composing or weaving a text is similarly a battle of the mind waged by the writer against the mind of the reader. It therefore, follows that in an attempt to compose or weave a persuasive and realistic text, the novelist has had to be strategic more so that this text has been hailed as his master piece. There is evidence here that Ngugi has undertaken some rhetorical exercise which abides by the maxim that the speech maker must undergo certain pre-text production exercises prior to the production of the text. The one that Ngugi has demonstrated here is called exclusivism through language. Its choice relies on the author’s knowledge of his rhetorical situation which in this context, the first target audiences are Kenyans. In order to forge kinship with them, he has to use their language. He exploits the joint linguistic and cultural capital he and his reader bring into the act of reading as dialogue. He uses this appeal to accomplish a task of altering perception towards the Mau Mau. This novelist puts it explicitly in his *sobriquet* that the freedom fighters are still boys. That is to say, he foregrounds their age category and selects the most appropriate semantic item to describe them. To him, they are freedom ones. Using this positively charged word automatically re-presents the youth as real patriots. This proves that the code switching is not a sign of lack in terms of vocabulary, but a rhetorical choice. His decision to provide the translation in parenthesis (p.68) emphasizes this point. In so doing, Ngugi has forged a relationship that necessitates a give and take psychological symbiosis. As he has delighted his reader by representing himself in union with the reader, he then earns the right to be believed in his new version of the Freedom Fighters.

4.3.3 Comments by elderly characters in *Petals of Blood*

In this post liberation novel written to express his cynicism on the new era, Ngugi's hope for Kenya and Africa still rests with the youth and is expressed by elderly characters within the text. In this novel, one of Ngugi's elderly characters states that, "God puts wisdom in the mouths of babes." (Petals/136). This is ancient wisdom that has for quite a while been inhibited by power performance politics and in this statement, Ngugi is providing some leverage to the image of youth. He makes his personal veneration for youth even more authentic by "colouring" it with two important qualities. Firstly, it is wisdom from antiquity and secondly, the statement gains its importance from the speaker who is an elderly character, someone who must be very experienced and therefore hallowed in the community. The utterance does seem like his, but he wants it to appear as a sacrilegious statement which attests to the fact that youth have been recognized even traditionally. That is to say, exclusivism by the elderly in the modern day is a form of deviance from long held beliefs. This finding, wisdom handed down, further legitimizes and gives credence to the necessity of this study. The person who utters this statement is authenticated by his age. This acknowledgement of the youth approximates the Setswana proverbial saying which states, "*Botlhale Jwa phala bo tswa phalaneng*" (An impala/antelope's wisdom comes from its younger one) and its equivalent: *Phala e se nang phalana lesilo* (an impala/antelope's without its young is a fool.) Indeed the youth do later make Nderi wa Riera look back to his youth of activism with awe as he sees himself in the young Karega (p.178)

In so doing, Ngugi does not only represent the plight of the oppressed in blanket or of women as some scholars such as Rutere (2009) whose works is laudable, nevertheless, but he explicitly represents the youth as a force in their societies. He has positioned this statement or rather wisdom in the context of neglect suffered by the elderly and everyone else in the village. It is the elders who are saying it and indeed, it does prove itself true later. This becomes synonymous with the act of remembering Africa Ngugi advocates for in *Something Torn and New*; it becomes a statement of *renaissance* whose role is to restore the youth back into their position among their communities. The statement is expressed as *Koinonia*, (the moment of truth) and it emerges or rather forces itself into the consciousness of the elderly character and reader alike, especially, at the moment of need.

In this very novel, Ngugi continues to restore African wisdom towards the phenomenon of youth as a socio-political force. One of the elders who is not named states that, "There is no house with a boy child where the head of a he-goat will not be eaten." (p. 140) Stereotypical as it may sound, this statement which is ignited by excitement caused by the action of youth, (p.140) is equally loaded with some degree of sacrilege. It has been handed down from antiquity. In explicit terms, the *aphorism* is an expression of the reliance of the elderly folk on the youth for economic emancipation. Textual evidence has already proved that, in the context of Ilmorog, economic development is youth driven. An in-depth analysis of this will be done later in this very chapter.

4.3.4 Mandates of elderly characters and reflections of youth on themselves

The next point in this section is derived from one of the oldest members of Ngugi's characters by the name of Chege (River, p.7). In what is actually the first of Ngugi's novels, we find Chege who is well respected and about to die pronouncing a mandating to his own son, Waiyaki. He wants him to go to learn and bring about developments in the village without betraying the ancient ways of the tribe. In this culture, the words of the elderly, especially, notable ones, such as Chege, are always "infused" with veneration as they are about to join the dead and their age deserves some respect within this cultural context. Knowing his audiences or target readership, Ngugi recourse the veneration of the elderly, and soon dying character, Chege, to the service of his communicative intention which is to usher the youth into the socio-economic and political performance space.

The trust that Chege is demonstrating towards the youth is also shown by Jacobo the father of Mwihaki, in *Weep Not Child*. Ironic as it may sound, it is this elderly character who is famous as a collaborator with colonial forces who encourages Njoroge, the very child, who by inference is the recipient of the sympathy in the poem above, to take responsibility towards the rebuilding of Kenya. Finding him in his house with his daughter Mwihaki who is defying her mother's preference that her children should not mingle with the low class children, Jacobo addresses Njoroge in the words, "It is such as you who must rebuild this country." (p.92). This is a statement of faith which proceeds from a man who has now come to terms with reality after years of betraying the people. He explicitly expresses his hope on youth. The reader is advised to pay

attention to the modal “must.”It does not imply the future, but the imperative which must be carried out in the present.The locution of the statement does not shift agency to the future, but rather admonishes the youth to act in the present.This is one of the many points of reference for the the thesis of this study.

Yet another evidence of faith in youth is vividly recorded in *Devil on the Cross*. In this novel, youth activism against social injustice is represented in two incidents which occur in the same scene. In this scene, which is a meeting held in Ilmorog, Ngugi allows his youth to represent their part in the struggle against poverty engendered by politicians. A student leader, whose name has not been mentioned, states:

We, the mass of students in Ilmorog, whether in primary or secondary schools or at the university, support the workers fully in their struggle against the system of modern theft and robbery...And we, the students, sat down and asked ourselves: What do we do to show solidarity with the workers?... let us join hands with the workers as they struggle to build a house that will benefit all the builders. (p. 209)

In that very meeting, the second and more direct representation of youth as a socio-political occurs.As another evidence which supports the thesis of this study, an elderly character whose identity has not been revealed except only as the representative of the workers explicitly and publicly celebrates the youth of Ilmorog workers as he states:

First, I would like to pay tribute to the courage of the students from the university and the schools around here. If our youth were to hang up its arms, what would happen to the defense of the land? (p. 209)

Close analysis of his statement reveals information which supports the thesis of this study. We do this by focusing on two keywords which are, “tribute” and “courage” which appear on the first line. The first word “tribute,” among other senses, denotes acknowledgment and homage. In the use of the word tribute, the speaker directly exalts the youth to the level of rulers/kings.This is so because in its historical sense, the word collocates with kings who would be its recipients. The online etimological

dictionary defines this word as, "The stated sum of money or other valuable consideration paid by one ruler or country to another in acknowledgment of submission..." While this study does not seek to elevate the youth above other age groups, it does, however, seek to draw attention to textual evidence in support of the fact that youth are a force that must be acknowledged in socio-political issues. The act of paying tribute itself is an acknowledgement of that power.

Explicitly stated in the words of the speaker is the noun "courage" which is used as an attribute of the youth. The speaker's foregrounding of youth as a power base in their struggle directly speaks to the thesis of this study. He sheds more light on the power of youth as he attributes the success of the uprising to the youth, in a very persuasive tone encoded in a rhetorical question, "If our youth were to hang up its arms, what would happen to the defense of the land?" In this rhetorical question, he extends the value of youth to the level beyond the current issue. This meeting is primarily convened for salary increases, but the main beneficiary and probably the convenor deviates and raises the attendants' awareness to the fact that the youth defend, not only, the workers, but the land as well. This deviation speaks volumes in terms of the representation of youth as a socio-political force.

We conclude this section with an emphasis that Ngugi is through and through interested in the plight of the youth and this will be demonstrated deeper in the remaining sections. His explicit expression of his sympathy as seen in the poem in the first novel to be published and the mandate to youth through Chege and Jacobo, the traitor, leads to a perception that the youth are represented as a force in the socio-political affairs of their communities. The remaining section of this chapter focuses on the individual characters and their contributions in the various aspects of their society. With the intention to further extract more evidence on the attitude of the novelist towards the youth, the section also discusses the victimization of the youth in both the pre and post-colonial eras of Kenya as represented in the works selected for the study.

4.4 The effects of colonialism on youth

4.4.1 Introduction

The representation of youth as socio-political force cannot be adequately done without an attempt to create a background against which the youth emerge as a

force. Referring to them as a force presupposes a socio-economic and political environment which runs counter to their aspirations and thereby provoke their inbuilt capacity for self but national preservation as well. The purpose of this section is to effect a contrasting background which illuminates the forcefulness of youth. Ngugi's representation of youth as victims of a colonial regime testifies to the subconscious concern the novelists has for youth. In this section, an attempt is made to demonstrate Ngugi's inclinations towards the youth. The discussion in this section will, however, make more sense against the experience of Tshenuwani Farisani as cited by Butler (2007) in Cyril Ramaphosa's biography. In a plaintive voice, Farisani states:

Before I knew the word 'politics', I had already been uprooted with my community three times... to make room for whites in newly declared white areas. Before I knew the word 'apartheid', I had already been denied timely education and daily bread. Before I learned anything about percentages and equality, I already knew that 'white' meant more food, more learning, more money, more cattle, better housing, better schooling, better health facilities. Before I heard the word 'terrorist', I was already being terrorized... before I knew the concepts of oppression and exploitation, I knew that our people were killed and buried on the Bethal potato farms... before I knew the word 'communist' as defined by Botha and his predecessors, my grandfather had already told me that- Whites do not love us; they hate us. A hunger amongst black is not a natural disease but an apartheid created tool of oppression. If blacks were edible, whites would have barbeques every day (p.19).

4.4.2 Victimization in *The River Between*

Against this real world observation above, an attempt is now made we now investigate Ngugi's texts for a similar plight on his youth. Evidence authenticating the presupposition above, opens with the younger characters set against each other from the very beginning of Ngugi's first attempts at fiction writing. The two younger characters of focus here are Kamau and Kinuthia who appear in the opening lines of *The River Between*. From the very outset, the two youths are already pitted against each other. The cause for this conflict is ideologies which are colonial and counter colonial in their land. The cause of the fight is Kinuthia's accusation of Kamau's father as a convert to the white man (River/p.5). This induces an anticipation of some impending socio-political, economic, cultural and psychological instabilities. Kamau

and Kinuthia, who fall within the category of youth, are the first characters to feel the internal or intra-racial conflict. This marks the beginning of an ideological conflict, which runs through *The River Between* and *Weep Not Child*, and has the potential to do harm in the ontological development of Ngugi's youths. The approaching of the white man soon affects them economically through the usurping of the land with the subsequent loss of their livestock. Chege, Waiyaki's father, the main character in *The River Between* confirms this as he states:

"The butterflies are there, beyond the ridges, putting up many houses and some taking the land." (p.7).

The butterflies in this quotation refer to the Whites that are now settling in the land. This implies; therefore, that Chege is aware of the invasion of Kenya by settlers. This invasion brings about a negative socio-economic change in Kenya as mentioned already, and the youth have their share of this misery. This is how it happens.

The socio-economic structure that existed before the invasion of the land subsequently changes. This foretells several changes in the society. The first one is that the agrarian mode of economy that has hitherto been followed is brought to an end and a capitalist one is introduced. When that happens, casualties are common. The new era demands that people, who are now landless, should begin to acquire new skills appropriate to serve the colonial economic system. Consequently, the natives are now alienated from the land and are forced to adapt to a new way of life. The youth are not spared from these negative consequences.

Orchestrated by the imperial government, the context within which Waiyaki must fulfill the mandate is not a generous one, and therefore, craves revolution. He has been charged by his father to acquire education for the general good of the nation. However, Education is always decided upon by those who have power. This provides the grounds for Althusser's view on it as an "Ideological State Apparatus" (Guggelberger, 1985; Rivkin & Ryan, 2008). Waiyaki's challenge arises from the fact that those who provide education produce a certain predetermined citizenry, one that will be convenient for the purpose of the powerful, and the dominant epoch who in this context are Europeans. The finding above derives credence from historical facts derived from some historical source on the machinations of the British and their imperialism. For

evidence on the preceding assertion, we turn to George Grey, the one-time governor of the Cape colony as cited in Christie (1991:37). Grey concluded that:

If we leave the natives beyond our borders ignorant barbarians, they will remain a race of troublesome marauders. We should try to make them a part of ourselves, with a common faith and common interests, useful servants, consumers of our goods, contributors to our revenue; therefore I propose that we make unremitting efforts to raise the natives in Christianity and civilization, by establishing among them missions connected with industrial schools. The native races beyond our boundary, influenced by our missionaries, instructed by our schools, benefiting by our trade, would not make wars on our frontiers.

The confession above provides some authenticity to the fictional world of Ngugi despite its origin in an east African country, Kenya. It represents a Constantine and queen Elizabethan sect of Christianity which negatively influenced some missionaries' attitude towards the colonized. Failing to interact critically with dominant ideas in the society, these missionaries then became agents of domestication. Waiyaki has to fight this vice while simultaneously defending himself against those who think he has begun to betray the tribe.

Despite the fact that many a youth such as Njoroge in Ngugi's novels aspire to it, this extract further implies that, education is an instrument in the hands of those who wield power. Using it as a tool, they direct the attitudes and the reasoning of the people they target with the education they provide. This may include even the intention to direct the mind away from the self which is the case with a good number of elderly characters mentioned at the beginning of the chapter.

4.4.3 The effects of colonialism on youth in *Weep Not child*

In this novel, Ngugi comments on another manifestation of this stratagem of the coloniser to subdue the natives economically. This ploy like many others also collateralizes youth. The narrator states that: you could tell the land of black people because it was red, rough and sickly, while the land of the white settlers was green and was not lacerated into small stripes" (p.7).

The comment above explains how the colonizer appropriates the resources or land as the base of the economy of Kenya. The strategy resembles the 1913 land act of South Africa whereby economically viable parts of the land were appropriated to the powerful race, while Blacks were forced to live on barren and impotent strips of land. This situation is analogous to the scorched earth policy advocated by Spencer to force the Irish to capitulate and surrender to British colonization. This stratagem is recorded in history as the Irish potato famine (Ngugi, 2010: 11), and in South Africa is represented in *Cry the Beloved Country* by another Anglophone novelist Allan Paton (1946). This element of intertextuality authenticates the claim that Ngugi, like Paton, is interested in the effects of the institutionalized poverty on the youth as a cause of their moral decay. In the case of Allen Paton, the author foregrounds the overcrowding of aboriginals as well as the overgrazing and their consequent emigration of youth the city of gold. This is true despite Ngugi's objections on how Paton portrays the oppressed in his novel. Paton who is Ngugi's predecessor went into great length to describe how the British engineered the moral decay which has coerced his character, Steve Khumalo, into violent crime and murder. Similarly, Ngugi's youth who are the concern of another youth Waiyaki are laid vulnerable to these conditions which are lamented by the Tshanuwani in the quotation at the beginning of this section.

Evidence of this form of subotage also resurfaces in *Petals of Blood*. In this text, conditions hindering the development of Ngugi's youths can be learnt from the elders of the village who complain that their children have all fled to the cities (p.115). Poverty is engineered. This condition of landlessness leads to poverty and results into Njoroge earnestly seeking education and wishing the same thing for his brother, Kamau (Weep, p.4). This desperate socio-economic order causes the narrator to reveal that parents were already becoming conscientized. In *Weep Not Child*, the narrator expresses the seriousness with which people need education in the following words: "It did not matter if anyone died poor provided he or she could one day say: 'look I've a son as good and as educated as any you can find in the land.'" (Weep, p.4). This coercion into an alien culture is normally a deliberate action by the colonizer as observed by Fanon (1961) that at the heart of an empire, is the dehumanization of the native. The colonized is defined as inferior and lesser human being. Fanon further adds that Blacks are seen as instinctive, their customs are dehumanized and demonized. With that: 'they are pressured to accept the culture of the rulers; their

beliefs and values are dismissed as backward and primitive.” Fanon further states that; the general tendency towards the natives is that, “His customs are ridiculed and demeaned” (p.252). With education being viewed this way, the sad thing is, it now becomes a tool which is used to acculturate native children and not to prepare them for the demands of the newly found society on the basis of philanthropy and civilization.

Yet another evidence of the plight of youth is seen through the eyes of Njoroge in *Weep Not Child*. The narrator records his cogitations which reveals the state of affairs among the youth in the words:

Some young men spent all their time doing nothing, but loitering in the shops. Some could work the whole day for a pound of meat. They were called the lazy boys and people in the village said that such men will later turn to stealing and crime...at times they called themselves young Hitlers”.(p.8)

Seen through the eyes of the young Njoroge, this observation nevertheless provides some valuable information on the plight of youth. Through land annexation, the youth have become jobless and are now vulnerable to exploitation and survival tactics which do not go beyond the immediate day. They have been reduced to surviving on what fortune brings to them for a day. On the one hand, the society is not concientized of the cause of their plight. They are simply labeled the “lazy boys”. On the other hand, the boys show inclinations towards crime and violence. This is seen through the name they use to describe themselves. They call themselves the young Hitlers. These youths can justifiably be referred to as the lost youth. However, it would be unfair to refer to youth in general as the “lost generation”. This study seeks to demonstrate that among the youths of their communities, there are those who lead the Kenyans towards liberation.

4.4.4 Effects of colonialism on youth in *The River Between*

In the light of the background above, we now proceed to the effects of colonization of youth role played by Livingstone and counteracted by Waiyaki. This victimization follows the pattern below.

The writer introduces one elderly character and his disciple and juxtaposes their interpretation of the Bible which places the youth in a position of superiority. The name of the missionary Livingstone and the two youths are the sisters, Muthoni and Nyambura who also have a father whose interpretation and stance they outclass. This missionary has established a school for native children with the object of giving both education and spiritual enlightenment. However, he gets his mission hijacked by the Queen Elizabethan quest for conquest and subjugation. His *psyche* has been contorted to fit in well with George Grey's subjugation and assimilationist mission wrapped in the words: "We should make them a part of ourselves." (Christie, bid).

The conflict between him and youth arises from a clash of cultures. Meant for children of the aboriginals, Siriana is western in approach. As a man from a superior nation mandated to herald the suzerainty of the west and its international Social Darwinism (a belief that the culture of superior nations normally has the right to inhibit those of weaker ones), he is intolerant of children from families, which still adhere to initiation. This is demonstrated by him expelling them from his school. The inevitable consequence of that resolution of his is that their chance of playing a meaningful role in the future of a newly industrial and capitalistic society is jeopardized. What is lamentable about his behaviour is that this happens at the time when natives have also accepted that formal education is central to the preparation of their children for the future in a fast modernizing world (p.12). According to the interpretation one derives from Livingstone's behaviour, it becomes evident that he fails to hide the fact that the end product of his education is submission to assimilationism which obliterates the natives and their culture. In order to endear him to his readers, Ngugi creates Njoroje as an ardent believer in education and strategically places this biographical piece of information in the foreground of his introduction of this character to the reader. He has appealed to the already existing general belief that education is an important tool of emancipation. Strategically, and with the view to appeal to the emotions of the reader, he represents Njoroje as a progressive thinker. As soon as the reader has been emotionally attached to him, Ngugi then shows how his fortunes are turned around. Textual evidence shows that this character has been rounded very well. Firstly, he is introduced as a boy wearing a calico; then he goes to school, shows some "sparks" in his intellect, and finally his hopes are pulled to pieces by the institutionalized violence of the government. (*Weep*, pp.3-4, & pp.114-120).

He is also represented as a selfless youth, a real man of the people, not in the ironic and pejorative sense of Achebe (1966), but in the literal and ameliorative sense. He believes that: "The only thing was education" (p.21). His going to school is for the benefit of the tribe as he explicitly aims to become educated so that he can help his family to buy some land and to fight for national land restoration. Coincidentally, at the time when his dreams are beginning to materialize, the colonial masters are also becoming more zealous in their efforts to maintain their conquest on the natives who want their land back. With the aid of Livingstone, they then thwart the dreams Njoroje has.

Further reading of the text shows that Njoroje has been represented as an optimistic youth who is *altruistic* and yet unfairly treated by the *paranoic* and fear ridden government officials. The destruction not only of his dreams must naturally arouse pity for him and anger against those responsible (p.106). The destruction of his dreams arouses an awareness on the plight of many a youth in colonial Kenya who are not mentioned in the novel. The writer augments this campaign of *pathos* in this youth's favour as he provides additional consequences of the initial assault on his future. Ngugi succeeds in his rhetoric to represent Njoroje as a victim. He firstly represents him as an object of love and then of pity. The result of this representation is that the readers automatically dislike the elderly characters who are responsible for the destruction of his dreams. In the next paragraph, we look into how Ngugi structures his presentation of an incident which elicits pity for the young man. He first represents him as a young man who unites and builds his society by establishing a link of the youths across gender race and class. This is evident when he establishes enduring social ties between himself and Mwhaki, and then links her to his white friend, Steven. His relationship with Stephen Howlands gets sustained until the eve of Njoroje's misfortune which is role-played by Stephen's own father. The narrator presents a love (Agape-unconditional) triangle between Njoroje and to other youths, Stephen and Mwhaki (p.114). The narrator records that on the morning of the beginning of an onslaught on Njoroje's life, psychologically, physically and vocationally, the principal's call out of class on him, Njoroje woke up feeling guilty for not having, in a long time, written a letter to Mwhaki who is a daughter of a rich chief and a betrayer of the people who has already shown some affection to him. He immediately resolves to write her a letter before going to sleep the same day. At the heart of the letter is the revelation of

yet another important social link conforming Mattera's poem in which he rules in favour of the children to decide the socio political fate of their countries. In this letter, he would be telling the young lady about the departure of Stephen Howlands to England. This major reason for the letter also reveals that the meeting of the two boys during the soccer match has recreated and sustained their relationship even at the height of their parents' enmity. This "good morning" of the youth marks the beginning of a long period of grieve and deferring of the young man's dreams which is roleplayed by among others: Rev. Livingstone about whom we have already discussed, police officers with concealed identities and Stephen's father, Mr. Howlands.

As mentioned already, victimization of this youth manifests itself at three levels which are: physical, psychological and then vocational. The first member of the trio is Rev. Livingstone who hands Njoroge to the police officers. His handing over of the young man, however, reveals an important aspect of the pact with the imperialistic worldview which at a more aggressive and violent level, is later revealed in the personalities of the police officers. The ordeal starts in this way. The narrator reports that the principal, Rev. Livingstone calls the youth out of classroom. This coincides with an opportunity when Njoroge is demonstrating his intellectual ability as he answers a question. The organization of events here helps the reader to learn more about this youth as a budding intellectual whose capacity for knowledge acquisition impresses, but then is suddenly overtaken by misfortune which has been "orchestrated" by the elderly members of his society.

Using showing and not telling, he then reports that after sinking into the chair he was offered, the missionary then told him the reasons for his summoning. Revealing his *paranoia* and total naivety, he then expresses his questionable sympathy to Njoroge as he blames his parents for having tempted him to do what he imagines he has done. His anti-dialogical approach to Njoroge's accusations is self-implicative in that he labours under the impression that he already knows what the youth has done. This is a subconscious claim to omniscience (p.117). Victimization of youth at this stage emerges from the unexamined personality of the elderly character. Livingstone has not learnt that it is dialogue between man and woman which leads to human conception and the preservation of the human species must follow the same path. With this attitude, he then plunges into falsely accusing the youth of a crime the young

man has not even imagined (p.119). In so doing, he applies a life annihilating principle which is analogous to rape. Instead of finding out from Njoroge if he had been involved in the crime he does not even want to mention to the accused, he presupposes that the young man has committed it already and also instead of asking if the parents did incite him into committing that anonymous crime, he already accuses them. He plunges the youth into some sort of kangaroo court as he would rather believe the accusers instead of the youth under his custody. This is probably based on their shared racial affiliation with him. The result of this is that the youth loses his opportunity to continue with his education or as Freire (1970) would put it, the young man's ontological development is interfered with.

At the physical level, Njoroge's persecution is now continued by the police officers. These officers are joined by Mr. Howlands, his friend's father, and a former employer of his father. The whole exercise by the police is indicative of how barbaric some Europeans are in spite of their claim on being a race that has brought civilization to Africa. Their physical abuse starts with their pretended interrogation. Instead of seeking answers from Njoroge, their questions reveal their *paranoia* as they express their questions in presuppositions. Among other questions they ask is the one on which they ask if he has already taken an oath, to which, he replies that he has not. Failure to respond with a "yes" leads them to assault him until he has suffered to the point of collapsing. In spite of having abducted him from boarding school, they still want him to tell them where his elder brother Boro is. Their beating continues until his whole body was covered with blood where the hobnailed shoes had done their work (p. 119). In order to assuage their conscience, which was probably nagging at them at the time, they then call him a bloody Mau Mau. This is a way of classification which justifies their savage acts on him.

Njoroge's recovery leads him to yet another expression of the viciousness of his captors. On recovery, the next day, he realizes that he was even more unsafe as he hears the voice of a woman he recognizes as that of one of his mothers. His contemplation on his situation is captured by the narrator in these words: "Perhaps death was not bad at all. It sends you into a big sleep from where you never awoke to the living fear, the dying hopes, and the lost visions." (p.117). This is terrorism conducted by the state on an innocent child.

The narrator further reports that, on waking up the following day, the onetime visionary finds himself with his whole body swollen, and still not knowing the reason for being in prison. Thinking that he would perhaps understand, he is now subjected to torture afresh, and what is even more depressing is to find that Mr. Howlands, his family's new and powerful enemy is now the leader of the "gang". The interrogation starts with the same question, but the frequent assaults have now become even more cruel.

Mr. Howlands confuses him even worse by introducing another accusation in which he now declares him an accomplice in the murder of Jacobo. The narrator reports the face of Mr. Howlands as being terrible to look at this time around. This former employer of his father now flaunts his ferocity in the face of the already fear stricken youth. The narrator records his turn of torture in the following manner. He took a pair of pincers and held Njoroge's private parts with it and kept pressing them tentatively as added to the pain with an announcement-cum threat: "You will be castrated just like your father".(p.118).

Their sadism and intention are captured by the narrator who uses two negatively charged words to describe them. He reports that one of them looked at Njoroge "ferociously" and instead of saying that he was speaking, he says he "barked" (p.116).

The after-math of this torture evolves into some psychological problems. Firstly, he develops some psychological disorders; he is afraid of meeting people in the village as he thinks they all perceive him as a failure (p.126). Secondly, he hates being a perpetual object of pity. Furthermore, he is tormented by a sense of loss and anxiety which results from the death of his father and the lives of his two brothers which are now in danger because of the renewed rage of the colonial government. Of the two brothers, Boro is going to be executed while the other, Kamau, is going to serve a life time imprisonment. (p.127)

Resulting from the factors above, he has "lost faith" in all the things he had earlier believed in. These include wealth, power, education and religion. The narrator states that, "Even love, his last hope, had fled from him." (p.134). Njoroge has eventually been pushed into fatalism. All these thoughts make him believe that life is not worth continuing with and, had it not been for his mother, Nyokabi, who discovered him just

before he executed his resolution, he would have killed himself by hanging. This act needs to be perceived objectively. A fair judgment on it cannot be passed without considering the route Njoroge has taken until the contemplation of suicide. The novelist has provided vivid details on the mental workings that preceded this resolution and instead of blaming the younger character as a hermit; the reader is invited to empathize. This logical process has been ignored by Robson (1979) who claims that Njoroge is a hermit. What he has failed to realise is that Njoroge is not a super human. What Ngugi might have been interested in here is to represent an ambitious youth whose destiny is interfered with the conditions rears fail to pay attention to often.

Kamau and Boro, the brothers of Njoroge are other victims of colonialism. In the case of Kamau, he has to shoulder the burden of being a bread winner alone at an age he is supposed to be a child and building his career. For the sake of his family, he works for Nganga as an apprentice carpenter (pp.20-21&p.61). The salary he earns is meager and Nganga's wife disregards his job description and turns him into a nanny. However, Kamau does not have a problem with himself being the breadwinner. He encourages his younger brother, Njoroge, to get education while he gets carpentry (p.4). After the attack his father has made on Jacobo in whose land they have been tenants, it is Kamau who solely shoulders the responsibility of building some new huts for the family in Nganga's land. This happens because his father's employer has dismissed him from his job. He has been dismissed alone after he disregarded his warning that as his employee; he is not supposed to take part in the strike. As a result of that, Kamau is now faced with the responsibility to ensure that there is food for the family, and he also has to pay school fee for Njoroge. This victimization, however, does not inhibit virtue in Kamau. The pressure he is subjected to, releases the good in this youth as he is capable of sacrificing on behalf of his family by appropriating their burden to himself, beyond any shadow of doubt; this is a true manifestation of *altruism*.

The coming of the white settlers to Kenya, as we have seen with the plight of the youth in *The River Between* also deals a serious blow to Boro, an elder brother to Njoroge and Kamau. His victimization, firstly, comes by way of military conscription. As a young man, he has been conscripted into the British army during the Second World War. However, that is a better evil compared to the loss of a brother, Mwangi, who has died

during his participation in the war before this one. The remembrance of his brother, which is actually the counterfeit story of the author's loss of a brother, leaves him reticent. This remembrance leaves him always reserved and talking very little. Perhaps what compounds his problem is further the fact that after the war he came home and there was no job for him. Ngugi's narrator explicitly puts it in this way: "There was no land on which he could settle..." (p.26).

Boro is also enraged by the thought of his father who had gone to war only to be dispossessed. His anger grows worse when he begins to understand that the land that is owned by Mr. Howlands is actually the one that was owned by his grandfather and now Ngotho, his father, is a labourer for Howlands in the land that he should own (p. 27). Empowered by the empirical knowledge from the war, he does not view life and land issues in a similar way as his father. The victim image that is in Ngotho, his father, has been demolished by his experiences during the war in which, unlike his father, he had been able to carry a gun, shoot and kill the white people- demigods. Through Boro, Ngugi demonstrates Freire's (1970) observation that violence is seldom initiated by the oppressed. The background he has shared about him represents him not just as a mean youth raging over petty squabbles with the white race, but as an offended victim of imperial violence; hence his counteraction with the same weapon later.

It is unfortunate that Boro's anger has reached proportions of domestic quarrels with his own father. As a youth with a more questioning mind, he has become angry at his father who has believed a prophecy that the whites would leave without any effort from the natives (p.27). It is this existential outlook which later brings him into conflict with his own flesh and blood.

In view of all the factors mentioned above, Boro decides to join the guerrillas whose goal is to restore the land to Africans. He is inevitably initiated into an ideology of violence; he subsequently loses his traditional view of the sanctity of human life. He joins the Mau Mau in order to restore the land. In the process, he loses focus on the reason for becoming a soldier/guerrilla, and killing becomes his second nature. Instead of preserving life, it begins to be a source of fulfillment for him. This can be vividly captured in his words as he states: "But for me, freedom is meaningless unless it can bring back a brother I lost. Because it can't do that, the only thing left for me is to fight,

to kill and rejoice at any who falls under my sword.” (p.103). This confession resonates with lines 26-28 of MacNeice’s poem, *Prayer before Birth*, in which the persona states:

*I am not yet born .Oh fill me
With strength against those who will freeze my
Humanity, would dragoon me into a lethal automaton
(Smith and Swacina, 1987)*

His conscience has been “numbed” by the violence institutionalized by the colonial regime. Njoroge’s ordeal mentioned earlier on provides a glimpse of this. Compounded by deprivation, the only skill he possesses in life is to kill. Human qualities such as forgiveness and mercy are not values to him any longer. A decontextualized judgment on him can render him a blood thirsty and boisterous youth. However, Ngugi leaves no room for this by developing him as a character immersed under circumstances that “fermented” such a view of the self. The details provided on him as well as the diction used to “clothe” those details absolve him from being viewed as a gullible youth convenient for use by politicians as those used by Hitler. He has a personal relationship with the hardships of his people, and he has reached a point which is justifiable if his life and that of his nation are read against the first few lines of the declaration of independence which state:

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and God’s nature .We hold these truths to be self evident that all men are equal; that they are endowed by the creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and and the pursuit for happiness. (Jefferson cited in Fabrizio et. al.1970:127).

Victimization of youth would be prejudiced if it were to deal only with its effect on the native youth. We are at this stage forced to “exhume” evidence of the same phenomenon on the whites as we turn to the Howlands family. Two of Mr. Howlands’ sons have been negatively affected by both racism and what the narrator ironically calls European civilization (pp. 29 and 31). The bilateral meeting between Njoroge and Steven Howlands implies that Steven has always been concerned about his socio-political manacles which denied him an opportunity to relate with other people on the

basis of colour. With Peter, the first born son, the narrator reports that he together with his sister were sent to England to study, but then the second world war not only interfered with his vocational aspirations, but also just like Mwangi who is Njoroge's brother, he too was killed. By extension, the young man died not out of his patriotic spirit or martyrdom, but because of the decisions of the elderly members of his society. This brings about another cause for sympathizing with Ngugi's youth.

With his death, the reader further, witnesses another form of women and girl children's rights violation and subversion which is engineered while they are in their formative years. While Howlands is more concerned about Peter as the rightful heir of his land, his concern translates into a very important statement of political economy and gender struggle (p.32). It introduces another youth who is covertly victimized because of gender. A closer analysis of the two characters in the two novels is loaded with subversion and the re-ordering of the world through egalitarianism. As mentioned earlier on, gender oppression also operates as imperialism and even gerontocracy. It thrives on the subversion of the "othered" sex/subaltern. It prescribes, subconsciously though, that the "inferior" be economically deprived. For instance, it achieves the relegation of women to dependency by appropriating lesser economic property to them while the masculine are predestined to an opulent life which can even afford them to own as many women as they want later in life. Evidence to the assertion above has already been provided on the issue of inter-textuality between the representations of the land allocation in *Weep Not Child* and *Cry the Beloved Country* as well as the comment on the Irish potato famine.

The link between the aforementioned poverty and dependency engineering strategies in the lives of women revolves around the appropriation of property along gender lines. At the cultural level, in the context of numerous African ethnic groups, land, just like in the case of Mr. Howlands, would belong to and be distributed by the men. In an agrarian economy setting, women are the ones who normally own chickens while men own sheep, goats, cattle, donkeys and horses. With these gender inclined socio-economic arrangements, women are inevitably predestined to poverty; dependency, and oppression become the *modus operandi*. Their poverty becomes a managerial tool wielded by men. For instance, the arrangement entails that woman would be the ones to offer the slaughtering of a chicken as this would be her domain in the economic

realm of the household. Consequently, this brings about asymmetrical power relations. To the children, this arrangement automatically suggests, in the strongest of terms, the male as the desired sex.

Among its side effects is the engendered perception that children, on one hand, both boys and girls would eat below their satisfaction every time the mother has ordered the slaughtering of a chicken. On the other hand, men would slaughter sheep or goats which are bigger in size compared to the chicken. Inevitably, this would subconsciously exult the masculine over the feminine as the man is the one who is always associated with an adequate satisfaction of the basic need, food; especially meat, which is a rarity in the children's everyday menu.

With this background, it becomes fair to conclude that the apportioning of land to Peter and not to the daughter is a manifestation of the re-invention of the poverty cycle against the feminine members of the human species. What it means is that Howlands' daughter is already predestined to the position of a weak economic partner in her future marriage, should she be fortunate to find a man in the world where women to man's ratio is another problem. With young black ladies of her age group, the situation becomes even worse as textual evidence in the cases of Wariinga and Wanja and Guthera in the novels after *Weep Not Child* has proved.

4.5 The contribution of youth towards the liberation of Kenya

4.5.1 Introduction

This section of the chapter focuses on Ngugi's representation of youth as reflected in his three novels; *The River_Between*, *Weep Not Child* and *Petals of Blood*. The characters involved in this chapter are Waiyaki, Muthoni, Nyambura, Njoroge, Boro, Kiari, Ndugire, Abdulla, Mukami and Ole Maasai. Note well, the plots of the three novels mentioned above are mainly realised out by the youth.

We begin this section by stating that the struggle against colonization in Africa should not just be viewed as a replacement of the white government by a Black one. This is supported by the fact that a broader picture of political history has recorded a number of political struggles in which governments were dethroned and enthroned. This

immediately brings to mind, the Russian and the French revolutions. These revolutions were not carried out by black people trying to oust Europeans, but were role played by Europeans/Whites against fellow Europeans. One therefore, wishes to express struggle in a broader perspective to avoid a myopic view of struggle as a declaration of war (military) against a white regime. Revolution which is another sense of political struggle includes among other senses, liberation or one should rather state that liberation itself is the summit of revolution. This, therefore, includes altering power relations in all aspects of life; breaking free from the domesticating ideology of the ruling class and the redistribution of wealth which normally begins with land. In the novels above, Ngugi's youths are represented as knowledgeable individuals about the affairs of their land. They are also represented as agents who can raise each other's awareness on issues of social unity, which is a necessary condition for decolonization.

4.5.2 The contribution of youth towards the liberation of Kenya in *The River Between*

The characters of focus here include: Kamau and Kinuthia, Waiyaki, Muthoni and Nyambura. Between the two boys, Kamau and Kinuthia who are fighting at the beginning of this novel (p.4), one observes the signs of disintegration whose root cause is colonization. This event itself provides occasion for the role of intervention by the youth and the reader's glimpse of what the youth can contribute towards social organization which is necessary for a collective reaction to their exigencies as victims of imperialism. This conflict introduces Waiyaki, the younger character whose first challenge is to change the mindset of his peers. The conflict itself is laudable as it manifests the interest and awareness of the youths towards the eminent danger confronting their own people. It also creates an opportune moment for the introduction of a youth leader who is even relied upon by the elderly character. Already blessed by the author with charisma, Waiyaki makes these boys realise that they are *comrades* (p.7). The word "comrades" itself already presupposes a certain level of consciousness and *praxis* on the part of this youth. It already identifies him as a political activist. Indeed, from the very beginning, the author represents him as a symbol of hope not only for Chege, his father who commissioned him earlier as we have seen. He is being true to his people as his father alerted him to the responsibility of acquiring education, so that he can help his people in the words: "Arise, heed the prophecy, go to the mission place. Learn all wisdom and all the secrets of the white

man. But do not follow his vices. Be true to your people and the ancient rites.” (p.20). This is an explicit declaration of this youth as a beacon of hope amidst the imperial invasion which is evidently assailing the Gikuyu people.

To Waiyaki, the struggle is not only about war, but it includes even the re-organization of the society which begins with the mind. It is; therefore, important that he should get formal education. This young person is represented by the author as a beacon of hope to the elder generation and he must be exposed to the current mode of enlightenment to avoid the condition expressed in Mbuli (1989:34) as he states in his native language:

Ukulimala kwe nqondo, ukulimala komuntu.

Ukulimala komuntu, ukulimala komndeni.

Ukulimala komndeni, ukulimala komphakathi.

Ukulimala komphakathi, ukulimala kwesizwe.

Loosely translated, Mbuli's lines mean that national destruction begins with the mind of an individual and progresses in a linear pattern, to the family and then the community and eventually to the community and then culminating with the whole nation.

Against this background, without sacrificing the future, the youth are represented as preservers of their national identity and culture. Waiyaki, the young character, is forced to wrestle with a culture imposed by the missionaries while at the same time attempting to reconcile the two. His struggle results from the ignorance of the missionaries whose zeal is accompanied by their bringing of both religion and formal education to Africa. With the two institutions mentioned above comes cultural superiority. The result is that in the process of living together with the Africans, there is some sort of *Social Darwinism* occurring. Guggelberger (1985) explains *Social Darwinism* as a social relationship whereby the culture of the superior nation or race is imposed on the lesser fortunate one. In his context, the occidental culture is exulted at the expense of the indigenous one. This results from the fact that Livingstone, the European missionary, does not want to learn anything from the culture of the black people. He; therefore, makes uninformed decisions about the institution of initiation. This study parallels this myopia, but this time around, it represents the youth as those people the elderly

members of societies have stopped learning from, and through this young man, Ngugi represents them as deserving audience from the elderly also.

Waiyaki is represented as a natural leader. His activism is “opportuned” by the plight of his people. That is to say, he is driven from within and does not wait until he is elected. When the withdrawal of education happens, Waiyaki, the youth, immediately intervenes in favour of the native children. This quest is compatible to that of many reformers. An example thereof is found in Fugard’s Mr. Myalatlja in *My Children My Africa* (1989). He bears a personality which is inline with the clarion call explicitly stated even in a Setswana novel entitled *Omphile Omphi Modise* by D.P. Monyaise (1965). In this novel, Monyaise insists that formal education is the way for the modern dispensation.

The youth’s power as a social redeemer gets occasioned by the expulsion of African children from a euro-centric missionary school. When this happens, we see Waiyaki being represented in the ideological and spiritual similitude which characterizes historical characters such as Du Bois (2008:69) who is often quoted as having insisted that: “Progress in human affairs is more of a turn and push, a surging forward of the exceptional man, and the lifting of his duller brethren slowly and painfully to his vantage –ground”. (p.68). Waiyaki has taken this sense of “agentativeness” upon himself to establish the Marioshooni schools and this then places him on a similar ideological platitude with Du Bois who further insists that: “If the negro was to learn, he must teach himself, and the most help that could be given to him was the establishment of schools to train negro teachers (Dubois, 2008:69). This is Waiyaki’s quest.

Through this system of education, which is Afro-centric in orientation, not only, does he provide an alternative to missionary schooling, but he also consciously defends initiation and circumcision as elements of nationhood preservation of the endangered African identity as he insists:

Circumcision was an important ritual to the tribe. It was the core of the social structure, and a something that gave meaning to a man's life. End the custom, and the spiritual basis of the tribe's cohesion and integration would be no more. (p.35)

The young man is further represented as a progressive nationalist who is conscious of what he should and should not adopt from the west. He is not gullible towards the encroaching ideology of westernization which competes with the African one for the mind of the Kenyan child. However, he is not as idealistic as to say everything from outside Kenya or unknown to his ancestors is evil. Waiyaki still believes in learning something from other fellow human beings from the other corners of "his planet". This is an attribute of youth which is also represented by Head (1971) through another younger character, Dikeledi, who was presented as being ready to learn even from a member of a low class filthy tribe, the Basarwa [sic], who were loathed by her own people (p.20). This reflects yet another laudable of Waiyaki's quest.

This young character continues to be a beacon of hope to his people as he brings education to their children. In one instance, the community is evidently perceiving him as a leader as they express their excitement about what Waiyaki is turning their children into. The narrator shares this with the reader in the following words: "Children caught the enthusiasm of their parents. Perhaps they saw that they were the hope and glory of the tribe (p.68)." This is yet another textual evidence which supports the thesis of this study, and it comes as the earliest evidence of trust that Ngugi demonstrates towards the younger generation. The young man is actually being associated with the likes of Julius Nyerere who was renowned as *Mwalimu*, the teacher. His contribution prepares the African child, for participation in a new mode of economy brought by the colonial regime. On the basis of the above, it becomes justifiable to conclude that textual evidence suggests that Waiyaki is a progressive candidate for social transformation.

Two other young activists in the novel under discussion are Joshua's daughters, Muthoni and Nyambura. Outstanding in their personalities is their mental fortitude and heightened critical minds. These youths do not only show rejection of ideological fetters, but they challenge them where they find the need. That is to say, they go beyond resistance and attend their situation by confrontation and passive resistance. Their activism is manifested in yet another State Ideological Apparatus, religion. In spite of their gender and their upbringing under an ideology of patriarchy, which is at the core of their social orientation, the two young women do not succumb to the whims and interpretation of the Bible by their father who is assimilated into the powerful culture. Against her father's will, Muthoni enrolls at an initiation school to express

independence and “rebellion” from her father. Her rebellion is not actually directed at her father, but his fanatic and alienating reverence of the dominant culture. Compared to that of Bazarov, the nihilist, in Turgenev’s *Fathers and Sons* (1965), this rebellion is positive. Like Chege and Waiyaki, she believes in cultural blending and not assimilation or annihilation. Muthoni states: “I am still a Christian, see a Christian in the tribe. Look, I am a woman and will grow big and healthy in the tribe.” (p.53). In this confession and statement of resolve, she is represented as a mature voice whose view of Christianity is not actually warsome, but affirming the good in it. Her resolution demonstrates both staying true to the nation and transitivity which are positive attributes of being young. The inference drawn here is supported by response to Amoti and Irumba (1980) as he states:

I wrote The River Between first. I had come from a mission school and was deeply Christian. I used to go to church at 5 o’ clock in the morning and was quite sure my destiny lay in heaven and not hell. In school, I was quite concerned with trying to remove the central Christian doctrine from the dress of western culture and seeing how they could be crafted onto the culture of our people. The River Between was concerned with this process. (p.181).

Against the quotation above which also shows that Ngugi’s writing about youth is realistic, that is to say, it mirrors the contribution of youth without exaggeration, we can conclude that the young lady’s position about Christianity is founded and qualifies her to contribute to a pool of ideas which every society can benefit from its youth. Her view of Christianity demonstrates the youth’s capacity to interact with all sources of knowledge at a critical level.

Muthoni's sister, Nyambura, whose name means ‘she of rain’ and therefore being an omen of prosperity and goodwill among the Gikuyu and most Bantu ethnic groups, is equally disturbed by her father's fanaticism about Christianity. The narrator mirrors her frustration in the following words:

Day by day she was becoming weary of Joshua's brand of religion. She; however, knew that she had to have a God who would give her a fullness of life, a God who would still her restless

soul. So she clung to the church because, he had died on the tree, love for all people blazing out of his sad eyes (p.117).

This theological insight provided by the young woman who does not have any theological training is a re-expression of the African theological quest in the diaspora. The representation of her ideas connects or rather associates her with social reformers such as Lovett Leonard, a professor of Religion and Society at the Oral Roberts University in Oklahoma who in the foreword of a book entitled *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia* by Otabil (1992: XI), states that: "I remember the economy engendered by sharecropping that forever kept us in bondage. We were taken from school to harvest crops..."

Leonard continues:

Added to this was the presentation of a blonde, blue-eyed, Europeanized Christ, the product of the artist's imagination. We tried to trust this Christ, but way down in our hearts something was lacking. Once, we discovered the manly Christ of the scripture, we became dissatisfied with a Europeanized Christ that did not square up with our manhood. We longed for a Christ who could break the bonds of oppression and set the captives free. We longed for a God who would keep His word, regardless of what it took; a God who was bound to His people by covenant (p.xi).

The reader's admiration of Nyambura as a force in politics and particularly theology grows stronger when read against another important point by Leonard who states:

...the Euro-American hegemony on biblical scholarship has been broken and that God is using the offspring of those who did not participate in the African Diaspora. Biblical conversation is now developing from those persons who have been labeled the "wretched of the earth." (p.xii).

Interesting enough, this Theologian concludes his observation with the language which presupposes an encounter with Frantz Fanon's seminal work, *The Wretched of*

the Earth. This re-interpretation of the scriptures which is similar to the quest expressed in South Africa's *Kairos* document is referred to as Black Theology, a branch of Contextual/liberation Theology which is promulgated by Frank Chikane in his autobiography entitled *No life of my own* (1988). It is a branch of theology which rejects the use of the Bible as a tool for oppression. Reading the utterances of the young woman against the theologians mentioned above represents youth as agents of a shift in theological paradigm. It further demonstrates that youth possess the capacity to participate in the mental liberation of their societies. We take the story of Chikane further to demonstrate the extent to which this youth's activism should be appreciated.

In this biography, Chikane who was the pastor of Faith mission church in Kagiso-Krugersdorp remembers his 1987 to 1988 detention under the Terrorism Act in which he asked for the police officer in charge of him to bring him the Bible into his cell. To this request, the law enforcement agent of the apartheid South African regime refused on the grounds that: "*Dit maak jou 'n terroris...*" (p.73). In English, this Afrikaans statement means, "It (the Bible) makes you a terrorist". The statement made it clear to Chikane that the regime believed that the Bible did not domesticate him. To Chikane, it rather made it "...clear that, for them, like all oppressive regimes, the Bible helps only if it makes you submissive to the dictates of the oppressor." (p.73). With this in view, Ngugi's young character under discussion is therefore represented as a "disturber" of hegemonic interpretations of the Bible.

Not only is the young woman geared towards the rejection of the domesticating doctrine held by her father, but she also represents the Bible as a source of hope. She is also optimistic, visionary and informed. Her opinion about the future of Kenya is that of a global, racial, tribal and gender harmony as well as peaceful co-existence. Drawing from her Bibliocentric schemata, Nyambura, clings on to the allegorical teaching of the prophet Isaiah as he states:

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the calf and the lion and the fatling and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like ox. And the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice

den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas (p.134).

Nyambura's vision of the world to come is in itself an embodiment of a global brotherhood/sisterhood, which is actually desired by world leaders as a strategy to bring about a socialist order of egalitarianism in all aspects of life. Her promulgation of a contextualized Christianity evidently provides to her soul, a solution for her world which is plagued with capitalism, cultural Darwinism, patriarchy, racism and class bigotry. She contextualizes the scriptures and thereby promotes a Theology of liberation. This branch of Theology postulates that an individual's socio-economic circumstances as well as history should be researched or taken into cognizance before they are taught about life in the hereafter. In his book entitled *The Church Struggle in Africa*, De Gruchy states that, "It has been a failure of European colonial Historians to write about the African history as though it began with the arrival of Portuguese explorers in the sixteenth century and the Dutch settlers in the next (De Gruchy, 1990:1). In the quotation above, Nyambura is reacting to the imposition of the white missionaries' European culture disguising as Christianity. In its stead, she eschews a Black Theology which according to Allen Boesak "...is the reflection of Black Christians on the situation on which they live and on their struggle for liberation" (cited in De Gruchy 1990:153).

Another modern view giving relevance to Nyambura's revolutionary view of Christ is the fact that, it symbolizes the yearning of religious fervour prevalent during the re-interpretation of the Bible. Her interpretation resonates with that of the martyred Biko (1978), who insists that, "Young people would like to feel that they can interpret Christianity and extract from it messages relevant to them and their situation without being stopped by orthodox limitations." This is what led to the reformation of a movement which in Europe engendered the spirit of nationalism and led to the Protestantism which people such as John Hus and Martin Luther among the others championed. Nyambura's re-interpretation of the Bible resonates with that of Steve Biko himself who once claimed:

We believe that our Christ is the God who cannot leave sin to reign in church without being challenged. It grapples with an existentialist problem and does not claim a theology of absolutes. It seeks to bring back the black man and the truth of his situation, for this is an important aspect of Black consciousness, for quite a proportion of black people are still Christians and still swimming in a mire of confusion-aftermath of missionary approach (Biko, 1978: 104).

Biko adds that Black Theology ... aims to describe Christ as a fighting God, not a passive one. This worldview is similar to the one held by Nyambura above. This younger character's ideological and doctrinal progressiveness gains a more revolutionary nature when juxtaposed with Biko's words. In the same *memoire*, which is written long after the publication of the novel, Steve Biko further adds that: "No nation can win a battle without faith, and if our faith in our God is spoiled by our having to see Him through the eyes of the same people we are fighting, then there obviously begins to be something wrong in that relationship."(p.64). This view authenticates that of Nyambura above, and it creates a necessary association between this youth and an icon of liberation in South Africa.

Further probing into her name as a character raises hope. Her name prognosticates new life and sustenance. In the milieu which has produced this novel, that is the African culture, especially among the Gikuyu's and their fellow Bantus, rain is perceived as the cleanser of the environment. It ushers the freshness of nature. It is also viewed as a good omen as can be seen from the optimism following Kenyatta's trial in *Weep Not Child* (p.72) Her interpretation of the Bible models the *praxis* that Ngugi realizes through Wanja, Njoroge, Boro, Karega, Mukami, Kamiti and the majority of the youth in his post-colonial fiction. What is more important about it is that, it silences dictatorial voices in Theology.

4.5.3 The contribution of youth towards the liberation of Kenya in *Weep Not Child*

In *Weep Not Child*, Ngugi shows that the youth view revolution not only in terms of armed struggle, but also as an act of demolishing all imperialistic fetters unleashed at the *psyche* of the colonized. The example we have here is of Njoroge who goes to school with the intention of salvaging his family and society. He views education as a panacea against evils such as landlessness, joblessness and illiteracy which his family and his people are suffering from. He expresses this view to another visionary youth, his elder brother Kamau who also wants to acquire carpentry skills with which he can redeem the family from poverty. Njoroge suggests that Kamau should go to school and acquire education. His desire is to be like Jomo Kenyatta, the president of The Kenyan African Union (KAU) whose learning has made him a national hero and philanthropist. The narrator states: "The drudgery of such a life made him fear a future that held in store such a purposeless living and weariness. He clung to books and whatever the school had to offer." (p.48)

This resolution which is synonymous to that of Waiyaki is analogous to the one that was held by one of the founding fathers of the Negro emancipation, Booker T. Washington (cited in Johnson: 1965). In addition, the quotation above expresses the fact that Njoroge understands poverty and the relief that formal education can bring. He is ready and willing to change his condition of poverty. This young character does not allow the socio-economic conditions to decide his fate; neither does he intend to get education for personal salvation.

We further gather an important aspect of his altruism in his dialogue with his brother. Their dialogue reveals something- a sharing of ideas. In response to the plea of his brother going to school, Kamau advises: Don't you worry about me? Everything will be all right. Get education, I'll get carpentry. Then we shall, in the future, be able to have a new and better home for the whole family (*Weep*, p.21).

The above statement sheds some light into the view of humanity or society at a family level. Here, the two youths, with Kamau being more articulate and mature, have a sense of selflessness, which raises them above some elderly characters such as Jacobo in *Weep Not Child* and Ezekieli in *Petals of Blood*. They exude the final stage

of Kohlberg's moral reasoning which is called altruism. As agents of revolution, these youths are not influenced by self-centeredness, egocentrism and greed. They strive for collective benefit and common good. This is best learnt from their conversations which in most cases reveals their victimizing condition and wisdom at the same time. For instance, in one of these conversations, Kamau shows some objectivity and non-racialism of the youth as he is able to point out to his younger brother that the poverty of the natives is not caused by the imperial race only, but there are some rich black people who do not want to see fellow black people rising above them. This observation is also voiced by Mandoza, a Kwaito musician in South Africa in the lines: "*Umntu o mnyama aka funi uku bona u muntu o mnyama aya phezulu or phambili, maar why?* (A Black man does not want to see a black man rising or showing progress. Why is this...?). The observation of the two youths is confirmed to by Fidel Castro in an interview with Betto (1995). In this interview, Fidel is cynical about rich people's willingness to share what they have with the lesser fortunate. In order to support his position, three stories of social justice are shared and they include: a rich young man who was a saint obeying all commandments, but decided not to follow Christ after Jesus had commanded him to go and sell what he had and give to the poor. The other one is that of John the Baptist who preached that "He who has two coats, let him share with him whom has none; and he who has food; let him do likewise (p.228). None of those who were listening complied. He believes that Christ did not choose the rich to preach the doctrine, but the poor which to him were the proletariat and he concludes that: "... Marx could have subscribed to the Sermon on the Mount" (p.230). Kamau's mindset which is admired by Njoroge is foretelling of the youth agitation for socialism as a solution to both colonial and post-colonial Kenya. It is an anti-thesis of the type of Christianity which leads elderly characters such as Kimeria (*Petals of Blood, 1977*) to take advantage of the poor such as Wanja, and it further marks a contrast between Mr. Howlands, their father's employee and Ezekiel Waweru who exploits his fellow Blacks in *Petals of Blood*.

At the intellectual level, Kamau contributes greatly. His view of relations is clear and his mental outlook foretells the role the youth will play even in future. In a conversation with his younger brother Njoroge, he utters two more important aphorisms. The first one comes at the time when Njoroge is expressing his naivety which in some way is ominous and forewarns his reader. His question is Pan Africanist and he expresses

his disappointment at some Africans such as Nganga who is his elder brother's tutor, but subverting his vocational progress and thereby taking sides with the forces of oppression in interfering with the brother's ontological development. It is after he has expressed the concern that Kamau aphoristically explains, "Blackness is not all that makes a man" (p.31). This is a loaded statement whose worth is tantamount to the panacea of the post-liberation state. While other characters only think of getting rid of the white man on partially holding the white race responsible for the black man's impoverishment, he deals with the myth which has the potential to induce inertia in the face of corruption spearheaded by indigenous leaders after liberation. This youth is further being represented as predisposed to an objective judgment of humanity. The end of his struggle is not to demonize the Whites which dissociate him from Malcolm X (1964) who under the influence of Muhammad Elija, succumbed to the temptation of using a blanket judgment on Whites. Textual evidence shows that this youth eschews fair-mindedness as he explicitly and openly argues that, "some Europeans are better than some Africans" (p.31). In a political turmoil where prejudice and some logical fallacies are a "daily diet" in the speeches of most emotional politicians, he is alert not to use a logical fallacy called over generalization. His addressee admires him the more as he unravels the intellectual arsenal the youth will demonstrate later in the authors' post-liberation texts. It becomes even more interesting that while on the second of his novels, Ngugi already primes his reader on what he is likely to talk about in the novels after liberation. He pre-represents what the youth are likely to stand for in future novels, especially, the ones set in the post colonial era. This is somehow done prophetically as he does not at this stage foresee a Kenya which might be ruled by betrayers who warrant the attack he launches on them in those novels.

The mental outlook portrayed by Kamau here has its own ramifications. Firstly, it bodes a mindset which is desirable to Ngugi and the sustenance of revolution, a mindset which is likely not to be contorted to the convenience of both the "Napoleons" and the "Squealers" (Orwell, 1945) of the post liberation era. It is a mindset which will never yield to the deception that the presence of a black politician in parliament marks the beginning of the restoration of economic freedom the struggle yearned for. Additionally, it represents him as the youth with the capacity to pursue a no colour bias in the pursuit of social justice. With this attitude, he is further represented as a candidate of the wisdom Gramsci wishes for the sustenance of the post liberation

mental alertness which is requisite for the individual survival and maximization of intellectual output which the ruling class normally wishes to suspend as seen in the quotation by Achebe and Orwell. It would do us some good to quote Gramsci's warning which is acted out by the youth under discussion. Gramsci as cited in (Bourdieu, 2008:174) has observed a similar phenomenon as the novelists above, he states that:

In our party, we have had another aspect of danger to lament: the withering of all individual activity; the passivity of the mass of members; the stupid confidence that there is always somebody else who is thinking of everything and taking care of everything. "Disturbed by their condition of absolute infirmity, lacking any constitutional education, the masses abdicated completely all sovereignty and all power.

Read against the quotation by Kamau, this youngman's predisposition turns him into an individual who is likely to resist a plea for the subconscious abdication of his critical faculty and the will to life which are requisite to fanaticism in politics. This observation becomes more hallowed as it parallels the one by Wariinga and Kamiti in later novels. In their situation, this could be achieved only through metaphysical intervention. What it relates about him and further proves that he is insulate/impermeable to the impact of the *Machiavellian* strategy of disguise and dishonesty which he counsils the prince to rely on as most people do not want to touch but to have a surface reality of things. Kamau is represented as a youth with the capacity to preserve his sense of discretion which Gramsci views as an element of self-preservation and the rejection of mental slavery which is usually made possible by displaced trust and allegiance.

Yet another youth represented as a beacon of hope in this novel is Boro, who is Kamau and Njoroge's elder brother. In this novel, his contribution is revolutionary in the conceptual sense of the word. From the beginning of the novel, he is worried by the death of his brother Mwangi who had died in the Second World War. He is also angry towards the elderly members of his society for not revolting against their socio-economic and political *status quo*. Consequently, this brings about a conflict between him and his father.

His father's inertia stems from the prophecy made by the prophet Mugo wa Kibero. According to this prophecy, the Whites would leave the land on their own. He cannot wait for the prophecy to happen; he becomes indignant and angry towards his father as the narrator captures him in the following phrase "...To hell with the prophecy." (p.27). This attitude towards the *status quo* is typical of youth. Ngugi appreciates it, and it is even evident in the name he gives to one of his younger characters-Kihika. According to Ngugi, this name means "he who is in a hurry." Ngugi does explicitly state this in the interview with the researcher that Kihika was in a hurry for freedom. In the South African context, this revolutionary attitude towards socio-political and economic justice is normally expressed by the African National Congress Youth League in their slogan "economic freedom now". The insight into how his people lost the land to the British settlers forces him to join the *Ihii Cia Mutitu* (Freedom boys of the forest), which is a military wing of the K.A.U. The parenthetical information demonstrates the extent to which the youth and not the elderly characters contribute towards the liberation of Kenya, and Boro becomes a symbol of youth as a force in the social political life of Kenya. Unlike his father, he is freed from the superstitious understanding of the white people who have so far been thought to be demigods. This is probably because he has been to the war where he has seen white people being killed and he has probably, like the Barber's son, also had sex with the white women (p.9). This proximity with the white race has obviously granted him a demythologized view of this race. Additionally, Boro goes to Nairobi where he becomes active in politics. Not only does he begin to understand the affairs of the land, but he also brings with him, another young and knowledgeable *comrade* called Kiarie who is our focus for the following discussion.

Through Kiarie, Ngugi represents his youth in a manner which shows that they are not idealistic and naive, but as people with a sense of direction, who are also concerned and passionate about the dilemma of their nation. Kiarie is brought to Kipanga to address a rally in which Pan Africanism is unraveled and preached as a new and yet old truth by which the Kenyan people should begin to live. As an African country, Kenya had also fallen victim to what historians call "The Scramble for Africa". This youth becomes a preacher of the reversal of the situation in which Ngotho, an elderly character, is entrapped. Taking an epistemological and historical route towards their dilemma, in his national campaign for self-determination, Kiarie puts things into perspective in his oratory, as he asserts:

All the land belonged to the people - black people. They had been given it by God for every race had their country. The Indians had India-Europe had Europe. And Africans had Africa, the land of the black people. (p.57)

This nationalistic way of perceiving social order is didactic and persuasive. Kiarie understands himself and his country's history. In his speech, he uses rhetorical questions and he brings into his speech some metaphysical elements such as the fact that the land was given to their ancestors, Mumbi and Gikuyu' by Murungu (God) so as to justify why it is necessary for the people to fight. He appeals to them by drawing some points from his and their cultural background. He achieves this by mentioning their ancestral lineage. Kiarie continues to unravel how their alienation from their land came into being. In the lines below he further states that:

Later, our fathers were taken captive in the big war whose cause they never knew, and when they came back. Their land had been taken away for a settlement of the white soldiers... our people were taken and forced to work for the settlers. (p.57)

The youth above is historicizing the problem and he attempts to arouse the consciousness of his audiences towards the cause of their problem. In an attempt to achieve that the author represents him as an orator who is empowered by his observation of what is called *Kairos*. This concept of Rhetoric refers to an observation of the element of time and situation in speech delivery. Failure to observe it leads to anachronisms and consequent aversion from the audiences (Keith & Lundberg, 2008:13). Kiarie's speech which is Garveyist in orientation exhibits the attributes of a true political movement as he articulates and disseminates the ideology of the struggle and its historical background and thereby sensitizes his audiences to their immediate realities. He also unravels the Marxist assertion that the material is the foundation of political and social abuse which is characteristic of an imperialistic and capitalistic social order. At the end of rendering his speech, people such as Ngunjiri are already angry about their situation and therefore his inferences speak directly to their exigencies.

At the cognitive *praxis*, he articulates the basic assumptions of the struggle/revolution as well as the world view and the goals of the Pan Africanist revolutionary movement. His credibility is enhanced by the author who infuses his personality and speech with the three intrinsic arguments postulated by Aristotle. These are: *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos* (Fauconnier (1985)). His moving speech distinguishes him as possessing the very essence of Aristotle's rhetoric. This makes him even more admirable without having read him before. The Aristotelian strategy above is explained below.

The first is called *Logos* and it means the logical proof. The second is called *pathos* and it refers to the emotions and frame of mind and finally, there is *Ethos* which refers to the speaker's reliability. The applause Kiarie receives while addressing the meeting attended at Kipanga attests to the ability of the youth to communicate his message with a fair if not highly successful degree of competence. A closer observation at it shows that there is a balance of these rhetorical devices. The trait which comes to the surface here is oratory. His speech gains more authority and awe as it balances elements of yet another set of rhetorical method Aristotle outlines as: *Inventio* which means the gathering of information, then he classifies it neatly into two categories for the consumption of his audiences the first one is *Disposito-* which means classification of information, it is followed by *elocution-* which means formulation, and action delivery, and then *Memoria* which means memorization. Category B of these elements includes *Docere* which means to instruct and inform. The second one is *Movere* which means to set in motion and place; it also means to please. Having said that, we now are able to make reference to the first text which is a fictional account, *Weep Not Child*, the story telling session in which Njoroge, the father of the protagonist, Njoroge, narrates how the Gikuyu people came to own the land legitimizes the occupation of the land by the Gikuyu people and simultaneously disputes the ethical grounds of occupation by the British and their "surrogates". His story leads to a conclusion that the Kikuyus are native to the land. However, he does not exude a revolutionary attitude towards the status *quo*. It is his other son, Boro, who gets explicitly confrontational to the alienating relations they have with the land. Boro becomes the embodiment of what most Kenyans are experiencing, a pain which craves action. So when Kiarie uses the issue of land, he has directly appealed to the problem of Kenyans and this makes him a skillful orator. It can; therefore, be inductively concluded that; his *inventio* is precise.

The speech leads to a complete paradigm shift in the politics of Kipanga. This is ignited by the action of Ngotho against Jacobo, a chief and a collaborator with the repressive system. It must; however, be mentioned that Ngotho's action does not stem solely from Kiarie's speech. The seed of decent has first been planted in him by another youth, his own son, Boro. By inference, it is the youth who put pressure on him. His attack on Jacobo is a simultaneous and appropriate response to the challenges of correcting the socio-political *status quo* as well as his image. This should be entirely credited to youth.

This story has similar perlocutionary force to the audiences as the one allegedly told by NoNxause, a young Xhosa girl who told the Xhosas to burn their cattle and fields, and then sit and wait for the ancestors to come and free them from the invading Whites. The two stories have an almost similar effect on those who believed them. Their enemies triumphed because of their belief system. It is against this backdrop that Ngugi through younger characters, eschews an existentialist view of religion - be it modern or traditional. A questioning attitude towards life in general is encouraged, and in this instance, this idea is communicated through the youth-Boro.

Using association as an analytical and literary appreciation tool, it becomes more interesting to see how Ngugi imbues Kiarie with rhetorical ingenuity associated with the Black American civil writer Martin Luther King. The rhetorical skill referred to here is the use of a pause whose purpose is to make a point sink into the reader's mind. In his famous speech, "I have a dream" Martin Luther King Junior uses these pauses to create anticipation. O'Hair and Steward (1999: 261) define a pause during a speech event as a strategic element of speech that enhances meaning by providing a type of punctuation, emphasizing a point, drawing attention to a key thought, or just allowing listeners a moment to contemplate what is being said.

At the level of *invention*, Kiarie shows himself well vested with the conventions of persuasion. He has researched the Pan African revolutionary tenets which include the restoration of the land which is a reaction necessitated by the illegal occupation of the lands of Africans by Europeans. His reigning concern is Marxist in nature and constitutes the base, land. This is the *substratum* of human existence which the Africans who form his audiences have been deprived of. This youth is being

represented as being in touch with his people's exigencies, an important attribute of a leader. His speech evokes the memories of loss through evictions and forced removals which are still vivid in the minds of most Kenyans at the time of the speech. Two sources which bear evidence to this claim, memories of loss, are *Weep Not Child*, the text within which the speech is represented and the author's (Ngugi) biography entitled, *Dreams in a Time of War* (2011). His speech is yet another act of remembering Africa Ngugi talks about in his *memoir*, *Something Torn and New: An African Renaissance* (Ngugi, 2012)

In this speech, this younger activist's energy and curiosity are voluntarily channeled into a fruitful, communal and nationalistic venture. From the day of the speech onwards, the village was never the same and those who have been collaborators with the oppressor, such as Jacobo are finally "weeded out" of society. The same panacea is prescribed by the author and carried out by the youth in his post-colonial novels which will be discussed hence forth.

The second evidence of land loss is non-fictional, and therefore, historical. In the *memoir* mentioned above, Ngugi states that while he was still at alliance school and coming back home for holidays he found his family at Kamirithu and not at the usual place where he had left them; they had been forcibly removed to the new concentration village by the imperialist government. His speech does indeed set his audiences in motion. It is his speech which ushers a new era in Kipanga, and by igniting action in Ngotho as it wrenches him apart from the inertia imposed by indigenous religion on him.

4.5.4 The contribution of youth towards the liberation of Kenya in *Petals of Blood*

In this novel, there are a number of young people such as Ole Maasai, Mukami and Abdulla who also participate in the revolution. Although the novel is written in postcolonial Africa, Ngugi uses a literary technique called flashback to create a background for his motif in this postcolonial story. The following discussion focuses on Abdulla, Ndigure, Mukami and Ole Maasai whose actions portray them as agents of social reconstruction. Abdulla becomes a guerrilla after taking the oath at Batani. Mukami is the daughter of Ezekieli, a rich landowner in whose land Miriamu the mother

of Karega and Ndigure is a tenant. She breaks the class distinction between herself and Karega by falling in love with Karega against the will of her father.

Ngugi's veneration and sympathy towards youth is manifest in how he represents another young character, Ole Maasai. Ole Maasai, whose name means son of a warrior, is born of a young village girl who suffers sexual abuse by an Asian trader called Rhamjee Ramlagoon Dharamasha. He grows up hating himself for being partly Indian and partly African. This may sound racist, however the context of his birth here is being described and not prescribed. That is to say, Ngugi does not imply that it is wrong to have a relationship with Indians or White. His father does send him money to spend for his day-to-day needs, but it is not enough. He becomes disillusioned and starts bunking classes, playing some dice, cheating and fighting. With Ole Maasai, Ngugi also goes to the root of juvenile delinquency and represents him sympathetically by providing his unfortunate social background. This background bears similarities with that of Tupac Shakur who in his song *Thugz Mansion* (Track 2) complains that:

*No one knows my struggle,
They only see the trouble,
Unknowing, it's hard to carry on
When no one loves you,
Picture me inside the misery of poverty,
No man alive has ever witnessed the struggles I survived,
Praying hard for better days
Promise to hold on
Me and my dawgs don't have a choice but to roll on.*

Album: better dayz

By Tupac "2PAC" Shakur

Ngugi represents this youth's behavior as springing from a dysfunctional family. He represents him such that it becomes evident to the reader that his behavior is the result to satisfy survival and satisfaction of primary needs inhibit moral development. However, Ole still manages to redirect his physical prowess and aggression to an act of collective salvation. This is how it happens. One day, he is given a parcel to deliver

to a man that would be within the vicinity of the mosque. He falls and trips only to discover that the parcel he is delivering is actually a revolver. When he is about to present the parcel, two European policemen arrest the man he is supposed to give the parcel to. He draws at them and shouts so that all the people could see him kill what the racial politics of his time declares enemies. In order to boost the confidence of his people, the oppressed, who by now have begun to perceive their oppressors as invincible, Ole decides to humiliate the oppressors publicly and thereby simultaneously re-order the perception his people have always had about the Caucasian race, who are in this context, enemies of the people. He is eventually killed on the day their battalion attempts to capture a garrison at Nakuru town. His death is yet another act of altruism, heroism and sacrifice that the martyred Kihika has prescribed in an earlier novel. Abdulla who is also on the battle survives, but he loses a leg from a gunshot. The death and wounding of the two youths have been made possible by Kimeria Hawkins an elderly native character who has connived with the imperialist regime and helped them to achieve partial victory over his own people as mentioned above.

4.6 Conclusion

In the light of the points discussed above, it can be concluded that Ngugi has sympathy towards the youth. The first sub-section of this discussion shows that even the names this author gives to his characters, both young and old, gives a clue towards the age that he is writing in favour of as well as the one he is writing not so much in favour of. With that established, Ngugi then explicitly represented the youth as a force which is similar to the real life youths discussed in the literature review. He has also represented them not only as victims, but as an age group whose lives suffer because of the elderly members of society. As further support for the thesis, Ngugi also represented them as the hope of other members of society who happened to be adults. This representation has the capacity to create some positive predisposition towards the youth who have also been represented as having taken part in the liberation of Kenya.

5. CHAPTER 5: YOUTH AS VICTIMS OF POST-COLONIAL BETRAYAL

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a premise that there are socio-political determinants of behaviour. Against this observation, it is therefore argued that character studies including Ngugi's characters cannot be conducted in isolation from the forces that shape it. The assertion above is informed by Badat who quotes Marx stating that, "men make their history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past" (Badat, 2009:4). It is actually believed even by Ngugi himself that: "colonialism attacks and completely distorts a people's relation to their natural, bodily, economic, political and cultural base." (Ngugi, 2009: 29).

Even after liberation, the youth in most African countries continue to suffer as a result of decisions made by politicians and elderly members of their societies. In this chapter, an attempt to expose the corruption, avarice and egocentrism of the modern political decision makers, and its impact on the ontological development of youth is made. Some background into the circumstances on the socio-political realities would be necessary. The depravity in the personalities of the post-liberation politicians was observed by Shakespeare more than five hundred years ago. In *Julius Caesar* Shakespeare concludes that:

But 'tis common proof, that lowliness is young ambition's ladder wherefore the climber-upward turns his face, But when he once attains the upmost round, he then unto the ladder turns his back, looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees by which he did ascend. (Shakespeare, *Julius Ceaser* Act 2.SCENE 1 .22)

In the statement above, Shakespeare warns his readers on the possibility of betrayal which comes from the philosophy of use and dispose. This is common in politics where the electorates are forgotten immediately after they have given power to the politicians

through their votes. The assertion in the citation above is supported by evidence from observations on post liberation politics. A number of postcolonial writers have warned African politicians and voters concerning their relationship once they have obtained power. These include; Fanon, Armah, Bila and Achebe who is one of Ngugi's peers in African literature. In his novel entitled *A Man of The People*, Achebe (1966) laments that:

We had all been in the rain together until yesterday. Then a handful of us - "the smart" and the lucky and hardly ever the best had scrambled for the one shelter our former rulers left, and had taken it over and barricaded themselves in. And from within they fought to persuade us through numerous loudspeakers that the first phase of the struggle had been won and that the next phase the extension of our house - was even more important and called for new and original tactics; it required that all argument should cease and the whole people speak with one voice and that any more dissent and argument outside the door of the shelter would subvert and break down the whole house (p.37).

The plaintive voice in the quotation above captures the anguish of the citizen of a new liberated African country. Its motif runs through all the novels Ngugi wrote after the liberation of Kenya. Their plots reveal this situation and how the youth who are its victims struggle to overthrow it.

The concerns shared by all the writers mentioned above are validated and given substance by Ngugi's post-colonial novels beginning with *Petals of Blood* and ending with *Wizard of the Crow*. In these novels, the youth have their share of betrayal, misanthropy and abuse in Ngugi's Kenya though in some novels, he uses fictional names in the place of Kenya. Of the many characters in his novels, focus will be on: Wanja (*Petals*), Karega (*Petals*), Joseph (*Petals*) Abdulla (*Petals*), Mukami (*Petals*), Guthera (*Matigari*), Gatuiria (*Devil*), Wariinga (*Devil*), Kamiti (*Wizard*) and Nyawira (*Wizard*). In this section, the reader's attention is drawn to some phrases in the quotation above with the object to foreground signs of disintegration which circumscribe the lives of Ngugi's youths.

Evidence in Ngugi's novels holds both national and global politics responsible for the agentive role they play in the victimization of the youth. It further testifies to the fact that as he viewed in the title of his novel, *Devil on The Cross*, that there is some "recycling" of the conditions the youth suffered under the imperial masters except that the new ruling class has taken it to a higher level. However, this is nothing new to Ngugi's young character Kamau (*Weep*) who foresaw it and expressed it in the statement: "A white man is white man. But a black man trying to be a white man is bad and harsh." (p.21). In the next few paragraphs, we will discuss some of those individuals whose deeds and beliefs can be held accountable for the dehumanization of the masses of the young people populating Ngugi's novels, and by extension, his agents of socio-political amelioration. The accusation aimed at them is based on textual evidence, and the fact that in *Wizard of the Crow*, Ngugi mirrors their *psychosis* as derived from their gullibility manifest in the mental dissonance he describes as *White ache*. This is a phenomenon Kamau referred to without using the concept.

With Ngugi having given the reader a possible cause of the African socio-political decadence which implicates the continent of the former colonizers, the reader is obliged to make inferences on the identity of some individuals. An understanding of the behaviour of Africa's post colonial politicians requires the reader to recourse some extra textual information which can create a broader context for interpreting their *psychosis*. We begin here with an assertion that Based on the fact that during the revolution, most African leaders usually sought advice from the now defunct Soviet Union. An appreciation of the didactic value of this novel is only accesable when it is read against two approaches cited in the methodology chapter. These are Phenomenology and Critical Discourse Analysis. The first suspect among those individuals who might have had tremendous influence on the art of ruling the masses in post liberation Africa is Joseph Stalin. With special reference to *Devil on The Cross*, the reading of Ngugi's post-colonial novels forces the reader to activate the mental files which relate to the relationships that were entered into during the struggle. What immediately comes to mind when the new leaders begin to show disrespect towards their own people is an array of stories and political treatises from the continent where colonialism itself came.

According to one of the novelists of the now defunct Soviet Union, Chingiz Aitmatov as cited by Zachariaz (1994). In this story, Aitmatov states:

On one occasion, Stalin called for a live chicken and proceeded to use it to make an unforgettable point before some of his henchmen. Forcefully clutching the chicken in one hand, with the other, he began to systematically pluck out its feathers. As the chicken struggled in vain to escape, he continued with the painful denuding until the bird was completely stripped. "Now you watch," Stalin said as he placed the chicken on the floor and walked away with some bread crumbs in his hand. Incredibly, the fear – crazed chicken hobbled toward him and clung to the legs of his trousers. Stalin threw a handful of grain to the bird, and as it began to follow him everywhere he then said quietly, "This is the way to rule the people. Did you see how that chicken followed me for food, even though I had caused it such torture? (p.26).

Zachariaz continues, "With that promised debasement, Stalin reduced humanity to the level of animals, and intoxicated with power; he ruthlessly exterminated millions of his countrymen, prompting the suicides of several members of his immediate family." (p.26). Another source of influence which could probably be held accountable for the dilemma of the youth in a largely third world continent is Nicolo Machiavelli, famous for his treatise entitled *The Prince*. In a chapter he entitles *How a Prince should keep His Word*, Machiavelli (1952) states:

How praiseworthy it is for a prince to keep his word and to live by integrity and not by deceit, everyone knows. Nevertheless, one sees from the experience of our times that the princes who have accomplished great deeds are those who have cared little for keeping their promises and who have known how to manipulate the minds of men by shrewdness and in the end they have surpassed those who laid their foundations upon honesty (p.41)

This is probably the advice which "the devil" gave to the leaders of the people after crucifying him in the novel *Devil on the Cross*, for the narrator states that they were pregnant with all the evils of the world after an intercourse with the devil. The

observation by Machiavelli is what the leaders of the liberation struggle fight against during colonization. However immediately thereafter, they denounce its virtue. This claim is authenticated by the slurs against socialism by some of the elderly characters who remind the protesters that Aburiria is not China or Russia (*Wizard/567*)

Another unverified claim almost similar to that made by the Russian novelists, but nevertheless providing some clue, is made by Fikile Ntsikelelo Moya (*City Press of 1st September 2013*). In an article entitled *When Conspiracy Theories Ring True*, Moya states: "There is a school of thought that says South African government has vested interest in keeping the majority of its citizens in the same material position as they have always been." He further poses questions as to why would the president spend 200 million of the state money which according to him, this is a question which should have been asked by that stratum of the society if they had not been reduced to chasing basic physiological needs such as food and shelter. Against this background, we now interrogate the texts for evidence of youth victimization after liberation. Three major texts will form the focus of this discussion and they are: *A Grain of Wheat*, *Petals of Blood* and *Devil On the Cross*

5.2 The plight of youth in *A Grain of Wheat*

In this novel, Ngugi gives his reader some glimpse of youth victimization. This novel captures the lives of several young people among them Mugo, Githua, Githogo as well as Kihika. In the case of Mugo, he is introduced as having lost his piece of land which has been confiscated by the government while he was in detention. He is according to Warui, reticent. Githua who is young is described as hobbling just like Abdulla who lost his leg in the guerilla warfare. He too is still poor. The narrator shows us this poverty in the description of his shirt which was torn, and its colour creaming black with his dirt, his left leg folded and fixed with a pin to cover the stump. He too like many other young men of Kenya has been laid bare to the *modus vivendi* of capitalism which is, "use and dispose".

5.3 Victimization in *Petals of Blood*

Textually, the situation of the youth is further made volatile by certain rumours which the narrators find crucial to report on during the hide and seek played by Nderi wa Riera in *Petals of Blood*. This piece of information which is dropped into the reader's mind as gossip provides yet another clue to the cause of youth victimization and an entrapment of their leaders at the first stages of moral reasoning in Ngugi's novels. The narrator reveals to the reader that Nderi was holding meetings with the Freemasons (p.84). He does not tell who these people are, but the emotional context within which this name is dropped makes it imperative for the readers to leave the text temporarily and look for meaning outside it. Our interest in the plight of the youth who are not aware that they are dealing with an agent of some extra-territorial forces such as the one mentioned above result in the reader's renewed effort for library search which yields the information in the next paragraph.

According to Larson (1984), Freemasonry is a clandestine fraternal order which was revived in Britain in 1717. There is a claim by its adherents that it is a religious organization which is based on the old testament of the Christian Bible. However, Larson claims that Masonic members recite oaths to have their breast torn open or their bowels taken out and burnt if they reveal the secrets of their organization. According to this historian, punishment also includes throat cutting and removal of one's balls on disclosure of secrets. For further information on the fraternity, the reader is also advised to read Smith (1980).

Against this backdrop, one begins to discern the root cause of the situation which the youth in *Petals of Blood* are suffering from. Among them is the starvation which leads to the collapse of Joseph at school as well as the remorselessness with which the uncondusive conditions of the education of the children of the peasants is treated by Mzigo (p.271). This is the first evidence of the alleged deliberate white collar genocide and the arrest of progress in human development. It legitimizes the accusation by Farah who observes that, "The African politician is a blind man. He moves only in one direction-towards him." (cited in Ayittey, 1992: 56).

In literary worlds, the psychology behind the victimisation of the youth is also recorded in one of Shakespeare's plays *Mac Beth* (Act 4 scene 3). In this scene, Macduff has fled from the power of the new ruler of Scotland whose rule can only be defined as tyranny. While in exile, he fortuitously meets Malcolm, one of the assassinated kings' sons and the rightful heir to the throne and they begin a conversation. In this dialogue, Malcolm expresses his awareness of how some elderly people/politicians maybe fear driven to the point of doing anything in an effort to preserve themselves against what they perceive as invincible tyrants. The young character expresses caution as he states: "I'm young, but you see in me the marks of suffering, that he has caused, and fearing for yourself, may think it wise to offer me up, as a weak poor innocent lamb, to appease an angry god." (Lines 10-19 act 4 scene 3 (p.89).

With the African leadership normally realizing that liberation is just a "mirage" or an illusion and beginning to acknowledge that their former colonizers have consolidated their power to the point of near omnipotence, it can be concluded that they may, in an attempt to secure their inherited privileges become tyrants who are zealous to protect the interest of their departed masters. Evidence of this is the fact that Nyawira's brothers were sent abroad and Gatuiria also was sent to get the education from the West so as to preserve the hegemony of the family line. In most cases, the youth become their number one targets as their generative power instinctively urges them to secure their future. Evidence to the claim just above this is derived from the political history of Zaire which is discussed below.

It is historically recorded by De Toledo (2010) who exposes the maintenance of asymmetrical power relations between Belgium and the now Democratic Republic of the Congo. He unravels the stratagem that was followed by the Belgians who had colonized the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda merely 20 years after their own liberation from France. In the paragraph that follows, he narrates the ordeal which is suggestive of some affinity between Ngugi's youths and the *should-have-been* first president of Zaire. According to him, between 1885 and 1908, that is a period called the Scramble for Africa, Leopold II owned the Congo as his fiefdom. Brutality reigned, and he was forced to surrender it to Belgium. In 1950, the Belgians saw that their domination was coming to an end, and they sought for some native leaders whom they could corrupt and deploy into new positions of power to guard their interests; Karl

Marx's observation comes in handy here. It is vividly expressed in the observation that: "the executive of the modern state is nothing but a committee guarding the interests of the bourgeoisie"(Marx,1968:170). They reluctantly left the Belgian Congo in 1960 not because they repented from their avarice. They wanted to establish some self-serving relations with the Congolese with the hope that they could come back and rule, but they could not secure collaboration from Patrice Lumumba because of his high education and moral standards.

De Toledo (2010:252) describes him as a "mercurial" and charismatic and a man who was loved by his people. He concludes his description in the statement, "He could not be bought, so he had to die" (p.352). According to him, the *coup de tat* that was staged by Moise Tshombe in July 1960 as well as the September 1963 one by Colonel Mobuto was an act of Belgian reincarnation into the citadels of power in Congo. It is lamentable that the *coup d'état* was allegedly supported by the USA, Belgium and South Africa. Lumumba was eventually assassinated on 17th January 1961 with the UN armies sent to his help looking away. With these conditions being prerequisite to the succession story in African modern politics, Ngugi's Kenya is no exception. His younger characters living in the era where the brainiest are eliminated, it becomes evident that the youth become the only hope for carrying the struggle forward as it happens in the play the *Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, a play by Ngugi and Mugo (1997).

5.4 Wanja's predicament

We proceed to two young female victims in *Petals of Blood* whose lives demonstrate that despite being victims, youth can be a force against social injustice. These are Wanja and Mukami who will be discussed in the order in which they are presented above. Wanja's victimization follows a linear pattern which begins with the author deliberately providing the reader with her biographical details so as to create a vivid picture which can entice the reader towards this youth. He strategically foregrounds the fact that Wanja is a brilliant girl at Mathematics (p.39). Our reading of the text does implicitly allow us to view Wanja as a beautiful girl, but this is not the issue for the author. The trait he wants to foreground is her intelligence. This is cunningly juxtaposed with the fact that her family is poor and, by inference, cannot afford the type of food dieticians would classify as intelligence enhancing. He then begins chronicling her

demise which takes place in the era of liberation. This is yet another aspect of contrast. Her demise is orchestrated by a certain man who comes with his two children to settle in this child's neighbourhood, and establishes himself as a businessman. This man reportedly owns a bus. When Wanja travels by his bus, he does not charge her. This man then visits her home and her father is so proud and unsuspecting. Wanja's instinct warns her against the man, she does not like his visits, but as a child in a gerontocratic society, she cannot voice it. For obvious reasons, which are patriarchy and gerontocracy, the young woman is muted. This socio-cultural constraint provides an opportunity for the predatory opportunism of the elderly character to exploit her, and this is how the ordeal unfolds. On one Christmas day, the same man brings Wanja a floral dress. This dress later proves to be a bait, especially, when the man later falls in love with Wanja (p.39). Subsequent to this *pseudo affair*, Wanja's performance at Mathematics deteriorates and leads to the first act of sabotage of the girl's effort to fully develop as an intellectual and an economical self-sustaining individual. Wanja's teacher who equally has interest on her also aggravates this situation. Somehow, Wanja peaks her Mathematics performance up and she obtains position two. Ngugi makes this character more interesting and more "alluring" by inserting her into a series of vicissitudes with the result that she appeals to our *pathos*. He creates an anti-climax in her career path and thereby extorts pity on the reader for her. With the plot unfolding, it becomes unfortunate that before writing her final year exam, she falls pregnant by the man mentioned earlier whose name is later revealed to the reader as Kimeria Hawkins. On being informed, the man promises marriage on condition that Wanja is prepared to be the second wife, but she does not consent (p.40). Before her mother could discover, she flees to the man who now denies that such a relationship could exist between himself and Wanja. The man denies on the grounds of, first, his age, and secondly, his faith as a Christian. These are two things which should have stopped him from abusing the young girl sexually, let alone impregnating her.

Sexual abuse, which leads to pregnancy subsequently, marks the beginning of a turbulent era in Wanja's life as she flees to the city in search for a livelihood. With the prospects of finding a job becoming void, she capitulates and accepts a job as a barmaid. Like any other girl who left rural Ilmorog with no qualification and no job, Wanja, begins to use her body and beauty as the only resources both colonialism and post-colonial political economy have not been able to usurp from her. While probably

hating men after the pregnancy ordeal, she, however, learns how to lure men with success. Her victimization is marked by a deflection whereby her Mathematical intelligence is redirected into playing the *coquette*. She surrenders to a life of being a bait in the bar, which eventually leads her into prostitution. She becomes the mistress of flirtation (p.56). The omniscient narrator reports that, she would make a man buy her a cider for 200 shillings. Inevitably, the postcolonial era of Kenya is perpetuating a form of natural selection by gender in which Wanja and many other young women, as we shall hear later, have no choice, but to risk being victims of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV-AIDS and adding to the already escalated HIV cases in Africa. She has entered into a “jungle” where she has to flirt in order to survive. It is interesting to note that Ngugi’s narrator reveals to the reader that the lady still has a sense of remorse. He tells us that she does explicitly confess that she is wicked, and yet she does not have choice. While still at school, Wanja is said to have shown brilliance at Mathematics as mentioned earlier, but now she is reported as a linguist. The narrator praises her as a linguist and obviously a very intelligent girl. Survival forces her to speak all the Kenyan languages as she serves her clients at the jukebox (p.78). Not only does she become a bar lady, but she also experiments with prostitution as she services long distance truck drivers with her body.

Despite all these, Wanja is not oblivious of her victimization which has deflected her from all the opportunities her intelligence could have enabled her to achieve. The life of prostitution which is compounded by free entry of foreigners into the country turns into a career which might reduce her mortality through STD’s. It has overlapped into the era of liberation. However, Wanja’s conscience is not “numbed”. She is still able to measure the emptiness of her situation by judging it against history. The narrator shares that, she is still able to look back and see the years she has spent in emptiness (117). Her life as an individual reflects the condition under which many young women of her country are subjected. In this life of emptiness, Wanja reveals that she has once been in love with a white man called Kala Singh, a foreigner who eventually almost turned her into a sex slave. This social plague is rampant. She networks and gets to know the story of one young lady who quitted bars and became a housemaid, for a white family. The employer paid her 70 shillings. When the wife had gone away, the husband would then have sex with the lady against her will. All these things happen during the era of liberation.

The conclusion to declare Wanja's situation as victimization arises from her resolution to go back home. This decision points towards her desire to regenerate morally and this places her above other elderly characters such as Kimeria who are increasingly becoming immoral. However, her good resolution is impeded by yet another male adult. This time, it is her own father who rejects her on the self-righteous claim that he cannot live in the same house with a prostitute (p.130). This is ironic in the sense that the young lady did not like Kimeria's visits whereas her father happily received him. Another evidence of her moral superiority is the revived love of children though her aversion towards men and marriage which has been induced by Kimeria is still maintained.

Further victimization manifests when Wanja gets initiated into the survival of post-colonial city life. She meets with one rich woman who promises to find her a rich European man (p.132). The woman survives in the world of men in a manner almost similar to that of Chaucer's *The Wife of Bath* in *The Canterbury Tales*. This is how the woman would do it. After living with the white man in some multi floored building for some time, she would seduce him to sign a will. When the will is signed, she would throw the man down the steps to die and all that the man had, would then be hers (p.181). What we gather from this lifestyle is that she has been thrown into a life whereby she has to use her sexual organs even to receive pardon from the law enforcement officers (p.130). This is a misappropriation of intelligence which simultaneously steals away her opportunity to live and leave a legacy. In the light of her confession above, it is evident that she does not enjoy this life, however this youth has no choice, but to act and behave in a manner that contradicts her own belief system. She is therefore not a lost youth but an oppressed one.

Be that as it may, her initiation into this lifestyle inflates her ego with *hubris*. After being mentored by the black woman mentioned above, her first "prey" becomes one German man she meets at the Starlite Night Club. The man tells her that he is looking for a girl from Kabete. He claims that the girl he is looking for was enticed to Germany, and he asks Wanja to help him find her (p.131). Naïvely, Wanja goes to the man's house in which she is almost turned into a sex slave. The house is so horrendous. It is walled with mirrors all over and she is guarded by a ferocious dog which is enraged by a slight movement she makes when the owner is away. In a *deu ex machina* like maneuver,

she fortuitously manages to escape and she gets help from another youth who is simply called the young lawyer. Without “terms and conditions”, the lawyer gives her money to go to her home. At this time, she is going to the house of her father who has explicitly stated that he cannot live with a prostitute in his house. When all these things happen to the young woman, the reader is forced to look back and remember that Kimeria’s uncontrolled sexual desire has managed to “remove the posts” against this youth whose family, society and state can neither understand nor protect. The reader is here reminded that the plight of this young woman is a mirror of what happens to many other young women in post colonial Kenya. The result becomes a deviant form of behaviour which leads to personality disorder which would have not otherwise occurred. The young lady’s dilemma demonstrates the cruelty of oppression which according to Freire’s (1971:93): “... interferes with man’s[sic] ontological and historical vocation to be fully human, that is, to know one’s self as a subject of history capable of understanding and transforming the world”

Inevitably, this young woman is fated to the statistics of “the young juicy viginas” lamented by Ayi Kwei Ahmah in his novel *The Beautiful Ones are Not yet Born*. This is the motif in Ngugi’s post liberation literature. Through her, the evil of both patriarchy and capitalism as manifestations of oppression reduce young women into “easy thighs” are exposed. Her character development so far attests to evil of narcissistic old men who have been acculturated from the benefits of the *Ngweko* as explained by Kenyatta in his seminal anthropology work already cited in this study.

With this *anagnorisis*, Wanja eventually relocates to Ilmorog instead of her home. In so doing, she reinvents herself as a “crusader” for rural development and philanthropy which has been lost by politicians such as Nderi Wa Riera (a hawk of the sky). She stays with her maternal grandmother and becomes the only young lady in the village populated with old people and little children except for one young teacher by the name of Munira. The two youths are later joined by another young teacher who has dropped out of high school because of the ideological power relations he resolves to challenge.

Still on the representation by Wanja, her repatriation to poverty by the author actually provides her with a better and fertile terrain for her personality and femininity to blossom. Instead of disparing in a rural area, she becomes a founder member of the

trio that becomes a model of post-colonial reform in politics, economy and education. She immediately forms part of the rising *intelligentsia* of Ilmorog and joins the entourage, which leads the community to Nairobi, where she unfortunately meets with Kimeria. This is the man who stagnated her life, but could not succeed to destroy her career. Ironically, Kimeria has now become a member of the elites ruling with all the economic advantages to make him even more comfortable in the new era. He is the same man who betrayed the freedom fighters, Abdulla and Ole Maasai by giving information about them to the European police officers. This is the same Kimeria who had impregnated Wanja and destroyed her dream for the future as well as the relationship with her parents. Kimeria has not changed his attitude towards young women. He still wants to take advantage of Wanja's destitute condition and force her to have sex with him (p.155). The presence of Wanja also exposes the fact that the thugs and villains of the colonial era still go unpunished. They are instead made rich to the point that Kimeria, the hawk, drives a big car as he wins tenders, which were initially won by Whites (p.253).

The victimization of Wanja reveals the web like socio-political and economic arrangements which militates against the passion of youths for survival. The initiatives of youth including Wanja and Karega are also hijacked by the *vultures* of the new era. Among them is the German who had kidnapped Wanja, and now has come to Ilmorog as an investor, a *pseudo* name for neo- colonizer. This Ilmorog has been revived and turned into a tourist attraction by the effort of among others, Wanja. The man is unpunished and Kimeria is now enjoying the fruits of a new Kenya. While Kimeria is experiencing opulence and probably piece of mind in this era, Wanja lives with regrets. Her maternal nature wants her to have a child, but she cannot conceive and this becomes even more painful as she remembers the baby she threw into the latrine. The baby keeps on crying in her ears. This past imposed blunder still gnaws her (p.40).

Her predicament which follows her even after many years after parting with Kimeria results into numerous negativities and stereotyping within her cultural context. Her inability to conceive can also be attributed to two possibilities. First, is the value attached to posterity among the Gikuyu people. In their tradition, there is a set period within which a woman is expected to procreate and thereby participate in the preservation and maintenance of the tribe and the human species in general.

Secondly, there is a symbolic meaning to it. Evidence in the text seems to suggest that people such as Kimeria are *necrophilic*. They seem to be killing life wherever they go. He does not regret what he had done. It is his encounter with Wanja which intercepted the young woman's freedom to fully realize her potential. In the life of this youth who comes from a poor family, education is the only escape route out of the dehumanization many female youths of Kenya are exposed to.

5.5 The case of Abdulla

Another young protagonist who is represented heroically, and yet betrayed by the post-liberation bourgeois government is the *cadre*, Abdulla. He has spent a lot of his time in jail and he gets released on the eve of independence. By representing his situation in an anti-climax, Ngugi further draws attention to him. He leaves prison optimistic, but then immediately gets plunged into despair. Below, an attempt is made to shed more light on the development of his victimization.

In order to paint a more vivid picture of his victimization, Ngugi represents him in contrasts. Firstly, he wants the reader to view him as someone from a family that in spite of being rich, they could use their wealth for a national course—the liberation of Kenya. Having presented the reader with the cogitations of Mr. Howlands (*Weep*, 31), he wanted his son to inherit his land/wealth, it could be similarly expected that he too should have been entitled to his father's wealth, but now he has lost all that including the father and every member of the family. This wealth includes the shop that his father owned at Limuru. Textual evidence states that it is this very business that contributed to Jomo Kenyatta's education in England. This mingling of fact and fiction naturally makes Abdulla a character of interest and perhaps someone who should have been recompensated for his dead father who was probably killed for funding the revolution. However this has not been taken into consideration by politicians of post liberation of Kenya.

In his own right, Abdulla is, beyond any shadow of doubt, loyal to the tribe, the nation and humanity in general. This is evident in the fact that he too had "drunk" the oath and joined the Mau-Mau. He keeps contact with his family. Unfortunately, he is shot and arrested. He loses contact with his family, misses them, and longs for re-union.

On his release, he returns to the village and starts looking for them, only to be told that they have all been swept away by the colonial army. He gets so hurt, but deals with his hurt by suddenly reminding himself that he is better than Kimathi, his hero, who lost all the brothers until he himself was also killed. As he comes back into civil life, he hopes to come back and hoist the flag (p.285). With the little money he has saved so far, he buys a cart and a donkey and he transports women and their merchandize to the city.

His entrepreneurial spirit is hamstrung by his physical challenge sustained from fighting injustice. However, he has to continue with life. Ngugi evokes pity for him as he foregrounds his victimization by selecting certain biographical details for the reader. Among the details he reports to the reader that his younger character had to survive by selling oranges in the streets while standing on one leg. Interpreting this against some Elizabethan literary background, - Abdulla suffers what one calls "The Lepidus Fate". Lepidus is one of the three members of the second triumvirate, which took over government from the conspirators who had killed Caesar. From this very play called *Julius Caesar* by Shakespeare, one learns that during the struggle, everybody is important and indispensable, but after victory, some become disposable while others remain indispensable and deserve the reward of the struggle for liberation. These are the Napoleons of George's Orwell's *Animal Farm* (Orwell, 1945) and Achebe's his Excellency the Honourable Chief Nanga in *A Man of the People* (1966). In the play, during the war to avenge Caesar's death, Anthony tells Octavius that he does not like Lepidus but for the purpose of "their own" success, they will keep him meanwhile. A similar survival strategy is expressed in Maru by the eponymous character Maru himself who claims that he does not want to "kill" his sister, Dikeledi, by immediately telling her that her boyfriend, Moleka, loves another woman, a friend of hers because he wants her alive and stupid. In History, this attitude towards one time *comrades* is reported to have been done by Stalin who after leading the peasants out of oppression, he then commits one of modern history's genocide against them. Abdulla is presented in the same way prophetically mirrored in Zakes Mda's *We shall Sing for the Father Land* (1989). These anecdotes inform an understanding of the victimization of Abdulla and many a youth in post-liberation Kenya.

Like many young people, Abdulla, is fated to oblivion after the war. There is no one who remembers what Abdulla's father did, let alone his personal contribution to the struggle. There is no job for him and he has been relegated to the statistics among the jobless. What actually arouses more pity toward him is the contradiction Ngugi invents through the ironic success of story of Kimeria, the man who betrayed him during the war, and who also during the struggle made a fortune by transporting corpses of casualties. The man is growing even richer in the new dispensation led by a government he fought hard to betray and undermine. Subsequent to this *peripeteia*, Abdulla resorts to alcohol abuse as a way of derailing his mind from the post liberation reality. He now has to accept that, it does indeed exist. This is a manifestation of existential vacuum as explained by Frankl (2006). We elaborate on this point below.

In a fate like occurrence, his resort to alcohol leads to a meeting with Kimeria. This happens at his drinking place and unlike many elderly victims, he still has the audacity to challenge him and illicit some remorse in him, and thereby unsettles him, as he asks him whether he still remembers what he did during the struggle. This is what Ngugi prescribes for the pens of the African writers. Abdulla had promised Ole Maasai to kill Kimeria, but now he is overwhelmed by the sight of Kimeria's opulence, especially, by the knowledge of the fact that it has been generated within the era of the regime he opposed and sold him and Ole Maasai to the settlers for. This "paralyses" him. The statement with the word "fate" in it as something that has favoured Kimeria, expresses in vivid terms, the depth of his cynicism towards the new government. By extension, this emphasizes the extent to which the future is uncertain for him. His will to fight injustice has now to a greater extent been exterminated.

Abdulla's victimization does not end with the sabotage of his booming business only; it continues to eliminate him as it turns him into a vagabond in a manner reminiscent of Fugard's Boesman and Lena. Despite the fact he was a co-leader in the mission to the big city, when new developments have transformed Ilmorog into a village of light and life, the town council decides to embark on a clean-up campaign, something close to operation *murambatsvina* in Zimbabwe where the poor were removed from the city. Their target becomes the shanties of the unemployed, the poorly paid and the rural poor with whatever form of building from tin houses to kiosks. Abdulla becomes no exception. He is forced to demolish his house as it falls prey to the comprador class

and he ends up hiring a room made up of mud walls in the barracks, and now using candle in an electrified Ilmorog. This form of institutionalized exploitation through accommodation is vividly represented in the case of Wariinga about whom we will hear later in *Devil on the Cross*. During the new developments, Ilmorog is divided into two settlement areas. One of them is reserved for the rich and well-paid while the other is for the poor, the unemployed and the exploited. These are the people who are later going to be labeled as “use less eaters” and therefore deserving to be eliminated as the economist Thomas Malthus once prescribed. This area which constitutes shanties and kiosks, mainly, is called New Jerusalem. This is the best place if not the only one in which the “Lepiduses” of post-colonial Kenya like Abdulla can rent (not own) a slum room. His business continues, but there is no roof over it anymore. A budding entrepreneur that Abdulla is, gets reduced to a hopeless vendor, who now sleeps on a very bad bed (p.283). The experiences of this youth here attest to the fact that youth do have the capacity to change their societies, but they are impeded by the socio-political arrangement of their gerontocratic society. His experiences provide more evidence on the activities of youth.

5.6 Victimization of Karega

In the next few pages, the discussion focuses more on Karega. To have him represented well, it becomes imperative that his biography be foregrounded. Karega is the son of a widowed peasant tenant woman called Miriamu. This suggests that he must have had some challenges in his upbringing. More like Abdulla discussed above and Wariinga in *Devil on the Cross*, he too comes from the blood line of loyalists to justice and liberation. His mother, Miriamu, led the march against Ezekieli, who was both her land lord and employer. Nothing is mentioned about him and his role during the pre-independence era. However, he too sustained a loss during the struggle. In a more similar way to that of the author’s brother, Good Wallace, he too lost a Mau-Mau brother called Ndugire.

Ngugi introduces him as a provident and self-reliant young man. He is financing his own education at a very early age by collecting pyrethrum on Ezekieli’s farm. In a fate similar to that of Ngugi (2012) himself, in 1955, his family was moved to the concentration camp/village. In a similar manner as Ngugi, his “creator”, and two fellow

characters in the same novel namely: Joseph and Wanja, he also manages to defy intellectual stereotypes. His performance at school shows that his future cannot be “authored” by the relationship between intelligence quotient and socio economic background and this elevates him to the status of a hero among Ngugi’s readers. He demonstrates a degree of intelligence which, combined with hard work, earns him a place in Siriana, the equivalent of Alliance High School in Ngugi’s biography. He eventually gets dismissed from school during the era of freedom. In the paragraph below, we shall draw evidence from the text to show how he was unethically expelled from school.

The principal of Siriana, Mr. Fraudsham, who was once a soldier has a dog which dies while the young man is still at school; he mourns the death of his dog and he wants some of the boys in the school to dig a grave for it so that he gives it a human burial. This act is strange to the boys and they subsequently laugh about it. His reaction manifests some derogatory attitude he seems to have always harboured towards Africans as he attributes their behavior to their savagery. The boys refuse to dig a hole. Had it not been for the others to refuse going to class, the boys mentioned above could have been expelled from school. This incident alone brings to the surface other grievances. Among them are: the demand for the alteration of the curriculum in which the learners demand that they be taught their history and African literature. Karega is highly involved in this act of re-structuring the African identity in the consciousness of the younger populace of Kenya. He is the embodiment of Ngugi and Adichie’s (2007) insistence on the presence and positive representation of the black race in literary works.

Another obstacle towards education in the path of Karega is racism and intellectual imperialism which are still intact in his society. In this era, the head of education is now Chui, who has “backslidden” from the tenets of the struggle, and is now working in collaboration with the ideology he abhorred formally, that is, while he was still a learner at Siriana (p.100). In a fate similar to that of Abdulla discussed above, no one remembers him, nor his dead brother, Ndigure. His betrayal deepens with every attempt he makes. Whichever office he enters into, he is told to come the next day. He, subsequently, starts selling by the roadside as a vendor.

The result of Chui's position on Karega's future leads to several manifestations of emotional challenges. Among them is the development of guilt emanating from a sense of betrayal he has towards his poor mother who fought so hard for him. Miriamu believed that in her old age, Karega "would always prop her up." (p.104). This youngman has grown up as a respectful child; even his mother actually gets surprised because Karega had never talked back to her. The new socio-political order now brings conflict in Karega's life which gets even worse as he regrets that his mother dies without him having done something for her. This is however just but a tip of the ice bag for Karega though.

Several factors manifest in the betrayal of Karega. When he thinks that things are getting better, he realises later that even in the new Kenya, things still fall apart. The first incident is employment related. Karega gets a teaching post in Ilmorog where, for the first time, he gets confronted by the reality of betrayal. Secondly, the village is populated mainly with elderly people and children who cannot be their children, but grandchildren only. This placed a huge amount of burden on his already wounded soul. The other age bracket (youth) is missing just like in Paton's Ndocheni. Thirdly, children such as Muriuki are hungry and collapse at school (p.111). Next, their rural education is neglected. Munira is disturbed by the fact that there still is no black teacher in the village. Good teachers have migrated to multiracial schools. In spite of the new era of democracy, there are still white schools in which a black teacher cannot get a post. Also, racism is still alive. The area's education inspector by the name of Mzigo cannot come to the village to inspect the progress or the problems of education because there are no roads. By implication, the education of the rural and poor children is not an obligation to him though he has occupied the post. During his stay in this school, he is forced to produce results where government officials do not dare set their foot. He witnesses the continuation of the machinery that ensures the production of peasants as the previous education system under the colonialism has done.

Ngugi has so far shown that there is evil perpetuated against the younger members of the nations he writes for and about. He has exposed the latest enemy of the African youth without taking side with colour. The representation of the dehumanizing situation of the youth attests to what another young character claimed earlier when he stated that, "Blackness is not all that makes a man". His sympathy with the betrayed, the

working class of which youth are the majority, forced the government of Arab Moi to deport him. This then justifies that Ngugi is indeed concerned about the forces that inhabit the youth from fully developing. Below we continue into yet another novel to investigate his works for more evidence on youth victimization.

5.7 Post liberation Victimization in *Devil On The Cross*: the case of Wariinga

Another young female youth who becomes a victim in post liberation Kenya is Wariinga. Her representation as a victim also warrants attention. In a similar fate as that of Wanja, her's also starts with *sexploitation* and it is through her that we learn more about this instrument of gender sabotage.

In her troubled life, Wariinga becomes one of the sources of insight into the victimization of the young women in Kenya. It is through her voice that we learn about the promiscuousness of politicians which always target the young females. This morally sanctionable behaviour has become one of the manifestations of male pride and dominance, and it is done without any fear of the consequences. The narrator reports one of its incidences at a time when Wariinga has gone out in search of a job. Just like Karega, we discussed earlier on, she too lands in a number of offices where she talks to Mr. Boss. He divulges that all these bosses have one thing in common whenever they see a young woman. Their reaction is the same. He captures this in the words "The one Wariinga meets this time, smiles and asks the same questions, and like the rest, the target is still Kareendi's thighs." Disgusted by this situation, she lamentably also reports that "The modern love bar and lodging has become the main employment bureau for girls and that women's thighs are the table on which contracts are signed." (p.19). In the light of the above observation, Kenya's patriarchy and gerontocracy as two of the forces the young females have to contend with are deeply entrenched. This ordeal which is suffered by young girls has reached a point of disgust for the narrator. The young women are evidently victims of exploitation through sex. They are obviously economically deprived so that they can become the *Kareendis* (easy thighs) for the pleasure of the former liberators.

When this happens, the result is the weakening of the moral fibre of the society and the young women become the worst victims. One African philosopher Eze (2008) advises that these moral choices are inhibited. He further contends that, with the removal of economic power, the young women are faced with the ravaging power of imperialism on the moral fiber. This observation by Wariinga is typical of the revolutionary ferment which Paulo Freire sees as the beginning of an individual naming her world and describing it so that she can change it. With this Wariinga assumes the role of the mouth piece for the common people, particularly, young women who are represented as the worst victims of the failure of African liberation.

The socio-economic and political habitat within which Ngugi's youth must realize their dreams in a post-colonial state is out-rightly adversarial. In the following section, an investigation of textual evidence in support of the assertion above is conducted. The results show that his youths' vocational development is "prey'd" upon by the political environment of their country which in most if not all the cases is role-played by the elderly characters. Evidence which emerges from the interrogation of texts selected for this study shows the following: young women are trapped into a socio-economic order which coerces them to avail themselves to sexual exploitations. This is a precondition for the satisfaction of their basic needs, food, clothing and shelter. In a plaintive voice, the narrator states:

Our new Kenya, however, sings only one song to Kareendi: Sister Kareendi, the case of a fool takes long time to settle. Sister Kareendi, every court session opens with feasting. Sister Kareendi, no man licks an empty hand. Take care of me, and I will take care of you. Modern problems are resolved with the aid of thighs. He who wishes to sleep is the one who is anxious to make bed (p. 19).

In the citation above, the narrator enlightens the reader on the reality of young women who do not want to yield to sexual exploitation. In this era of liberation, they find themselves being regarded as fools if they do not succumb to the power of men. When they are seen, they are referred to in gastronomic terms. They evoke the desire for a feast (line 5). Their thighs are being referred to as an offer they should make. This is

expressed without any sense of decency in the tone of the speaker. They are even castigated for their lack of urgency to “make the bed” (last line).

In the light of this, the novelist records some liberating moments in the life of Wariinga. These are moments which attest to the normal instincts of survival which have been re-enchanted by an existential view of the self.

In her own story which she wittingly reports in the third person instead of first person narrative, Wariinga shows her *conscientization* towards the agentiveness she has to demonstrate towards self-preservation. Pushed into it by victimization, she mentions that she does carry a knife which she is unfortunately unable to open and make use of in her fight against her boss who almost attempted to rape her (p. 23). This resolution to carry a weapon is indicative of two important realisations. Firstly, she is ‘literate’ about her socio-political environment as a “genderized” war zone, which is at the same time ageistic and imperialistic. Secondly, her initiative in defending fellow young women in her country which is manifest in reporting the retrograde perception they are subjected to is laudable.

Victimization of young women in Kenya becomes even more evident in her cogitation captured in the words:

To Kareendi of modern Kenya, isn't each day exactly the same as all the others? For the day on which they are born is the very day on which every part of their body is buried except one—they are left with a single organ. So when will the Kareendis of modern Kenya wipe the tears from their faces? When will they ever discover laughter? (p. 26).

5.8 Victimization of youth in *Devil On The Cross*

In this novel, Ngugi attempts in the best possible way to unravel the sinister forces behind Africa and Kenya’s “arrested” development. The narrator eavesdrops into the secret plans the rulers of his post liberation country have now developed some *phobia* for youth. This *psychosis* has led them to hatch a plan in which firstly, the youth and the common people should be muted or even “pushed” into extinction. The new

method involves the trapping of oxygen and then selling it to the commoners. Thinking that this information will not reach the ears of some of the electorate, Gitutu Wa Gataanguru freely states the benefit of this new impoverishment strategy in the words: When university students make a bit of noise, we could deny them air! When the masses complain, we would deny them air! When people refused to be robbed or to have their wealth stolen, we'd simply switch off the air until they came to us with hands raised, beseeching us. Please steal from us. (pp. 107-108)

In the statement above, the students are not the only targets, but what makes them important is the primacy or rather the hierarchy which places them at the summit of this politicians pyramid of enemies and targets. The words "noise" which is used to describe their protest, shows the degree to which the speaker disgusts their activism, and by extension, its impact on him and his cohorts. The narrator has warned the reader earlier on about this inevitable conflict. This conflict which arises from an ideological shift by the elite is unabashedly expressed by an elderly character by the name, Robbin Mwaura in the words: 'Nothing is free in Kenya. Kenya is not Tanzania or China.' (p.37). This runs in contra-distinction to the view that prevailed during the struggle for decolonization. What is even worse is the arrogant display of his ignorance in China in particular. This is one country where socialism has managed to feed many people. For further knowledge on this claim about China, the reader is encouraged to read a book entitled *Architects Of Poverty: Why African capitalism needs changing* by Moeletsi Mbeki (2009).

What this character whose name can be split into the verb Rob and in, meaning thieves must rob people in their own countries and not go beyond their national borders as the thieves from overseas did as reported in the scene of the cave. His is a remorseless expression of a betrayal of the early tenets of the struggle. The mention of the two countries Tanzania and china is an arrogant statement expressing a break with the socio political arrangements of those countries. It is contemptuous of the leadership of Mwalimu Nyerere and Chairman Mao Tse Tung. In the context of South Africa this would amount to a betrayal of the Freedom Charter.

5.9 Testimonies of hatred towards youth by elderly characters (*Devil On The Cross*)

The desire to keep the masses ignorant and subdued inevitably continues to generate malice towards the students. This hatred towards the youth which testifies to their power to disturb the peace of the ruling class is expressed in the statement of an elderly character who is named Kihaahu wa Githenga as he states:

In the morning the topic is democracy. In the evening the topic is democracy. Is democracy food and drink? If I could get hold of those kids at the university, together with their pygmy-sized teachers. I would load them on to an aeroplane and request them to take their communist nonsense to China or the Soviet Union.
(p.117)

In his disapproval as captured in the citation above, this character berates democracy which seems to be a quest pursued by the youth (University students) of his country. This testifies to the activism of youth. At the same time, it provides evidence of the hatred they are subjected to.

University students are obviously among those youths who could not be recreated for the convenience of the *Devils On The Cross* who in the context of this study are represented by the national leaders of post liberation Kenya whose secret competition is encroached upon by the youth, Gatuiria and Wariinga. (Pp.94-127)

Victimization of youth which starts with denial of basic rights such as education as seen in the case of the veranda boys read about in *Weep Not Child* leads to possible misuse and abuse by politicians at a later stage. In *Devil on The Cross*, this is captured in the confession of Gitutu who states:

And if we have gathered to brag about our ability to use youth wings to terrorize others, everybody here should know that, I, Gitutu wa Gatangura, have also employed a group of thugs more terrifying than any other youth wing I know. The group undertakes any mission I give it, including removing from the face of this earth anybody who so much as dares to meddle in my thriving

and robbing activities. My thugs, or should I say my mercenaries, have an enormous appetite for very strong bhang. (p.119).

This escaping of the truth through the lips of an arrogant elderly politician attests to the carefree attitude which characterizes the education system. By extension, it reveals why “it might not be a good idea” to have children of the masses given education by post-liberation politicians. The problem with it is that it might elevate them from the level at which they can be easily used by the new rulers who have learnt the art of ruling the masses from the former rulers. The reader is here reminded of Ntsikelelo Moya’s conspiracy theory and the stalinist illustration on how to rule the masses discussed above. With the education system being deliberately failed, the rulers will benefit from illiteracy. This has the capacity to “ferment” civil war. In real worlds, it has been cautioned by Forti and Maina, (2012:59) who believe that, “Unemployed youth are an inactive and insecure demographic that can be mobilised for violence, raising the country’s chances of relapsing into civil conflict.” It is this very observation which leads to the belief that youth underdevelopment is orchestrated by politicians,

5.10 Conclusion

The discussion above has represented the man made dilemma of youth in a manner reminiscent of the departed colonial masters. It reminds the reader of an earlier assertion that the neocolonial politicians have learnt all these manipulations from their former rulers. What emerges from this discussion is the fact that the reader and the society are exposed to the plight of the youth. This exposure also has the capacity to alter perception about youth and their behaviour. Instead of discrediting them as delinquents, the facts representing them rather plead for an understanding of their adversarial conditions. The author has shown that, in some cases, education might be given to them, but it might be aimed at constructing them for the convenience of the middlemen of neocolonialism. The end result of their neglect is fanaticism and suspension of intellect in the face of manipulators. In literary circles, they would serve the same purpose as the one served by Mac Beth’s murderers who had been duped into believing that Banquo was their enemy, when he actually was an enemy of their new master, the real criminal behind treason.

6. CHAPTER 6: YOUTH AS AGENTS OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

6.1 Introduction

The coming of Europeans into Kenya, which introduced a new era, disrupted the rhythm of native life. It also introduced new identities and relationships. These were accompanied by new socio-political possibilities. Further to that, this era introduced a complete paradigm shift and a series of challenges to the lives of ordinary people. His characters, young and old, find themselves having to survive in a socio-political and economic environment which compels them to either surrender or fight against their situation which still resembles the condition of the colonialism or its re-invented version. This introduces a period ironically called the Dark Age of Africa. This observation suggests that darkness is a necessary condition for the emergence of youth as beacons of hope. In this section of the chapter, we explore how Ngugi's youth contribute towards the emancipation and remaking of society. This chapter is divided into six sections which are further divided into sub-sections.

This section of the chapter focuses on the positive role of the youth from different social backgrounds. This includes, among others, characters from *Weep not Child* who are: Steven Howlands (White), Njoroge (black tenant's son), Mwhaki (a black bourgeois' daughter) and Karega (a tenant single parent' son in *Petals*), and Wanja (a runaway and former prostitute), Muthoni, Nyawira, Kamiti and Kamau.

6.2 Youth as agents of social reconstruction in *Weep Not Child*

6.2.1. Youth against class boundaries

The quest of youth to break racial stereotypes and reclaim their right to humanness, which is manifest in their desire to de-racialise and de-stratify social arrangements of their society is evident even before the younger characters reach the stage of youth. In *Weep Not Child*, besides the scene in which Steven Howlands and Njoroge are jointly attempting to make sense of racism, there is also evidence of Njoroge and the little Indian boy attempting to make friends across racial boundaries. The friendship is impeded by Njoroge's mother, an elderly character who influences her son to reject the offer of a sweet from the Indian boy (p.36).

Compared to some characters of his race in Ngugi's novels, this little boy has a laudable character. He is unlike Ngotho's employer and numerous other Indian shop owners who showed uneven handedness when serving Whites and natives (*Weep*, p.7). One such elderly character is Ngotho's ex-employer, an anonymous Indian, whose relationship with him comprised some blood sucking strategy which was similar to that of many white settlers. The narrator divulges to us that the Indian business man who had hired Ngotho before Mr. Howlands deliberately owed him a month's salary which he would lose if he stopped working for him (p.28). This boy's generosity elevates him still above yet another elderly character of his race whose name is Ramlagoon Dharamasha, the father of Ole Maasai who never took his responsibility fully to the point where his son ended up being susceptible to a life of crime. These two will be discussed further in *Petals of Blood*. This boy's character shows that from the days of colonialism to the era beyond, youth have always proved to be resistant to social evils which have plagued their societies.

In the very first novel, *Weep Not Child*, Njoroge and Mwhaki defy social class created by capitalism. Their relationship is a good example of youth transcending social stereotypes, which is a part of their parents. This is evident in their socio-economic background which is asymmetrical. Njoroge is a son of a peasant. His father, Ngotho, is a farm labourer and a tenant who has built his house on the land belonging to Jacobo, a rich landowner and a farmer who sells his people out to the imperial government. He is black and yet has acquired the right to grow pyrethrum, which is a special privilege of Europeans in the era within which the novels plot unfolds. All of his children have succeeded to a relatively high level in their vocations. Like Gaturia in *Devil on the Cross*, one has gone overseas and the other is a school teacher in the country where education is scarce, especially for Africans. On the contrary, their neighbours, the Ngothos, are all illiterate except for the young boy who will now begin school a year after Mwhaki, Jacobo's youngest child, who is even younger than him.

In order to break class boundaries and to affirm the innocence with regards to social stratification of youth that can become a resource for social reconstruction, the two become friends. They defy class arrangements of their society as they treat each other as brother and sister in spite of their disparities in as far as their socio-economic backgrounds are concerned. Yet another instance of their defiance to a stratified

arranged society has actually happened prior to this one. Before starting school, some herd boys once hit Mwhaki with a stone and her brothers would not soothe and comfort her. It is Njoroge who finds her and soothes her. In this scene, we witness Mwhaki finding solace from a boy from a low class family. This is against her mother's disapproval of her having a relationship with children from "uncivilized" families, which in her view meant non-Christians (p.9).

Their relationship models the African passion for social cohesion encoded in the adage, "I am because you are." It builds on the principle of reciprocity and manifests at the time when the male youth is faced with a micro socio-political challenge which is recorded in the scene on page thirteen of the novel. In this scene, Mwhaki is empowered by her social capital, that of being a younger sister to a teacher in the school. He uses it to defend Njoroge against the bullies. This happens at the time when Njoroge begins school and the older boys want to initiate him. Their relationship continues to defy materialism as it starts from an innocent *philio* type of love and later evolves into an erotic one. Ngugi's narrator reports on a scene demonstrating their positive rebellion and its flip side which is the quest for a non-discriminatory social order. He states:

They went to a hill. It was near their home. She lay on the grass on the left side and faced him. He sat upright and looked at the plain below. The plain was usually full of water, especially during the rainy season. Now it was dry. Mwhaki played with the button on his back pocket. Then she sat upright and too looked at the plain. She said, "I was afraid" (p.92).

The foundation of an erotic relationship laid here shows that Mwhaki does not have a problem confiding in Njoroge and that he esteems him highly despite the poverty of his family. The authorial craft employed here cunningly and strategically throws in a statement with some symbolic importance from the environment. He states that the environment was dry. The environmental dryness is symbolic of the "aridity" of the souls caused by racism and social stratification. In this "famine", the soul is "besieged", hence the statement, "I am afraid." uttered by Mwhaki who now enjoys going out with Njoroge to a place where they can just be alone, perhaps, with nature and like the romantics of old, replenish their humanness. The reader is here reminded of a similar

resolution which was taken by Maru and Margaret Cadmore in Bessie Head's *Maru* when Maru decided to build a house a thousand miles away from his own village as the Batswana, his own ethnic group and subjects were so racist to the extent that they would even kill their chief's suitor if he came from among the Basarwa [sic], whom they classified as just another animal. The assertion above is responsible for the Khoisan to be called the Bushmen. The intimacy of these youths continues to grow certainly out of the grip of social stratification. In order to put the reader into perspective, the narrator captures one moment during their temporary elopement in the words below:

But her eyes dilated like a child's as she looked hopefully at him.

An idea came to her. She held Njoroge by the neck and shook him excitedly... Suppose you and I go from here so that we can come back when the dark night is over. I could be such a nice sister to you and I could cook you very tasty food and... (p.95).

Evident in the diction above is the fact that, as they now mature and become aware of their bigotry infested community, Njoroge has become a source of solace to Mwhaki. By way of interpretation, Mwhaki is willing to let go of her father's ill begotten opulence and begin a life of her own with a "poor young man". To a materialistic young woman, this was naivety or mental degeneration at its best. However, the benefit society derives from Mwhaki's choice is the demolition of the stratification walls that often impede relations between individuals from families such as those of Njoroge and Mwhaki. Class bigotry is not tolerated in this new generation as the Mwhaki evidently does not judge his worth on the basis of his socio-economic background, but on realities and possibilities.

Mwhaki's desecration and intuition demonstrated in this scene elevates her to the status of a leader. She is able to affirm the manhood of Njoroge which in her culture could be validated by *lobola* and other symbols which are materialistic. This behaviour by Ngugi's youth is universal. In the literary world, there are characters and individuals who typify this virtue. Among others are: Bessie Head's Maru and Margaret Cadmore mentioned already, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* as well as Alifa Rifaat's Ni'ma in *An incident at the Gobashi household*. It is even exemplified by the life of Percy Bysshe Shelley, who is a writer himself.

Evidence of their non-materialistic relationship is further manifested in the endurance and depth of their relationship. Mwhaki and Njoroge's relationship beats time, distance, change and subscribes to Shakespeare's observation in Sonnet 116 which is entitled *Let me not to the marriage of true minds*. This happens when Njoroge goes to Siriana and Mwhaki to a training college for teachers. They keep missing each other. As an expression of that, Mwhaki writes a letter to Njoroge in which she expresses her goodwill to him as she states:

You don't know how much I miss you. For the last few days, I have been thinking of nothing, but you. The knowledge that you are so far from me makes the thought very painful. But I know what you are doing there. I know you'll do well because you got the determination. I trust you. (p.112)

The letter above shows generosity, and it also expresses the fact that there is no competition in their relationship. Instead, there is goodwill in spite of the fact that Mwhaki has not been able to continue with secondary education while Njoroge has. This does not make Mwhaki feel inadequate and no jealousy arises from this. She misses Njoroge and she expresses her trust in him. This is the strength of the soul of youth. This obviates the fact that the fear that normally possesses those who are above in the social strata does not exist with Mwhaki. In their quest to clean up the social environment for an egalitarian society, these youths demonstrate a relationship which outclasses that of her father versus Njoroge's as well as that of and Mr. Howlands, the white farm owner and Ngotho his labourer which were characterized by hatred and exploitation. Their love outweighs the rancour that has since the day of the meeting at Kipanga turned their parents into enemies (p.57-60). As mentioned before, this erotic relationship by Ngugi's youth is trans-generational, trans-national and trans-racial, and it is a universal attribute which, more like art, rejects social rigidity (Ngugi, 2012). This trait in the youth positions them as the age group of choice to remake the world. Before closing this discussion on the two it is crucial to point to the reader that these youths are violating the disires of their mothers who each would not want her child to associate with children of the rival family. These mothers' 'social tastes' have been determined by religion and class.

6.2.1 Youth breaking the colour bar

While Mwhaki and Njoroge's affair demolishes social stratification at an intra-racial level, Steven and Njoroge demonstrate yet another ability of the youth to destroy a *psychosis* called racial prejudice. With their age naturally allowing them to absorb new ideas and their opportunity to take part in sport as spectators, the two young men are an embodiment of the contribution liberated youth can make towards the social re-arrangement and the building of a deracialised society. Their understanding of racial bigotry is not shallow. These two youths meet at a soccer match of their respective schools in Siriana (*Weep*, pp.109-112). They have now matured and outgrown their boyhood *paranoia*. Ngugi represents them in the Vygotskian social constructivist mode as they jointly engage in matters of progressive social analysis. This is captured by the narrator in the words:

Stephen could easily recall the many times he had hidden in the hedge near his home with the object of speaking to Njoroge or any other of the children. (*Weep*, p.110)

Stephen does not only cogitate upon this, but he also confesses that central to his confusion is the word fear (p.110). He explicitly states that: "I was afraid that you might not speak to me or you might not need my company." Njoroge makes an almost similar confession in these words: "I was sorry, I ran away from you. I too was afraid." (*Weep*, p.110). With the curiosity inherent in youth, Ngugi remedies the animosity of racial segregation by dissecting the psychology behind this social orientation in Njoroge's utterance as he states:

Yes it's strange. It's strange how you do fear something because your heart is already prepared to fear, because maybe you were brought up to fear that something, or simply because you found others fearing... That's how it's with me (p.110).

This scene can further be given a heading "the diagnosis of racism by youth" as it represents the two young men probing into the root of racism and *paranoia*. In so doing, they open their minds to new possible worlds and simultaneously empower themselves for a better social reality. Their conversation shows possibilities of a new world order of inter-racial and global brotherhood. While in Kenya, the elderly politicians are engrossed in racial politics and nationalism, the youth are teaching each

other lessons which help them become responsible parents of the future who will lead their children towards social integration. This will have a positive impact on their nation as everyone would then claim their space to contribute to the common wealth of humanity at country level. This will manifest itself when all members are able to contribute socially, politically, technologically, and scientifically and economically towards nation building. The world they aspire to, is the one in which no individual will be barred from submitting their intellectual contribution towards solving the challenges of the human race. Additionally, their dialogue is symbolic of a plea for a settlement of disputes by negotiation.

This conversation by the youth has been so well crafted by the author to reveal the social engineering that belies racism. Pragmatically and semantically analyzed, we find the following rhetorical device, the use of the passive in the statement, "Your heart is already prepared." (p.110) Critical reading of the statement naturally leads to the following questions and answers: who is preparing the heart for fear to reside in it and the answer becomes, those who are responsible for the upbringing. The answer implicates the elderly characters, their parents. However, the youth have in spite of all these impediments begun what is called "self-authoring" and "agentiveness" in their identity construction.

These youths' racial affiliations make their discourse even more valuable in terms of the socio-political possibilities inherent in them. One is white and the other is black. Symbolically, this shows that the problem between Europe and Africa can be solved through verbal exchanges. Furthermore, the conversation shows that the youth are more positively predisposed towards social cohesion than their biological parents. For instance, Mr. Howlands and Ngotho have never looked into their problem in the manner their children do. This fictional account is true about youth as it can be observed in Athol Fugard's *My Children My Africa's* the metaphor of a debate which features youth predominating. It also resembles that of two South African music groups of the eighties which are, Juluka, by Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu as well as a gospel music band which called itself Friends First. These two performing arts groups consciously resolved to defy racial segregation by forming inter-racial music bands. This is the cause for Johnny Clegg's imprisonment which happened while he was still a teenager. (Korpe & Reitov, 2004).

6.3 Youth as agents of social reconstruction in *Petals of Blood*

6.3.1 Mukami martyred

The reconstruction of society for the better becomes more passionate among the youth in the novel above. In this novel, these socio-political activists include Karega, Mukami, Wanja, Abdulla and Joseph. This section of the chapter begins with Mukami, a young “rebel” whose father Ezekieli owns vast tracts of land and he can also grow pyrethrum, a crop specially grown by Whites and sell-outs. Her father displays an exploitative attitude towards his own labourers. Even his own family suffers from his tendency to hoard money. The narrator reports that he still feeds his children on primitive meals (p.36). His workers are poorly paid. This resulted in a march, which was led by Miriamu who is Karega’s mother. This old lady is one of the very few elderly characters with a revolutionary mind in Ngugi’s novels. This conflict between Miriamu and Ezekieli lives for a long time until their children have grown up. Mukami, like Nyawira in *Wizard of the Crow* also becomes the model of class suicide (Ngugi: 2012). This is demonstrated in this way. In spite of the fact that Mukami is a child of a rich person, she still does not have a problem with doing the job of a peasant child. In order for her to demonstrate her commitment to an ideal of social reconstruction and class defiance, she stoops so low as to collect pyrethrum with a child of her father’s employee at weekends (p.13). Exposed to their humanness, as a result of her intermingling with them which in the case of a stratified society would have been deprived of through segregated residential arrangements, she ends up falling in love with Karega, the younger brother to Ndigure. She has to deal with several hurdles before she renches herself apart from the forces which align her with social stratification and exploitation. Firstly, she has to ignore the pain of her father as she befriends the younger brother to the man who cut off his ear. Secondly, she befriends the son of her father’s ‘enemy,’ Miriamu, who once led the workers’ march against him. In doing this, she aligns herself with forces of human progress against a common belief, which states that, “Blood is thicker than water.” She obviously has considered the material loss she would sustain as a result of her choice, but then counted them nothing compared to the moral imperatives of her strong belief in the maxim.” I am because you are.” This, however, invites victimization on her.

Her victimization is paradoxical. She suffers rejection from her father, but Mukami does not recant, instead, she opts for suicide (p.228). Her death elevates her to martyrdom. This behaviour is common in a revolutionary setting where, in most cases, the guerillas would rather commit suicide in the face of arrest rather than permitting the enemy soldiers and or the police the joy of capturing and torturing them. An example of this in Mafikeng where this text is written from, is of 1986 in Seweding village where an Umkhonto we Sizwe guerilla opted for suicide rather than being apprehended by the enemy after killing a White police officer. Mukami does this to hurt her father and to make a statement that her life is not an object to please her parents, especially, when they are on the wrong side of virtue. She too like Head's Maru, would rather not live instead of offering her life to perpetuate an ideal she is at war with. In her life and death, Ngugi casts an ameliorated perception on youth rebellion. The representation of this youth activist *de-pathologises* youth as a stage of rebellion and gives a new interpretation which instead of focusing on her rebellion, rather concentrates on this youth's attempt to free her life and carve some space for herself to live her own ideal which is rooted in social justice and egalitarianism. Mukami's behaviour is compatible to two other youth activists in literary worlds. These are Isabel Dyson in Fugard's *My Children My Africa* and Mwhaki in *Weep Not child*, in this very study, it can then be concluded that the author wants her life and suicide to be seen as acts of philanthropy and human preservation.

She is further represented as being positively predisposed towards the children of the poor. This is evident in several things she does, especially, for Karega. Firstly, she wants to know why Karega has not gone to school. This is a direct confrontation to the re-invention of cycle of poverty Karega is already entrapped in. Subsequent to that, she encourages him to go to school and through the influence of this female youth, Karega resumes his education. Secondly, from her parents' opulence, she feeds Karega with plums and pears, and thereby distinguishes herself as an agent of wealth re-distribution.

Mukami's socio-political activism grows from protest to action. Firstly, she believes that Karega also deserves a chance to build his career. She, then takes this desire to a more practical level by accompanying and helping him to augment his chances of acquiring education. Her *praxis* here is shown in this, when Karega is collecting

pyrethrum during the weekend, Mukami comes and helps him. Her commitment to Karega as her object of philanthropy becomes even more manifest in her conversation with him. Ngugi also represents her as conscious agent against colonialism. He captures their socially ameliorating conversations in which these two youths, that is her and Karega, spend some time together discussing topics such as *Uhuru* (Petals/p.216)

Mutual appreciation at both human and gender levels as foundations for peaceful co-existence are manifest among Ngugi's youths. This is evident in Mukami's character profile. It is Mukami, the female youth, who spearheads her's and Karega's destiny as she teaches Karega prayer and asks him to go with her to church. This brand of Christianity is in agreement with the interpretation held by Muthoni in *The River Between* and Fidel Castro (Betto: 1986). Unlike that of her father, her Christianity is one that dispences and never takes. She is not in the habit of taking from others, but she would rather give to them. To the request, Karega consents and Mukami does not mind being seen with Karega, a poor woman's child. Just like Njoroge and Mwhaki, the two begin to dream of university, marriage and children (p.218). They would even "quarrel" about the sex of their first-born. Their disagreement is, however, ameliorative, as it is characterised by selflessness and altruism; which is to say, instead of her own sex, Mukami prefers to have a boy child first and thus giving priority to the happiness of others before her own. Similarly, Karega prefers the female instead of a male child. It would go vice versa. Mukami would express her wish that she likes a boy and Karega would say a girl. What the author is communicating here is a great sense of subconscious mutual gender appreciation and not depreciation. Mukami is probably fantasizing on the reproduction/perpetuation of her alter-ego. The same is true of Karega who has also reached the final stages of Kohlberg's moral reasoning development. Based on this textual evidence, we can conclude that their relationship is gender *biophilic* instead of 'othering'. It is devoid of the self-seeking attitude which normally regards boy children a better sex especially referring to Karega who might have wanted his first born to be a male.

It would also do justice to Karega's identity and world view to mention explicitly that he holds a progressive attitude towards women. This is something the author probably wants the reader to hold him in high esteem on the basis of. This can be learned from

the fact that in his culture, boy children are preferred to girl ones. According to Ms. Mbugua, a Gikuyu native who has volunteered to provide insight on her Gikuyu culture, everytime a boy child is born in a marriage, the husband must top up the bride price he was charged before birth. That is to say, every time a boy child is born, the husband owes the family of the wife an additional sum of bride price. This view on the importance of the male children is evident in the orature of the tribe where one of the characters in appreciation to the initiative of the youth in *Petals of Blood* claimed that “where there is a boy child, the head of a he goat will always be eaten” (p.138). This is the same attitude which has enraged the narrator in Dangarembga’s novel mentioned earlier on as she begins her story with the words “I was not sorry, when my brother died.” Damgarembga (1988). This mental outlook towards his society is evidently reversed by Ngugi’s youth above.

We also witness commitment to revolution among Ngugi’s youths. This becomes more manifest in their family relations. Central to the sense of justice Mukami adheres to, is the conflict between Karega’s brother, Ndigure and her father. This guerilla, is the one who actually cut off Ezekieli’s ear and yet the children Karega and Mukami are resolving to live together forever. The cutting of his ear is symbolic to the lack of humility and cooperation necessary for victory against the forces of colonialism. In so doing, Ngugi positions the youth as the agent of discipline. This attribution of agentativeness to youth in matters of discipline is repeated in *Wizard of the Crow* as well. As a matter of choice, their relationship disregards the knowledge they share with the reader on the missing of Ezekieli’s ear. In Mukami, Karega sees a woman he should spend the rest of his remaining days with, and the woman who qualifies to bear him children also. The same is true with Mukami.

In the mean time, Ezekieli, her father who has preached against Mau-Mau gets punished by Ndigure and has not forgotten. Failing to acknowledge his own betrayal to the people, he then asks Mukami to choose between himself and Karega, and Mukami as mentioned earlier on, chooses to commit suicide. This state of moral dilemma imposed by Ngugi on her, turns her into a heroine to both Karega and the reader as well. This arises from the fact that she has paid the highest price for one’s belief. Again, this is a statement to defy social stereotypes and break the ground for a new world order of global brother/sisterhood into existence. Through her martyrdom,

the society is gradually getting purged of the “crippling” social virus, which has hitherto kept some happy at the expense of others.

6.3.2 Karega, unionism and the emancipation of the mind

Like most revolutionary writers, Ngugi believes that the reconstruction of society begins with the reordering of the people’s *Weltanschauung* (world view). In this study, his youths are represented as capable of living out this liberatory belief. In his post liberation fiction, Ngugi relies heavily on the young Karega when it comes to this area of social reconstruction. Perhaps to add another dimension of social reconstruction, one has to make it clear that reconstruction and liberation do not mean a scramble for the relics of the past. In this context, with the objective of advancing humanity, some obscured good of the past is brought into harmony with the modern; and modern in this sense does not mean European, but it means the innovation of “man” the generic.

Karega demonstrates the belief above through his own life. After being thrown into the streets through the power of Chui, the “backslidden” politician, he gets a job as an unqualified teacher. He gets deployed to Ilmorog. On arrival, his first challenge is the destitute condition under which learning has had to occur. This is the first attribute of a leader. He is represented as a youth with the ability to see a need and not wait to be told or elected to attend to it. Firstly, he becomes part of the community and detects its problems and then takes an ingenuity. This attitude towards his people turns him into a hero and his heroism begins to remind the elderly observers watching him of the ancient wisdom: “God sometimes puts wisdom in the mouths of babes” (p. 117). The choice of this *aphorism* which is ignited by the behaviour of the young man is a deliberate rhetorical choice to create some big expectation for the readers, especially, those who share a similar cultural background. In the following paragraphs, we observe how the author/creator’s testimony represents this youth as a socio-political emissary in his literary representation of his everyday world.

The first major event which introduces him to the reader as a force in the reconstruction of a society which is plagued with betrayal is that, textual evidence points toward him as the brain behind the change in several spheres of Ilmorog. His first focal point is to change the mind sets and myths which render them indolent before their exigencies. One of them revolves around Abdulla’s donkey which people have been *ideologised*

to perceive as the cause of drought (p.115). At this stage, their minds have been subjected to poverty which has in turn induced a myopic view of their situation. They can only interact with their reality at a micro socio-political level which is the wish of their rulers as alluded to by Ntsikelelo Moya earlier on. They cannot interrogate their immediate socio political and economic environment. This myopia favours Nderi wa Riera, their MP. Karega, then advises his people that both Abdulla's donkey and the community can be saved. Having won their trust, he then redirects their minds to the real problem. At the heart of its solution is a revolutionary verdict. Subsequent to that, he advises the people to send a delegation to Nairobi with the sole purpose to ensure that the irresponsible MP, Nderi wa Riera is unsettled and exposed. It is at this stage in his activism that one of the elders, Njuguna, sees Karega as "the light to be sent" (p.115). This statement speaks directly to the thesis of this study. The people agree with Karega and for the first time in their history, they are going out on a political mission. They are living according to an existential view expressed in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar(Act 1 Scene 3. line 90, p. 19)in which he insists that: "Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius."This assertion by Shakespeare was stated by Cassius in the play cited above, and it was meant to arouse his hearers into fighting against being enslaved by Ceaser.Though it was used to serve his envy, it contains an important statement of self preservation.

In order to present a much stronger argument in favour of this agent of socio-political change, it would perhaps be ideal to intercept this discussion with some biographical details on this youth. Karega, as mentioned already, is the son of Miriamu, a single mother and a tenant. The report on his vocational development as explained earlier on, is that at the time on the reader encounters him, he has not gone to school yet. The reader's first encounter with him is a representation of his first act of activism which is carried out at a personal level. He is resolving to acquire education. This is instigated by yet another youth, Mukami. He does this by paying school fees with the money he acquires from collecting pyrethrum, a child labour exercise which simultaneously foregrounds personal agency. He goes to school until he earns himself a place at Siriana, an elitist school set up by missionaries. Then comes maturity in his activism as he begins to fight oppression against fellow learners. After leading a strike which has come up as a result of Fraudsham's insults to Blacks, he gets expelled from the school. His insult followed their laughter at the burial of a pet dog. Their laughter

was caused by an alien cultural practice of the human burial of a pet dog. In reaction to that, Fraudsham retaliated with a racial slur. He interpreted their behaviour as emanating from the fact that as racial group, they do not have feelings. His anger towards them rages further as they would not take punishment. Following this incident, Chui, an ex-student who also at the time of his enrolment at the same institution led a strike which demanded respect for black learners and an Afro-centric education comes to the school. This time he comes as a government official, to preside over a disciplinary meeting. This has its new implications. Chui is now politically and financially powerful, and has probably joined the rich and the elderly members of his nation. He eventually expels Karega from school and this begins an era of struggle in the life of this youth.

This dismissal from the elitist school ushers him into radical politics. The result of their verdict, more like that of Malema from the ANC, is self-defeating in that everywhere he goes, Karega then exposes injustice. Following his dismissal from Siriana, he then works for Watali (p.109). His sharp sense of justice cannot help, but question the condition of the working class people. He ends up leaving the employment and goes to the city to look for work. At the city, notices of no employment frustrate him. In some instances, he is told: "come the next day". This happens until he gives up and goes to Ilmorog. Overwhelmed by repeated frustrations, he resolves to bury his frustration in alcohol (p.103).

Ngugi continues to represent Karega in a manner which foregrounds youth resilience, a laudable personality trait. Tapping into his resilience, Karega somehow regains his mental stability and finds a job as an unqualified teacher in Ilmorog. His leadership and pursuit for social justice plunges him into yet another series of challenges. This is influenced by the educational standards as well as the conditions of the learners which are unacceptable to him. Among these conditions is the absence of black teachers in what formally was a white school. It is through his probing into some socio-political realities that some valuable interpretation emerges. It becomes evident that even in the era of liberation, nothing has virtually changed in favour of the Kenyan nationals of African descent.

This young man who earlier on was reported to have been an utter drunkard and was gnawed by a sense of worthlessness in Kamirithu township, has now broken free from the fetters of his past which is a very important observation being communicated by the writer. The youth are therefore represented as an anti thesis of Plato's assertion (as cited in Kehily, 2007) that youth is synonymous to "spiritual drunkenness". What Karega shows here is sobriety as opposed to the state of drunkenness.

Karega's activism like that of Njoroge (*Weep*) and Waiyaki (*River*) approaches the struggle of the natives through education. He too believes in it as a tool for raising Blacks to their senses and to restore all that they have lost since the first day imperialism set her foot on the Kenyan soil. This youth is aware of the psychological damage education introduced by people such as Fraudsham has caused. He is aware of its capacity to eliminate the consciousness of the black man and his suffering from the minds of black children. Faced by this reality, Karega resolves to alleviate the problem of his new home through the aid of the story in which fact becomes intertwined with fiction. Recoursing what one could name the hystorization of the problem, this young teacher tells his pupils the story of Mr. Blackman. An excerpt of that story follows below:

In the beginning, Mr. Blackman had land and the mind and the soul all together and intact. That was day one; on day two, [he continues] his body was taken away and bartered for silver coins. On the third day, they brought priests and educators so they could bind his soul since he was still fighting. With the body and soul being alienated from the soil, Mr. Blackman then started fighting. (p.236)

In his epistemological approach to his nations reality, Karega "exumes" the censored history of the African people and their heroes by conscientizing, not only, the learners, but readers as well about their unsung heroes such as L'ouverture, Koitalel, Waiyaki, and Nat Turner, Dedan Kimathi, Catral, Nkrumah, Nasser, Mondlane and Mathenge.

In an attempt to remember the *debris* of the African mind which have deliberately been scattered by the conquerors, Karega eventually mentions national heroes who include among others, cadres such as Ndigure. He is careful to mention the mythological

ancestry of his ethnic group, Mumbi and Gikuyu and also add that the quest for the African soul has led to blacks taking an oath in 1952, and thereby simultaneously re-enfranchising Mau Mau and validating the need for violence. In putting these words and facts into his youth's utterances, Ngugi exalts Karega to the status of a self-taught hero who possesses a great depth of knowledge of history, particularly, one that the conventional syllabus does not provide. He is represented as someone who does not only rely on the conventional syllabus for historical facts. Like Mistress Masumbuka, a character played by Whoopi Goldberg in Mbongeni Ngema's Musical *Sarafina* (2006), he relentlessly pursues knowledge in a manner reminiscent of Ngugi's Andamesian child spoken of earlier on. This similarly, invites confrontation with the principal later.

Their conflict revolves around the issue of Curriculum. Karega's contestation against the Europeanization of the curriculum, especially, the liberal arts, reveals in him, an understanding of the capacity of this area of knowledge as an effective tool for colonization, neo-colonization, memory erasure and sustenance of an ideology which is responsible for the grievances he mentions later in this section. We will resort to literary theory in order to substantiate on this assertion.

The reading of Karega's demand against Eurocentric history is justified by literary theorist, Cullier (1997:37). According to Cullier, in the nineteenth century, literature is said to have emerged as an extremely important idea, a special kind of writing which was charged with several functions. Among others, it was made a subject of instruction in the colonies of the British Empire; it was charged with giving the natives an appreciation of the greatness of England and engaging them as grateful participants in a historic civilizing enterprise. These functions have an impact which Karega wants to save his people from. It is the very intellectual poison which Kgotso Seatlholo decried earlier on. This literary theorist continues, "at home, it would counter the selfishness and materialism fostered by the new capitalistic economy. He continues to acknowledge the double edgedness of literature which resonates with Karega's stance as he states that it was used to counter the values of the middle class and the aristocrats. It gave the workers a stake in the culture that materially relegated them to a subordinate position. Its replacement by a more Afrocentric version would play a counter hegemonic role in favour of the workers Karega wants to liberate. Hence his demand that European one be replaced by the Afrocentric one.

Even as a teacher, Ngugi still represents him, in heroic terms despite his lack of “qualifications”. He is careful to let the reader acknowledge that this young teacher does not only present facts but he also possesses the art to lure the learners into liking what they learn. He presents historical facts in a poetic manner and thereby makes it irresistible and inerasable. This poeticizing is indicative of the passion he has for Africa and its people. Another important aspect in representation is the amount of space allotted him in the whole text. Having impressed the author with his insight on philanthropists and martyrs, Ngugi rewards Karega, his own creation, with a larger share of time to impart his perception altering observations not only to his learners, but to the reader as well.

This youth’s heroism is animated by contrast. Despite being a high School dropout, Karega’s generative mind is compatible to that of great thinkers/educational philosophers famous for their theory on education and democracy. His theory echoes Critical Pedagogy which among its adherents are revolutionaries such as Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Ira Shor, Stanly Aronovitz, Donald Macedo, Peter Mc Laren and Roger Simon. According to George (2001:92), critical pedagogy engages students in analysis of the unequal relations that produce and are produced by cultural practices, institutions (including schools), and it aims to help students to develop the tools that will enable them to challenge this inequality (p.92). A close reading of Karega’s demands on curricula change, both while he was a learner and when he is a teacher, shows that his pedagogical philosophy leans towards Critical pedagogy. It can further be described as liberatory, empowering, radical and engaged. This way of viewing curriculum and education is also called pedagogy of possibility by George (2001). This is the representation of youth as intellectuals.

With the above, Karega is represented as a youth with a clear sense of direction with regard to his pedagogy and teaching philosophy. His education is aimed at producing learners with a consciousness that allows for engagement in the remaking of their world. In addition to the greatness Karega derives from sharing a worldview with the African icons above, it would do justice to have a few of these individuals to be investigated for who they are and what they stood for. In the following paragraphs, an attempt is made to give the reader the rationale for the choice of these individuals in

Karega's speech and provide more insight into them. The aim here is to augment what Karega could not provide due to textual space economics. This position is encouraged by the realization that the author does not want to give the reader everything so as to create a feeling that Karega possesses infinite knowledge on history, a discipline which is so central to Ngugi's writing (Ogude, 1999). There seems to be a deliberate effort by Ngugi to seduce the reader into admiring Karega by provoking inquiry on those icons being "re-membered" to the African consciousness. This assertion is supported by phenomenological approach to textual analysis as mentioned in the methodology chapter.

We now proceed into yet another aspect of Karega's heroism as we focus on the gravity of his insight into politics. His view of the struggle is not mono-centric. That is to say, he does not think of himself and his Kenya alone, but to him, what the Kenyans are experiencing is what every other African is going through. His heroes are African political icons. They are of the continent and not the country. The vision of Haile Selassie, Marcus Garvey, Kwame Nkrumah and Thabo Mbeki of a one unified Africa is the ideal by which his learners should live. He prepares them for a broader self-concept. In so doing the African leader and his quest from the native land to the Diaspora are given publicity. That is to say, instead of African learners getting more information about foreigners, they should rather start by knowing heroes, past and present, in their immediate race and context. Textual evidence shows that these beliefs which he wants to inculcate in the African mind have always been with him even when he was still a student at Siriana (p.170).

For several reasons, his pedagogical approach dubs him a great education philosopher. Firstly, owing to its presentation and the energy of its presenter, the story of Mr. Blackman could not leave Karega's learners without arousing curiosity. One such learner is Joseph, a boy displaced and separated from his family during the war and now adopted by another youth. Evidence of his ability to create a dialogical class further emerges from the provocation it arouses on Joseph's curiosity. This learner shows signs of interaction with his environment, which he begins to interrogate. The question he asks reveals some of the myths people's souls have been bound with. It reveals that the use of religion as the opiate of the masses as it alludes to the myth that white people who are fewer in number have bigger brains, and that blacks should

then really be called the children of Ham; the son of Noah who was cursed to become a servant to his brothers (*Petals/238*).

Secondly, his quest for a liberating education occurs also in his arguments with his principal, Munira, at Abdulla's drinking place. Munira reminisces and remembers how his fault finding mission finally caught up with Karega. He does confess to himself that he started having a problem with Karega's lesson contents and the kind of literature he was exposing children to. Munira remembers himself talking about the protection of the children's minds. In the mold of the principal in the film *Sarafina* (Ngema, 2006) as mentioned already, Karega's principal wants children to learn and memorize facts, but they should not proceed to the level of applying them to their exigencies. That is what should be taught, no interaction with those facts at a critical level (p.246). By inference, in this principal's teaching philosophy which is lodged in the subconscious, History and information should be farfetched from the reality of the children. This attitude towards education is inherited from the white master who had been deposed, but now is being reinstated by their native surrogates. This situation is strongly represented in his novel, *Devil on the Cross* (1980), which is a sequel to this novel. Karega is thus thrust against an establishment whose mission is to ensure stagnation and counter-revolution. This; however, does not in any way diminish his status and contribution towards the intellectual re-awakening of his people. During the struggle, demands for better education were made, and after, the maintenance of the colonial education system and its goals became the goal of the new black *bourgeoisie*. What one sees here is the withdrawal of allegiance from the core values of the struggle and a renewed allegiance to what was inadmissible before. Karega becomes a victim of this. His victimization emerges from the fact that Munira, as the head teacher/principal, does not want children to be taught "propaganda" about blackness and African peoples. He believes that the fact that children know the tribe they belong to is enough. He is somersaulting back to the issue of tribalism, which is the seed of disintegration sown by the erstwhile government of imperialism and later revived by Nderi wa Riera for the maintenance of poverty. The perpetuation of tribalism helps the new *bourgeoisie* to divide the people so that exploitation can thrive on their division. They are not supposed to learn about themselves even after liberation and this is what enrages Karega.

Ngugi adroitly weaves the scene above in a manner which firstly represents Karega as a victim of the authorities, but then turns fortunes against Munira's *hubris*. The principal had almost come to a feeling of victory over his surbonate when Karega seized the moment to hit back and express his invincible soul in as far as the struggle of a black man is concerned. He starts by lashing at the emphasis of facts alongside the truth as he states:

"Man [sic] is a thinking being from the time he is born to the time he dies." (p.246)

Karega then overwhelms Munira with his scientific, psychological and philosophic understanding of perceptions. He expresses that those who give facts can select only those facts, which can socialize their receiver in a way that is beneficial to them; this explains why the guardian of this domesticating education immediately mentions them. He does not hide the fact that, Munira is reminding him of Chui, a post-liberation comrade who has "backslidden" from the ideals he could die for during the colonial era.

Thirdly, the recording of Karega's conversation with Munira is another instance which demonstrates that youth are capable of logic. He begins to mention facts to Munira and other teachers. Among them, he selects some points which to him do not exclude the word "fact." As if he is attempting to indoctrinate his addressee, Karega recourses some phonoaesthetics (rhyme) towards the plea for a re-evaluation of the known as he states the following:

The oppression of black people is a fact, the Diaspora of blacks is a fact, Africa is one of the richest continents with infinite possibilities for renewal and growth is a fact, Our people fought against Arab slave raiders is a fact, and "That our people resisted European intrusion is a fact.(p.247)

After mentioning all these factors, Karega then clinches his philosophy of education for the new post liberation Kenya in the following paragraph.

Our children must look at the things that deformed us yesterday, that are deforming us today. They must also look at the things which formed us yesterday, that will

creatively form us into a new breed of men and women who will not be afraid to link hands with children from other lands on the basis of an unashamed immersion in the struggle against the things that dwarf us (p.247).

Two important observations which enhance Karega's stature as a socio-political activist arise from what Karega is stating. One is political, and the other is educational. In the first instance, this represented him as possessing depth in the origin of his socio-political *status quo*. He exudes a heightened sense of judgment with regard to his socio-political reality. Being the main character who champions the re-connection of his current socio-political reality to Kenyan history, critical reading of *Petals Of Blood* urges the readers to consult with the *apologia* of history as a discipline in order to derive a more vivid picture of Karega's heroism and capacity to reform society. According to Rice Jr. (1978) in his work, *The foundation of Early Modern Europe: 1460-1559*, renaissance historians postulated that history is a guide for life, and that its value to humanity is that it incites them to virtue and discourages vice. They further add that it is the mother of experience and the grand mother of all wisdom and therefore the right discipline for training future statesmen in politics and war. They justify their claim by attributing the wisdom and accumulated experience of a life time of the old to it. Inductively, they then arrive at a conclusion that its reading is an accumulation of vicarious experience. On the basis of the above, it can therefore, be concluded that reading Karega against Tosh's observation that "History holds clue to human destiny," (Tosh, 2010:29). He is therefore represented as a social reformer.

Of all the characters in this novel, young and old, it is Karega who demonstrates passion about the political history of his country. In the light of the above observation and many that are forthcoming, it is still insisted in this study that the youth are a socio-political force and not the ignoramasses who are naïve about the affairs of their lands. Those who are naïve are, by default or predestination, only as creatures of a conservative state, been deliberately decapacitated. Even though we are discussing Karega, it would do some amount of good to our argument to remind the reader that Ngugi himself was regarded as an elder while he was still a primary school pupil. This was due to the fact that his society naively or as a matter of convenience apportioned soundness of mind to age. Controversial as it may seem, this presentation of the youth as a preserver of history, by extension, is in itself a claim that the youth do possess

the capacities Rice alludes to in the paragraph above. Reference to History as contribution made by the citation above further “de-stereotypes” the youth as inexperienced members of society and simultaneously conveys the status of statesmanship on Karega without waiting for an ageistic and gerontocratic approval. His understanding of history combined with the agency and generativity inherent in his stage of development, prescribes Karega the character urgently needed by the Ilmorog and Kenya of his era. It is even more important for the reader to note that Karega’s handling of history is not rivaled by any, including Matigari himself.

Yet another important observation is that, this educationist, philosopher, politician and anthropologist, who is young, espouses an educational approach, which is universal and socialistic. He is against a system of education which is geared towards the production of instruction takers. As mentioned already, he eschews a pedagogy which empowers the mind. This universal outlook of pedagogy by a young person is not an exaggeration as it is analogous to that of a one-time Soweto SRC president in 1977 by the name of Khotso Seatlholo. In one of his addresses Seatlholo states:

We shall reject the whole system of Bantu Education whose aim is to reduce us, mentally and physically, into “hewers of wood and drawers of water” for the white racist masters. Our whole “being” rebels against the whole system of existence, the system of apartheid that is killing us psychologically and physically. The type of Education we receive is like poison that is destroying our minds; it is reducing us to intellectual cripples that cannot take a seat within the world community of academics. It is killing an inherent sense of creation in us and thus it is frustrating us. Twenty years ago, when Bantu education was introduced, our fathers said: “half a loaf is better than no loaf” But we say: “half a gram of poison is just as killing as the whole gram” thus we strongly refuse to swallow this type of education that is designed to make us slaves in the country of our birth. (cited in Kane & Berman, 1978:24)

The resonance in the ideas of the two youths above, one fictional and the other factual, satisfactorily justifies the categorization of Karega as a philosopher. He is

represented as a young man with a penchant for knowledge. That is to say, he has *philos* (love) for *Sophia* (knowledge). An objective view of these two youths, should have won them position of authority in the education systems of both Kenya (fictional) and South Africa (factual). It is unfortunate that Karega's milieu has been "hijacked" and "hacked" by the *necrophilic* power of the new *comprador* class. This class is inherently against light/knowledge or guthera in Gikuyu, and like the writer himself, he too was eliminated from the system through expulsion.

The expulsion of Karega from the education system does not mark the end of his engagement with social justice issues. It rather takes him to another and more powerful institution in the existence of the society. That is economics. His social involvement evolves into yet another level which is even more central according the Marxist view. It is here where his commitment to social reformation, revamping and modernization of Ilmorog reaches its zenith.

Following the march to Igbal Iglud house in Nairobi which is his brain child, several incidents which foreground his passion for social justice ensues. The first one is a visit by the government official. Subsequent to this, an aeroplane surveying the area is seen in the air. The plane crashes and kills Abdulla's donkey, but the purpose and intention is not defeated. Many new developments which would have not occurred without the initiative and bravery of this youth follow. These include: the development of a market (*Petals/256*), Abdulla started a small drinking place which begins to thrive. The economy gets re-enchanted and modernized as women begin to have markets for their Agricultural produce. Abdulla's business also gets extended, a shop, a bar, a beer hall, dance place and five rooms are added to his compound.

Several more developments indirectly linked to youth initiative occur. A government minister comes to Ilmorog for the first time (p.190-194). Following this visitation, a shopping complex is built, an African Economic Bank also gets established in Ilmorog; loans are made available to farmers, people receive title deeds for their lands, farming gets commercialized and Education which has always been in a shambles at the time when Karega arrived in Ilmorog also receives attention as new classrooms and staff houses are built and more trained staff members are recruited. Even people such as Mzigo, who would never come to an area of his inspection as an educational

supervisor, eventually, comes to Ilmorog. The demography of the once abandoned territory also experiences radical changes as population increases due to outsiders who have come to look for better opportunities; all these happen because of an idea, which comes from the young man, Karega. This in itself is a model of development initiated by ordinary people who are led by youth.

It is, however, unfortunate that Karega never benefits from these new developments which have been stimulated by his intellect. After being dismissed from the employment of the school, his life keeps alternating from looking for a job, selling, organising vendors into unions and organising trade unions. His political ingenuity becomes even more manifest in the passion with which he attends to the plight of the working class. He starts preaching of a new world. As he theorizes about their situation, he begins to see salvation as lying only on the unity of the peasants and workers. Emanating from this, is his metamorphosis, into a more explicit and radical approach to politics. Subsequent to the above, he begins to preach socialism and nationalization of the land. Furthermore, he avowedly “crusades” against individual land ownership as he asserts that:

Kenya, the soil, was the people’s common shamba, and there was no way it could be right for a few, or a section, or a single nationality, to inherit for the sole use what was communal...
(Petals/302)

Like Matigari, though an elderly character, in a later novel, the plight of the poor becomes his reigning concern. He is disturbed by the eviction of the peasants from their land. His keen spirit and alertness in socio-political and economic issues allows him the sensetivity to discern a common pattern in the dealings of the colonizers and their successors. He ends up being imprisoned, once, for these beliefs. It is during his imprisonment that this young character finds an opportunity to reflect on his new nation. Karega, comes to view Kenya as:

The world in which some could only be clean by wiping their dirt shit and urine on others. A world in which one could only be healthy by making others carry his leprosy. A world in which one could only be saintly and morally upright by prostituting others.
(Petals, p.306)

The observation above demonstrates the extent to which the youth are involved against those forces which reduce their societies to under-development. At the end of the story, Karega, the “gad fly” and the “Andersian child” is subjected to the fate of social reformers such as Socrates, the biblical John, Makhanda, Mandela and many others who had to face either death or imprisonment. Additionally, Ngugi represents him in messianic terms as he shares with his reader that, his mission is carried on by his disciples. Even in prison, Karega still creates disciples.

Textual evidence shows that Karega’s stature as a national hero is ironically developing even at the time when the *comprador* class had contained his body through imprisonment. The police officer in charge of him finds the need to confess that he indeed does not enjoy being an enemy of the people and that he is forced to continue with the job because of hunger. Interpreted against Ngugi’s background as a product of missionary education, one finds an evocation of two stories, one in the bible and the other in Shakespeare’s *MacBeth*. This report is an inter-text of the biblical story when Paul and Silas were incarcerated by the illegitimate government of the Romans. In this story, the prison guard ends up asking the detainees for advice on how to be liberated from serving the regime which makes him act against his own conscience. By extension, he is asking to subscribe to their world view irrespective of its consequences. Similarly, the police officer assumes the position of powerlessness before Karega as he confesses to Karega that: “I...we want you to know that despite what has happened...some of us are glad to know of your struggle for us workers...we feel with you...only that we endure because, we must eat...” (p.343). The second similar incident is recorded in the play mentioned above just towards the *denouement* when Ross reports to Mac Duff that Macbeth’s soldiers are behind him out of compulsion and not loyalty, he actually states that they have rebelled (*Macbeth*, Act 4, Scene 3). Ngugi’s rhetorical strategy here deserves a bit of pragmatic analysis. Firstly, the punctuation of the speech shows some false starts and reparations. In spoken language, these are manifestation of the fact that he esteems Karega highly and that Karega as his audience, has not only had influence on his mind but even on the design of his speech. His supra-segmentals are evidently full of, not just respect for the youth, but reverence as well.

Karega's war against social injustice evidently continues even while he is in prison, and this elevates him to the position of historical figure such as Stanley Mathenge (*Sicherman, 1990*). His, incarceration, just like that of Mathenge, a one time Mau Mau general and early target of the British imperial forces whose course led to the death of hundred and fifty people including a woman named Muthoni, leads to riots in Ilmorog. A young female activist by the name of Akinyi visits him and reports that, they are fighting, and that they have organised a strike. The strike is going to be led by the movement of the workers including their unemployed comrades in Ilmorog. This report seems to echo some important telepathetic connection between this activist who is a prisoner and his comrades out of prison. It further imbues this activists with the capacity to impart vision so effectively that his followers are able to own it and make it their own.

His imprisonment does, not only, reward him with honour, but it also attests to his power to cause civil unrests as we learn from the report brought to him while still under police custody. Among other comforting reports brought to him is that, in Nairobi, the workers and the poor have begun to retaliate against what he already described as jiggers. The reports add that, one of the government officials was killed while he had gone to collect some money for the rent from his impoverished tenants. The report adds that those who killed the government officials called themselves *Wakambozi*, which means, the society of the One World Liberation or those who liberate. This is a sort of international socialist movement for the liberation of the working class citizens of the world that was setting its foot on the country with the consequence that those who inherited the position and attitudes of the former imperial masters of Kenya are purged out of the society by those whose sweat built the economy of Ilmorog. This is the invisible spirit of Karega. It cannot be put behind the bars. While Karega's body is "caged", his soul lives on and his absence witnesses a more radical alteration of the society. This happens even though he is temporarily removed from interaction with the community and the union. Ngugi's representation of this youth and his tribulations runs parallel to that of Jesus Christ of the Christian holy books whose influence became stronger after his departure from his disciples.

It would be fair to state that the heroism with which Karega is represented is necessitated by his intellectual involvement in the controversy of Africa and its people

becoming the burden of the western world when it is naturally endowed with the enormous capacity for wealth. An appreciation of his world outlook anchors on the fact that, firstly, he is young and secondly, his insight surpasses his educational qualifications. For instance, his words on the quotation above demonstrate an awareness of certain economic realities of his country. As part of Africa, Kenya also has a share in the natural material and economic capacity recorded in two nonfictional works by Ashimolowo (2007:53-56) Ayittey (1992: 20). This representation of youth will become more relevant to the thesis when read in the light of phenomenology. Due to textual space economics, we will cite Ayittey in his work entitled *Africa Betrayed* as he states:

Africa's natural resources and mineral wealth are widely acclaimed as vast and diversified. It (Africa) has 40 percent of the world's potential hydroelectric power supply, the bulk of the world diamonds and Chromium, 30 percent of Uranium in the non-communist world, 50 percent of the world's gold, 90 percent of its Phosphate, 40 percent of its Platinum, 7.5 percent of its coal, and 8 percent of its none Petroleum reserves, 12 percent of its natural gas, 3 percent of its iron and ore, and millions upon millions of acres of untilled agricultural land. In addition, Africa has 64 percent of the world Manganese, 13 percent of its copper and vast bauxite, nickel and lid resources. It also has such strategic minerals as cobalt, critical in the manufacturing of jet engines, Rhodium, Palladium, Vanadium and Titanium. Without these essential minerals, many industrial plants in the West would grind to a stand still.

He continues:

Africa also accounts for a large share of the world's production in other sectors: 70 percent of Cocoa, 60 percent of coffee, 50 percent of palm oil, and 20 percent of the total petroleum traded in the world market, excluding the United /states and the former Soviet Union (p. 3).

It can be inferred that from the above that in Karega's view, all these resources have been appropriated to the advantage of individuals whose personalities can be described only in metaphorical expressions such as jiggers (p.200). They have intumdiverted what nature has provided for the benefit of every Kenyan to themselves and then turned everyone into their slaves. Karega then explicitly wants this situation changed in favour of those who labour.

What has been said so far about Karega will be incomplete if it fails to include his encounter with Nderi wa Riera during the much to Nairobi. In the light of the above, this discussion returns to an earlier incident of Karega's radicalism. In an incident prior to the one discussed above, Karega shows that indeed the youth are the mainstay of their societies in the era of neo colonialism. In the same meeting where Abdulla draws a picture of the mind of the neo-colonial rulers and the plight of the betrayed, Karega elicits and exposes the "backslidden" mindset of Nderi. Through his questioning, he elicits the hidden malice and deceit haboured by the MP against the poor from this Member of Parliament him. In his exchange with this post liberation politician, Karega forces the MP to state his dislike for population. After he has blamed poverty and unemployment on the irresponsibility of over population on the poor, Karega makes him face his anti-Kenyan sentiments in the question, "So the people are the enemy?" (p.179). Among the issues raised prior to this one are two others in which Karega openly opposes the idea Nderi presents.

The first one happens when Nderi attempts his luck at both constructing the youth as unfit in the economy and shifting the blame of unemployment onto the victims of his party's economic and political failure in the statement: "you look too young to be a teacher, it is good to see a young man with sense these days. Most of the others want to be clerks-white collar jobs and they don't even know how to type." (p.178). Karega forthrightly confronts this distortion by stating that he is sure that most school leavers would be happy for a decent job after finishing school. Inadvertently, this statement by a senior member of the society exposes the cynicism not only of this politician but most elderly members of society. It acts as support for the thesis of this study as well as its rationale.

In this very scene, Ngugi elevates the youth against this elderly character by giving the reader Karega's inner thoughts, which are not part of the response. Hidden from the MP, the narrator reveals the wound which the MP's ignorance has revived and thereby presenting the youth as having a justifiable re-bell-ion. On the other hand, the MP who is posing as a diplomat exposes his naivety as he has not sought the facts about Karega before making allegations. In other words, as compared to that of the other youth by the name, Kiarie, his invention is devoid of an understanding of the concept of Audience Design (see Meyerhof, 2007:42-44). This is manifest in his attempt to attempt manipulation when he has not acquainted himself with facts first. The quotation above provides yet another rationale for the study as it exposes the fact that young people's capacity to think rationally is grossly undermined. The faulty reasoning which is espoused by the MP obviates the viciousness or rather skewedness of excluding the youth in decision making. It, therefore, follows that much as the dictum "no representation no taxation" makes sense, there should not be any parliamentary discussion on the youth without the youth.

In the light of Burroway's observation that one of the ways we understand people is by assessing, partly instinctively, and partly through experience, what they express both voluntarily and involuntarily (Burroway, 2011: 92), we conclude this section on this younger character by extracting some of his involuntary and; therefore, more genuine cogitations with the view to further investigate two of his traits which are statesmanship and an all seeing personality. In other words the author wants his reader to access Karega's thoughts first-hand, thus making him more important as a force against neo-colonialism.

The author decides not to report on Karega through the narrator, but rather allows the reader to witness activism from the characters cogitations. Eavesdropping into his reflection, he allows us to hear the character as he states:

Imperialism: capitalism: landlords: earthworms. A system that bred hordes of round-belly jiggers and bedbugs with parasitism and cannibalism as the highest goal in society. This system and its profiteering gods and its ministering angels and hounded his mother to her grave. These parasites would always demand the sacrifice of blood from the working masses. These few who had prostituted the whole land turning it over

to foreigners for thorough exploitation, would drink people's blood and say hypocritical prayers of devotion to skin oneness and to nationalism even as skeletons of bones walked to the lonely graves. The system and its gods, its angels had to be fought consciously, consistently and resolutely by all the working people! From Koitalel through Kang'ethe to Kimathi it had been peasants, aided by the workers, small traders and small landowners, who had mapped the path. Tomorrow it would be the workers and the peasants leading the struggle and seizing power to overturn the system and all its prying bloodthirsty gods and gnomonic angels, bringing to an end the reign of the few over the many and the era of drinking blood and feasting on human flesh. Then, only then, would the kingdom of man and woman begin, they joying and loving in creative labour. . . (344)

Several insights emerge from this reflection. Firstly, he is clear about the cause of his situation. It is the result of the combined evils he mentions in the first line. He then describes them in a language which suggests their dangerous pest-like-nature to man and life in general, and thereby insinuating that if human-kind is to be preserved they be "doomed". Indeed, the people have already begun with the process of weeding/dooming them out of society as the young woman has reported above. This verdict is later carried out by two other youths. One is Wanja, in the same novel and the other is Wariinga in *Devil on the Cross*. From his description of the *status quo*, it is evident that he views the modern leadership as parasites who are middlemen of foreign exploitation who must be consciously and constantly fought. Juxtaposed to this, are his praises to the fathers of the revolution.

Last but not one, this cogitation by the youth further shows that this philosopher-cum-*philanthrop* carries the pain of his people the living and the dead. He is consumed completely by concern for change and restoration to point that he does not even think of his own plight as a prisoner. He is concerned more about the emaciated compatriots and his own mother who was haunted by the deeds of the "blood suckers". One more laudable utterance in his reflection is his gender inclusiveness. The last line which records his ideal society does not exclude women. He is careful not to talk about men the generic, but he explicitly puts women side by side with men. This is consistent with the way he views women as seen in his conversation with his late martyred lover, Mukami.

The last of personal words as an activist are recorded in his conversation with their MP Nderi Wa Riera.

6.3.3 Karega outwits ilmorogan politicians

This greatness of the youth's ability to critique his own society and its politicians is just like the many occasioned by the predicament of youth. It is through him that the reader gets to know the possibilities of conspiracy against the youth, the poor and the children. This victimization extends even to their very existence as human beings. It is through him that we derive a deeper understanding of the cause and gravity of neglect the children of Ngugi's post colonial country are laid bare to. We learn about this in the same meeting where Abdulla draws a picture of the mind of the neo-colonial rulers and the plight of the betrayed. During this very meeting, Karega elicits and exposes the "backslidden" mindset of Nderi and elicits in him through questioning, the hidden malice and deceit haboured by the MP against the poor. The MP has begun to shift blame about the plight of the poor and the unemployed youths from his government. He has begun to blame the people for their lack of restraint in having children-overpopulation. In his exchange with the MP, Karega forces the MP to state his ideas which Karega interprets in the words: "So the people are the enemy." (p.179). Two other issues which have been raised prior to this one are one in which Karega openly opposes the idea Nderi forwards. The first one happens when Nderi attempts his luck at both constructing the youth as unfit in the economy and shifting the blame of unemployment onto the victims of his party's economic and political failure in the statement: "you look too young to be a teacher, ... it is good to see a young man with sense these days. Most of the others want to be clerks-white collar jobs and they don't even know how to type." (P.178). Karega forthrightly confronts this distortion of reality by stating that he is sure that most school leavers would be happy for a decent job after finishing school.

In this very scene, Ngugi elevates the youth against this elderly character by giving the reader, Karega's inner thoughts which are not part of the response. Hidden from the MP, the narrator reveals the wound which the MP's ignorance has revived and thereby representing the youth as having a justifiable rebellion. The MP who is attempting to pose as a diplomat ends up exposing his naivety as he has not sought the facts about Karega before making allegations. In other words, his invention as

compared to that of the other youth, Kiarie, as we have seen earlier is devoid of an understanding of the concept of Audience Design and yet he wants to play the game of manipulation. The quotation above provides yet another rationale for the study as it exposes the fact that young people's capacity to think rationally is grossly undermined. The faulty reasoning which is exuded by the MP obviates the viciousness or rather skewedness of leaving out the youth in decision making. It; therefore, follows that much as the dictum "no representation, no taxation" makes sense, there should not be any parliamentary discussion on the youth without the youth. Secondly Karega corrects another distortion by the MP who blames joblessness on population explosion. This view runs parallel with the view that the African is a sex freak as mentioned earlier on in this study. This *necrophilic* and eschewed thinking about the poor which is consistent among the elderly characters resurfaces even in a later novel, *Devil On The Cross*, where malice prompts one of the rich men to unashamedly assert that: 'Fucking among the poor should be forbidden by a decree.'(p.) The two statements by the modern politicians do indeed prove them as using ideas they have borrowed from somewhere.

With the view to expose their surrogacy and the avarice of the world where they are advised, we compare their attitude to that of some thinkers of the Western world. Focus will be more on the attitude they exhibit towards their own people's right of birth as a problem. This story explains the reason for the neglect of so many children which in Ngugi's fictional works are represented by Joseph and Muriuki. In the following section, we share the story which shows that the lives of Joseph (Petals) and Muriuki (Devil) were "unwanted" by these politicians. Sanger argued "...organized attempts to help the poor were the surest sign that our civilization has bred, is breeding, and perpetuating constantly increasing numbers of defectives, delinquents and dependents." This attitude towards the poor as well as its stereotyping has been borrowed as it is by Nderi Wa Riera. With words being the window into the human soul, one sees the connection between the western view as well as their bourgeoisie representatives in their former colonies. Nderi has mastered "the art of blaming the victim". For further information on the concept, the reader is advised to read a book with the same title written by Ryan (1976:50).

Margaret believed that her alternative to charity is the (live) stocks which she felt were most detrimental to the future of the human race. They have now come to the elimination of the unfit. According to Peterson, also very interesting that Planned Parenthood always targeted the minorities, the unwanted, the disadvantaged or family limitation contraception, abortion and sterilization. More children from the fit, less from the unfit that is the chief issue of birth control (p.51).

As there is no revelation without revolution, this revelation from Wariinga is ominous to revolution. The seed of radical change in heri is sown in her dreams. Through this dream-cum-revelation, the author evokes biblical prophets of old who were daring to death. Wariinga is used as an allusion to the biblical John in the island of Patmos. Ngugi empowers her with the metaphysical which gives her the power to write about the things of the world to come. History, an ameliorated one, is first conceived in a woman. That is, the very womb that one who is eluded as the source of life in *Weep Not Child*. It is rightly interconnected with the future, the concrete as well as the possible.

As the Afrikaner people have observed "*Die apple val nie ver van die boom af nie*". Loosely translated, the proverbial saying means an apple falls not far from the tree, Sanger as a disciple of Thomas Malthus an ardent eugenicist was also impatient. She had really imbibed Malthus work published in six editions between the years 1798-1826. Peterson quotes Malthus' injunction which states:

All children born beyond what would be required to keep up the population to a desired level, must necessarily perish unless room be made for them by the death of grown persons ...therefore we should facilitate instead of foolishly trying to impede, the operations of nature in producing this mortality; and if we dread the too frequent visitations of famine which we compel nature to use. We should sedulously encourage other forms of destruction. Instead of recommending cleanliness to the poor, we should encourage contrary habits. In our towns, we should make the streets narrower, crowd more people in the houses and court the return of the plague. In the country side, we should build our villages near stagnant pools, and particularly encourage settlement in all marshy and unwholesome situations.

The diction used here expresses the intention implied in the phrase “necessarily perish”. It demonstrates that even in real life there are people who can deem it necessary to decide the fate of others. This is the same man-made fate Muturi decides to fight in *Devil on the Cross*. The phrase becomes more interesting through the use of a semantic feature which evokes biblical language. It represents the neocolonial ruling class as *deities*. Another attention deserving phrase is “we should facilitate the operations of nature in producing this mortality”. This explicitly expresses the willingness of the former patriots to eliminate the masses that have now become a burden to the intelligentsia and the *nouveau riche*, who should sedulously encourage other forms of destruction. This advice from the former colonizer who has secretly been consulted by the post liberation politicians should be held responsible for the motion which states that, “Fucking by the poor should be prohibited by a decree.” This statement inadvertently sheds some light into the orchestrated dilemma of the post liberation poor, and the youth seem to be the worst victims.

Ngugi, however, represents the youth as a formidable force against this and similar impotent ideas. It is the youth, Karega, who boldly confronts the MP and asks him if the people have suddenly become the enemy of the politician. Compared to what the native politician stood for as presented by Ngugi and many other African creative writers during the struggle, it is disheartening to think of what human nature is capable of. However, the youth as re-presented in this and other novels by Ngugi are, beyond any shadow of doubt, capable of healing Africa from the effects of this psychologically paralyzing revelation.

Karega's stature in issues of social justice is not an exaggeration of what the youth are capable of doing. In the real world, he is a replica of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS). According to Beckman (2006:117), this student movement which was guided by the Marxist and Leninist principles, proved that they were the custodians of the tenets of the Nigerian struggle. This movement proved itself to be “... the voice of the popular grievances rooted in aspirations and struggles for national liberation”. His representation as a force against imperialism shows him as possessing the same zeal that is in the group Redykuoluos.

6.3.4 The contribution of Wanja

Ngugi's representation of youth as a social and political force does not exclude female ones. In this section, discussion focuses on Wanja who is also a friend to Karega. Outstanding about her as a character is, among other things, the socio-economic and political contribution she makes once she reaches Ilmorog, her refuge home. What she turns out to be alters perceptions about the youth in general. The rise of this once deserted rural village into an economic Ilmorog, owes much of its modernity to the experience and ingenuity of Wanja. She is represented by the author as someone who providence has sent out on a "Diaspora" in order to bring survival skills of the city to the "god-forsaken" village of her grandmother. However, she too has to undergo some character distortion and re-orientation.

The representation of her development as a character naturally draws the attention of the reader to her, not only as a youth, but as a model of good lessons to be learnt by people who are oppressed. Ngugi "mirrors" her life in general, that is to say, he does not only dwell on her exploits but also on a series of his vicissitudes and that in itself foregrounds her desirable traits. Below follows some highlights of her biography. Firstly, she is introduced as an innocent and morally upright child. Her innocence is interfered with by an elderly character, Kimeria who impregnates her and denies responsibility. In reaction to this sabotage of her vocational and ontomological development, she eventually commits adultery and murder. A closer reading of the text then acquits her from both. In the first charge, that is adultery, she gets vindicated by the fact that her society, beginning with her own father failed to protect her from the rampant scourge of Sex-ploitation and its worst manifestation, statutory rape. The act of statutory rape ushers her into abject poverty where she is left only with her body to trade with in exchange for the basic needs for survival. In the second charge, that of murder, the young woman gets absolved by the juxtapositioning of her socially imposed character twist and an acknowledgement of her behaviour as realistic, revolutionary, and existentialistic, philanthropic and patriotic. Concurrence with the aforementioned relies heavily on the consideration of her ideological and ethical terrain her personality has to take its shape from. The paragraph below attempts to shed more light on the relationship between her resolution and the use of the adjectives employed to mitigate her deed above.

In terms of humanitarianism and economy, her exploits are laudable. For instance, she is reported by the narrator as the person behind Abdulla's entrepreneurial success. This includes the extension of Abdulla's business. The use of her experience in prostitution which she later advises Abdulla to use. It is she who tells him to open an escort agency (p.76). However, when she does that, she still feels that she is wicked (p.78). This confession places her among those who can acknowledge their imperfections and therefore are able to change and affirm their wish to continue being human. This sense of remorse is not existent with two elderly characters who are Kimeria (*Petals*) and Waigoko (*Devil*).

She is not only represented with the attributes above, but the reader is given a hint of her traits which point to her leadership capacity. Both her personality and leadership traits are admirable because of the effort she takes to develop herself intellectually. Textual evidence informs the reader that Wanja reads extensively (168). It can be surmised from this that it is these books which fortify her against the frustrations of her life.

Wanja spearheads a paradigm shift in terms of some opinions held towards some traditional institutions. This is manifest in an unpopular choice she makes, one that has traditionally been thought of as the prerogative of men. She chooses not to marry. This is a different generation of women. While the generation before her's would need marriage as a social and economic security, to Wanja, spinsterhood is a choice and not bad luck. For, indeed, the truthfulness of the claim above, can be surmised from her physical beauty which has even made her fall victim to Kimeria's lasciviousness. Her choice is a statement of declaration in favour of the independence of women. Its second manifestation is evident in her organization of women into a women's self-reliance group called Nyakinyuwa. The members of this sorority have resolved to revive rural agriculture and elevate it to the status of commercial farming. This will obviously lead to imacipation at the level of economy. In spite of her beauty and city experience, she does not have a problem working with her hands.

Ngugi further represents her in a manner that elicits admiration for her. The omniscient narrator reports on a very important question in her cogitations. In her introspection, she asks herself this question: "Why should I become a prisoner of a past defeat? Why

should it always be held against me?" (p.229). In so doing, the young lady elevates her mental capacities and world view to that of the famous civil rights activist, Martin Luther King Junior who insists, "an unexamined life is not worth living."(King, 1963:52)

The curiosity of the young woman mentioned earlier does not result from her vicissitudes, but a trait she has had from her childhood. This is manifest, firstly, in her resoluteness, which is very strong from a very tender age. She has been critical of her father's attitude towards the English.

Secondly, it manifests itself even in economically related issue as she sets her foot where few women dare. She develops into a "lioness" who starts her business which in turn reduces unemployment. Further to that is the fact that even men get employed in those businesses. She owns a fleet of vehicles and a beautiful thatched house, which, thirdly, she later uses to kill/eliminate, the postcolonial blood suckers, Chui, Mzigo and Kimeria, whom she believes, are responsible for the betrayal of the peasants and the working class. Her action, which is their death, is doubly justified. The first justification is derived from an observation of the reality around her life. Her radical and existential interpretation of her own situation resonates with Fanon (1968:154) who has come to understand that:

... wealth is not the fruit of labour, but the result of organised, protected robbery. Rich people are no longer respectable people; they are nothing more than flesh eating animals, jackals and vultures which wallow in the people's blood.

6.4 Youth as agents of socio-political reconstruction in *Matigari*

In this novel, Ngugi represents another young female socio-political activist who unsettles the postmodern politicians, her name is Guthera. Her representation as a character on the side of virtue makes more sense against the biographical details shared below. Just like in the case of Wariinga, Ngugi presents his reader with some vivid biographical details so as to draw sympathy for her. He achieves this by intertwining her biography with a literary technique called moral dilemma.

Firstly, Ngugi's invention of this character serves his communicative intent with the text. It is a sub-conscious representation of his ideal world in which youth make the difference. Guthera's name means the bearer of light. This name foretells of her role in the society. She is born into the world of Ngugi as an agent of enlightenment. She is born of a Christian father who unlike many elderly characters such as Jacobo in *Weep Not Child* and Ezekieli in *The River Between* did not support the colonial government. Her father is a devoted Christian whose influence persuades the young woman to decide to be a born again Christian. She decides that she is going to be holy and will not commit fornication. She indeed manages to live up to this creed even up to the time when her father gets arrested for keeping bullets in his Bible. At the time of the reader's encounter with her, she is still a virgin. Her ability to keep her vows and delay gratification which is the sign of *megalopsuchia* becomes more apparent in the face of challenges. After the pronouncement of her father's death penalty, one policeman approaches her knowing very well that she is vulnerable as she loved her father. He attempts to extort some sexual favours and benefit further from the frustration created by the system the policeman acquiesces to. The girl rejects him in favour of her resolution of her sexual purity, and consequently her father dies. The death of her father leads to the suffering of her siblings as her father was the sole bread winner, however, this leads to yet another manifestation of the greatness of her soul. This greatness starts with the reversal of the resolution she had taken earlier. Guthera then decides to join prostitution so as to feed, clothe and educate her siblings. Conversely, she vows never to give any sexual favours to a policeman with the consequence that she gets mauled by the police dog that hypocritically does this under a thin veneer of cleaning the streets by removing prostitutes. The vivid representation of the girl's background, particularly, her moral development is provided with the aim to *paint* an existential rationale for her behaviour. Her moral choices and questioning of her allegiance to an ecclesiastic world resonates with that of Boro, who in response to his father's loyalty to the seer's words exclaims "To hell with the prophesy."

It would perhaps illuminate further the attitude of the author towards this young character by interpreting what he is probably communicating with the prostitution of Guthera. Firstly, Ngugi deliberately leads his reader to interpret Guthera's prostitution and perhaps that of many young women in the country of his authorship as a moral stance which is beyond their volition and therefore deserving empathy and pardon

eventually. Ngugi defends her resolution to join prostitution by using, a literary technique called “showing and not telling” [sic]. That is to say, he lets the reader realize that it is generosity coupled with altruism and not moral degeneration which is the root of Guthera’s joining of prostitution. The generosity of Guthera against herself and her ingenuity against the corrupt state are further touted by the author during the arrest of Matigari the eponymous character of the novel. Against her vowed belief that she would never give sexual offers to a policeman, Guthera voluntarily entices a policeman into a sexual activity with the objective of releasing Matigari from prison. Though a prostitute this time, she surrenders her strong held belief not to *mammon*, but to a socio-political course whose end is emancipation.

The contribution which this youth use here is that Matigari is not only freed from prison by the younger character, but it is through this young woman that he is also recreated as a mystic rival of the government who cannot be contained by prison. The activism of the youth further lends Matigari, an elderly activist, the capacity to prove that the ruling class are not invincible. It can be surmised from this that prison, as their symbol of power, cannot contain him. Still on this act by Guthera, Ngugi further represents her as a human being capable of returning favours and preserving lives that do not have to perish even if it means abandoning the strongest of her beliefs. Compared to the politicians of her country who have forgotten what the votes of their people have done for them, she is being represented as someone who has not forgotten that Matigari saved her from being killed by the dogs of the state under police command.

Guthera’s behaviour absolves youth from the negative implication of Aristotle’s view on them as he states that, “... it is not appropriate for a young person to be a student of politics, since the young are inexperienced in the actions of life.” (cited in Kehile, 2007:3). Aristotle further states that, since the young are also apt to follow their impulses, they would hear such discourses without purpose or benefit since their end is not knowing but action” (p.3). The generalization by this philosopher does not in any way come near to the truth if applied to Guthera as well as the ninety university students who died fighting a regime that should not exist.

The image Guthera is represented in approximates that of Martin Luther King Junior who once stated,

"A man who has nothing to die for is not worth living" (King, 1963:196). Guthera expresses similar sentiments as she states that it is better to die in pursuit of what is right. This is actually the beginning of self-realization (Prabhupada: 2007) and naming of the world as explained by Freire. This realization is captured in her words as she states, "You see, my entire life has been dominated by men, be it our father in heaven, my father on earth, the priest or all men who have bought my body and turned me into their mattress." (p. 140)

A commendable attribute of this character which emerges from the citation above is her ability to begin to question the forces that have hitherto attempted to circumscribe her life. This normally leads to activism, which firstly manifests at personal level and then towards fellow human beings. She becomes even more attention deserving as an activist when she is perceived against her background.

6.5 Youth as agents of socio-political change in *Devil on The Cross*

6.5.1 Introduction

In this novel, Ngugi represents the youth as a socio-political force at a more advanced level of activism than they are represented in the previous novel. In this novel, they show themselves as the *intelligentsia* in the struggle against social injustice. He seems to be even more explicit with regard to the view that needs to be held concerning youth activism in *Devil on the Cross*, his fifth novel. In this novel, he represents youth as a socio-political force through the lives of two young people. The first one is Wariinga, the female youth and the second one is a young man by the name, Gaturia. These will be discussed in the order presented above.

6.5.2 Wariinga's exploits

The representation of Wariinga reveals not only the power of youth, but infinite possibilities that have been obscured by gerentocracy and patriarchy. It also reveals the resilience of youth as well as their agentativeness towards their own life and the sacrificial life style they may display to model and revive the dignity of women, both

young and old. This young woman exemplifies a conviction by Che Guevara (2010:163) who insists that:

We still see how the youth-heroes almost like in the novels, who can give their lives almost hundred times over for the revolution who can respond as one to whatever specific task they are called upon for. Nevertheless, sometimes do not show up at work because they have a UCJ meeting, or they stayed up too long the night before- discussing some initiative of the youth organization

In this section an attempt is made to investigate Wariinga's activism in the light of the observation by the author above. Wariinga lives up to this communist creed. Besides being modelled in Ngugi's own industrious mother, Njeri, what makes her even more *sheroic* is the fact that she takes up work to demolish gender stereotypes. Guevara insists that there is a need for the building of a nation which values work and individual contribution which approximate the quest encoded in the words below:

Man's greatest dignity, a social duty, a pleasure given to man the most creative activity there is. Everyone will have to be interested in their work and the work of others, in society's daily advance, a social dignity to the young communists as cannot be limited by national borders (p.162).

The above assertion will be investigated by focusing on the plot of the novel whose authorial craft structures information in a manner which foregrounds certain of the character's events. In the exposition of this text, the author recourses the meta-physical to persuade and obtain sympathy for this character which at the same time elevates her to the level of a mediator between humanity and the super-natural. The first trick he employs is the technique called flashback. This is manifest in the choice of first person a narrative technique to provide the background to Wariinga with the account cloaked in some *pathos*. He/she is evidently circumscribed by factors which attempt to mute him/her, but he is beseeched by Wariinga's mother to tell the story which he then tells on page seven of the novel. The fact that it is the mother who is addressing Wariinga challenges the reader to make an inference that the mother being

referred to is not the biological one but Kenya herself. By extension, it is Kenya who is giving this youth a socio-political mission by enlightening her first. This story later turns out to become the Rosetta stone, not only of Kenya's, but the whole of Africa's post-liberation socio-political debacle. The narrator states:

*Is it not said that the antelope hates less the one who sees it,
than the one who shouts it to alert the hunters to its presence
(p.7).*

By inference, in this novel, the antelope then becomes the younger characters. They become the recipients of the hatred of those who cause the poverty of the people. In the remaining sections, an attempt is made to highlight the events that justify this assertion. Relying heavily on his diction, oral tradition and the schemata of his audiences, he is certain to have used his second trick to create an effective hook for his mission of persuasion in favour of the youth. He then proceeds to invent or "mirror" a counterfeit of a situation which demands the reader's curiosity. The idea of censorship is foregrounded in the novel and the young character, Wariinga, becomes the agent of this mystery as she simulates the "Andnesian child" (see page 68 of this text). Her conversation with the deity who reveals the secrets behind her country's political failure to her endows her with the status of the *shaman/vates* or prophet in our modern day language. This youth is henceforth equipped or endowed with some credibility (ethos). This interpretation is largely mediated by the reader's culture. The author makes it seem very difficult to tell the story of Jacinta Wariinga, the protagonist. The telling of the story here gives the impression that the author wants to "ambush" the mind of the readers so as to arouse sympathy and eventually position them in favour of the youth. He does this by appealing to the authority of the metaphysical to suspend criticism and then evoke belief. Thus giving the younger character some despotic power over the audiences and observers who in this case become the readers.

To strengthen the authority of this youth, he increases the tempo of the events, this is to say, the rate at which the events occur in the plot. This in itself invigorates the story with some sense of urgency. It happens this way, the narrator ends up admonishing himself for starting the story in *media's res*, that is to say, he starts in the middle of the story instead of following a linear pattern. The very act of ensuring that the mystery is

revealed through the young character attests to the weight of investment on youth for the socio-political concerns he is famous for as a novelist.

This act of youth veneration bestowed on Wariinga is evident in the spontaneity with which the narrator bursts into a praise poem (p.192) in honor of her. The poet who is a metaphysical being states:

*Wariinga Jacinta Wariinga, look at your self
Take a good look at your self
You have a young body
The joys of life are all before you
If you hadn't taken too singeing
Your hair with hot combs and your skin with lightening
creams like Ambi
The sheer splendor of your body would
Be pulling a thousand and one hearts behind it
The blackness of your skin is smoother
And more tender than the most expensive perfumed oils
Your dark eyes are brighter than the stars at night
Your cheeks are like two fruits riper than the blackberry.
And your hair is so black, soft and smooth
That all men must feel like sheltering from the sun in its
shade.
Now, to the power of youth,
Add beauty to the power of property,
And you will rid your heart of all the troubles that poverty is
heir to.
Men will kneel before your body,
Some of them content to touch the soil on which your feet
have Trodden,
Others driven to standing by the way side,
Hoping to be touched by your shadow as you pass by.*

The significance of this poem is that it counteracts the hegemony of the Caucasian skin colour as the standard of beauty to be aspired to by the aboriginal people of Africa.

It further points to the subject Wariinga as possessing physical attraction which then directs the beholder to the immaterial and soulful being who communes with the metaphysical. The narrator explicitly laments the use of skin lightening creams such as *ambi* which probably talks to the ambition of the black people wanting to change their skin tone so as to be acceptable. The poem itself is a praise song on African beauty. In making the youth the subject of the poem, Ngugi is actually resurrecting African beauty which is a historically celebrated observation. For instance, Ashimolowo (2007) cites several instances of the veneration of African beauty by several intellectual ancestors of European civilization and philosophy. The first one is a general view held by the Greeks. For instance, he records that Martin Bernal in his book, *Black Athena*, records Seneca's thought of Blacks as being full of courage and freedom and that they were also applauded by Herodotus who is acclaimed the father of History. In his records, Herodotus is said to have stated explicitly that Pythagoras studied Mathematics in Egypt for twenty one years (Ashimolowo: 2007), and that more important and relevant, also commented on the Ethiopian as being handsome.

Still on the subject of black beauty which is epitomized by this youth. The young woman is used by the author as a symbol of that beauty. She is in other words the resurrection of the identity Ashimolowo discovered to have been venerated by Frank Snowden in his book *Black antiquity*. In this work, Snowden cites a Greek epigrammatic in which black beauty is venerated by Asclepiads who states that, "Gazing at her beauty, I melt [sic] like wax before the fire. She is black, what is that to me? So are the coals, but when we burn them, they shine like rosebuds. (p.201). Against this background, it can be inferred that this re-presentation of the youth (Wariinga) by Ngugi is analogous to the judgment of the ancients and actually goes further than that. Firstly, it offers an opportunity for black beauty to be re-appreciated, and secondly, it redeems the image of a black person from the mis-re-presentation by the *intelligentsia* and artists of the western world as Ngugi complains elsewhere.

Despite the fact that this poem is recited by a narrator who is actually the Devil himself, there is a high possibility that Wariinga is indeed as beautiful as the lines in it state. However, at the level of socio-political contribution, she becomes the window through which the reader learns of the secret pact between former colonizers and the new rulers of her country. In the conversation she has on chapter 8 of the text, it becomes

explicit that, unlike the elders who have just testified in the cave, the young woman has the capacity to resist temptation. Ngugi invites the reader to view her as a character with an adorable personality. It is also through her that we are enlightened about the cause of Africa's poverty which is a contradiction of her natural capacity and wealth. This whole poem demonstrates that even before any action or words by Waringa this youth is already appointed for the amelioration of the condition of Kenyans.

6.5.3 Prostitution or emancipation: the case of Guthera

We begin this part of discussion by stating that while it certainly cannot be the author's intention to promote prostitution, Ngugi wants his reader to view the adultery of young women not as a sign of moral deficit, but a virtuous reality. Not only does he want it this way, but also wants to educate his reader about the realities of the moral dilemmas of the post liberation African youth in general, especially young ladies. For textual space economics, this discussion dwells more on Guthera and hope that the reader will look at Wanja in the light of the theorization which will emerge from this one.

The author represents Guthera's prostitution as an altruistic act and not an attribute of the "lost generation". Her's, unlike that of Margaret Wariara, a former girlfriend of Kamiti in *Wizard of the Crow*, is classified under the category Fletcher as cited in (Barclay, 1987) calls "sacrificial". Fletcher illustrates this concept in Mrs. Berger's story summarized below.

Set in a second world war Germany, this story is about a family which is pulled asunder when the father and the mother are removed to different concentration camps where there are high possibilities of death. The father in the family somehow escapes, comes home and unites with the children. When he gets home, the children tell him that the mother had left a long time before with the aim of getting some firewood. She too got arrested and confined to a concentration camp. At the concentration camp, a sympathetic soldier tells the woman that there were only two conditions under which she could be released. The first one was sickness and the second was pregnancy. The second one seemed possible within her power. She then asked the soldier to impregnate her. She becomes pregnant and she gets subsequently released as the soldier had promised. She re-unites with the family. The baby gets born and the whole

family including the step father, the man of the house, love him dearly and call him Dietrich which means the ruler. The baby becomes the family's special child as they believe that he has done for them what none could have. Now back to Guthera, her prostitution deserve to be perceived as an act of altruism. She has begun to live life not for herself but for her siblings after losing her father she begins to drop her belief system and lay down her body as she joins prostitution. In her voluntary self degradation she like Miss. Berger she too commits and act of dishonouring her body so that she can preserve life.

6.5.4 Gatuiria commits class suicide

Some challenging facts about Gatuiria and his quest for social justice are recorded in the dialogue between Gatuiria and his fiancé Wariinga. These conversations reveal his resoluteness in terms of his self denial. His representation which is encoded in his own words demonstrates the fact that he possesses the will power necessary for social and political redress. Close to the meaning in Guthera's name, his name means the researcher. In the meaning encoded in his name, one is already led into hoping that a higher level of seeking socio-political intervention is recident with this youth. His activism starts when he is very young. This is recorded in his conversation with Wariinga as he states:

My father is a business tycoon. He owns several shops in Nakuru, and lots of farms in the Rift Valley, and countless other businesses to do with import and export: footwear, fabrics, and flowers seedlings. Just mention any type of trade, and my father will have a hand in it. He runs special planes for many exports and imports of his. I am his only son. His aim was to send me to America to learn how to manage property and profit... business administration... the kind of education that Mwireri wa Mukiraai was bragging about last night. But as for me, I've never wanted to follow my father's footsteps. (p.133)

This personal testimony by Gatuiria tracks back his formative years of conscientization which eventually sends him into a resolution to denounce his father, a decision which is normally made by parents against their children. Instead of the storyteller

foregrounding the scene in which his father is reproaching him, he wants the reader to hear it only at the time when it is reported by the young character. The authorial craft used here is to deny the father an active role as well as the benefit of direct speech.

His interlocuter, Wariinga, is shocked by this confession and innocently asks the question 'Why not?' That is to say why wouldn't he want to follow in his father's footsteps. A more important revelation of his personality and moral choices becomes available to the reader's mind as a result of a two word question the lady asks. Gaturia forthrightly tells him that:

Because my heart was always with the workers on his tea plantations. They were the ones who sang beautiful songs to me, who told me exciting stories, who often played their guitars or their bamboo flutes for me... I would look at the shanties they lived in, the food they ate, the rags they wore, and when I contrasted that poverty with the richness of their songs and the breadth of their knowledge, I would be seized with a deep hatred for my father. Weren't the workers people like ourselves? Sometimes my father would whip them, and abuse them, and call them dumb cows. And you know, on one occasion I actually found him beating my mother because she asked him to stop whipping a man who was very old. When later I started questioning things, my father showed me the stick, and he forbade me to go near the workers' quarters. I didn't stop visiting the workers, however. I think that's why he sent me to America while I was still young.'(p.133)

The confession above captures a human element worthy of veneration. It demonstrates that it cannot always be true that a lamb takes after its mother. In a similar manner in which both the young Indian boy and Stephen Howlands in *Weep Not Child* showed their willingness to relate with Njoroge, he too enjoys not only the company of his father's servants, but the lessons he learns from them as well. This sympathy with the poor and victims of one's parent is similar to that of Mukami in *Petals of blood*.

6.5.5 Gaturia, Music and the healing of Kenya's socio-political ailments

While his fiancé has had a revelation on the origin of the calamity of Kenya, Gaturia recourse music to the aid of his country. A phenomenological reading of this portion of the text reveals certain important facts about music which elevates the youth to the level of an avant-gardist in the struggle for socio-political and economic justice. This art has been reported to have had cure to some historical and biblical figures. Being introduced to the reader as a researcher, the youth must have probably investigated and diagnosed the social ills of his society and he probably must have also conduct a search on how music could be used to bring about healing. We look into some extra-textual evidence which can assist in interrogating the wisdom of his resolution to use music. This is done with the view to fill in the gabs which the writer might have deliberately left for his reader to fill in.

The first source is the oldest and most common existing religious text in the world of Ngugi and his primary readership. The art this youth has resorted is the one that is said to have helped the ruler of Israel, Saul, to recover from his mental and emotional disturbans (The Bible-1 Samuel 16:23 NKJV). It is the same art form that, by inference, has had a rehabilitating effect on Nyawira's (*Wizard of the Crow*) middle class tendencies. In the paragraphs below, an attempt is made to discuss some ethno-musicological findings, and then against that background, proceed to use textual evidence to demonstrate how this youth becomes a force in the socio-political space of his country.

A justification for the choice of music is first provided by Saunders (1962: 471) who provides corroborative evidence to the use of music as a tool relevant for socio-economic amelioration. According to him this art genre which is chosen by Gaturia has numerous benefits to individuals, which eventually overspill to society. This ethno-musicologist observes that musical tunes serve three functions which are: ethical expression of Ethos (character). Secondly, he advises that music provides active *praktika* which encourages us to perform certain actions, and lastly, they produce certain powerful emotions and or inspirations (*enthousiasmos*). Saunders further argues that music can confer benefits; to promote education; to purify or purge emotion; to provide relaxations and leisure. This happens in a variety of ways. For instance, in the case where the subject of music is a person(s), the character(s)

portrayed by the song affects our own and consequently influence our actions. What this means is that the art genre this youth wants to use is logically proved to have effect on human character. As an aspect that needs attention if this youth's country is to be changed for the better.

In the second of its functions, he cites an important connection between humans and music as an action stimulator. He postulates that when music is played, human beings are presumably stimulated to action immediately. The example he uses is that of a march, which humans get plunged into, sub-consciously, once they hear a marching tune. In the third function, he observes that human emotions are aroused and this consequently leads to movements and actions of the body, as in "orgiastic" ritual dancing. These observations attest to the ingenuity of Gaturia's choice of the art of the muse to assemble his people into action against socio-political degeneration.

Further observation by Saunders which the value of Gaturia's strategy is derived from what he calls the Harmonia effect of music. According to him, "*harmonia* which is the main element in music making has the connotation of fitting in together in an ordered combination." What this means is that Gaturia's art of choice can reduce conflict in society.

Other benefits of music which elevate this youth to the position of a social reformer include, firstly, assisting in education. Talking about assisting in education, the reader is here reminded of the effect of music as abused by politicians in Achebe's story, *The Voter*. Hitler is also mentioned to have used music to indoctrinate his followers into anti-Semitism (Hutchings, 1990). Additionally, the reader is reminded of music as an alleged cause of Albert Einstein's genius (Ruggiero, 2006:3). It can, therefore, be argued that the representation of Gaturia as having a penchant for music suggests the possibility of the capacity for the same level of genius that was in Einstein. The author seems to be sending a subtle message to associate this youth with this renowned thinker.

The second benefit is the *cathartic* power that Gaturia wants to take advantage of and heal the soulful ailments of his political leaders through. Music is used to promote civilized pursuits by relaxation and relief after tension. The point above is explicitly

stated by Aristotle who insists: "This is an agitation by which some people are liable to be possessed; it is observable that when they have been listening to melodies that have an orgiastic effect on the soul and they are restored as if they have undergone a curative and purifying treatment." (Horace: 1998:473-474). The resolution to resort to music proves logical in the face of psychotic disorders unabashedly displayed in the scene of the cave. This scene craves the *cathartic* power of the muse. Gatuiria who in Kenyan history is a counterfeit of both the author as a musician and the youth who call themselves Redykyulass in Kenyan youth resistance (Musila, 2009) is; therefore, represented as an agent with a solution to the political problems of his country. As a result of this, we find wisdom and insight in Gatuiria's quest to compose a national anthem. This trait in him is prompted by his training as an artist. This is what he knows as a musician that music is not just a time killing activity/pastime as Ray Phiri and Stimela once warned the South African apartheid regime (Phiri et. al.1984 track no 6). This youth is capacitated with some kind of revelation knowledge, artistic and Mumbi-like attributes with the capacity to "remake the world". Through this youth, Ngugi advocates for a paradigm shift, one in which the youth and the artist will both be included in the economic, political and social affairs of every modern state. The artist who in the case of this novel is a youth can bring sanity to a country hijacked by psychopaths and nation wreckers who include his own father.

The above observation and claims are further authenticated by theory of art. Gatuiria's choice of the arts as a solution to the social justice problem is justified by several philosophers of art whose observations are discussed below.

The first one is from literature and it shows that artists have always collaborated with forces of social justice. In the first instance, Gatuiria's resolution to use art evokes the effect which resonates with the impact art had on one of the famous theoreticians of Literature and the Arts by the name, Shelley (1998). This literary apologist's greatness as a person owes much of popularity to his choice to commit class suicide, an evolutionary state of the mind which elevates one to the summit of Kohlberg's moral reasoning stages-altruism or super ego according to Freud. He is reported to have written, "... in proud rebellion against her conservative and aristocratic roots." (Shelley, 1998:332). In the light of this, it can be concluded that Ngugi's representation of this youth takes the form of parallel character development with Shelley. Both of them have

travelled beyond their geographical confines. In the case of Shelley, one could attribute his mental liberation to the interaction he had with William Godwin, a philosopher, whose daughter he later eloped with. On the other hand, the fact that Gaturia was sent to America may suggest that he made encounters which helped him take a distant look at the evil perpetuated against his fellow citizens. The result of this mental liberation is the relationship he enters into with a girl his father had taken advantage of because of her lowly status socially and economically. An almost parallel mental disposition with Shelley is that in the case of the former, he had an opportunity to interact with the lives of the ordinary people and felt their pain. This proximity with the plight of the ordinary people has led to the production of works such as *Prometheus Unbound* and *The Masque of Anarchy*. Juxtaposing Gaturia's reliance on the arts and what Shelley accomplished through both his life and literary productions, further elevates Gaturia to the class of philosophers and social reformers. It is against Shelley's background that findings that Gaturia's conviction to carry out a socio-political rehabilitation program with music as a tool is authenticated and therefore appreciated. The decision to recourse music into a tool for social amelioration further finds its validation in this theorist's view on the sister genre of music, poetry as he also states:

Poetry is ever accompanied with pleasure, all spirits on which it falls, open themselves to receive the wisdom which is mingled with its delight (p.343).

Similarly, music which is even accompanied by more pleasure will open-up hearts for Gaturia to impart new values of kindness and harmonia to those who will hear it.

As pointed out already, through his approach to issues of social justice, Gaturia is also represented as assuming the status of a legislator. It is unfortunate that "Poets are unacknowledged legislators of the world," (Shelley.1998:338). Justification of the assertions made so far rely on the provocations evoked by the reader text convergence which in this case is admittedly the prerogative of the reader who has some background to Shelley's poetics.

Gaturia's ingenuity and progressiveness in as far as his approach to the political decadence of his country is concerned become more evident when analysed against

the observation of two other philosophers, Sir Phillip Sydney and Leo Tolstoy. Reference here is made to Sydney's observation that:

Among the Romans, a poet was called vates, which is as much as diviner, foreseer, or a prophet..." (p136).

He further cites the example of Hiero who being a tyrant, was humanized through music. Sydney adds, "Hiero, a once tyrant turned into a just king where Plato had failed with his *Dionysius*. The same thing was done with both Simonides and Pindaras" (p.152). That is to say, they too were rehabilitated from their acquired beastly nature and restored back to their identity as human-kind (type).

The reading of Gaturia as a character against a chapter entitled, *What is art*, by Leo Tolstoy, from the same anthology, provides a more adorable representation of Gaturia's vocation and vision which is expressed in art. Tolstoy expresses a view which compares music to speech. According to him: "... is a means of communication and therefore of progress", that is, of the movement of humanity towards perfection." (p.472). With these philosophers evincing a similarity with Gaturia's *weltanschauung*, this youth is beyond any shadow of doubt, a force in the altering of his political and social *status quo*. He too has even been represented as *vates*, a healer and a prophet.

Another laudable trait evinced by Gaturia as a beacon for socio-political progress is his humanness which surpasses that of his own father. Among other factors which provide evidence to the assertion above is his relationship with women which is exemplified by the relationship he has with Wariinga. In this relationship, we derive a manifestation of the maturity and purification art rewards its adherents with.

A careful scrutiny of his personality further shows that this youth is not exploitative in his relationship to his young woman called Wariinga. Unlike his father, he loves children to the extent that he is even prepared to raise a child whose birth he has not caused. Finally, his resolution to love and respect women and children adds to the redemption of the black men's identity who in the racist view have always been seen as morally bankrupt especially when it comes to erotic relationships. This altering perception of the self is crucial to self-respect, goal setting and discipline in general.

One could take it further and add that, Ngugi has also played the strategy of association with a biblical character who preserved the life of the messiah and thereby saved the world in as far as the Christian religion is concerned. Relying on the schemata of his primary reader, the Kenyan writer juxtaposes Gaturia with Joseph the father of the Biblical Jesus of Nazareth. As a good persuader, he is certain that the intellectual and socio-religious milieu of the time will complete his persuasion trick by evoking the long term memory of his addressees to release this relevant connection. When Gaturia chooses to raise Waringa's daughter as his step child, this awarded him with the veneration that is normally accorded to father of Jesus in the Bible.

6.5.6 The cogitations of Gaturia and youth activism

Further textual evidence on the activism of Gaturia can be accessed from his cogitations. Reading his contemplations sheds enormous light on the identity this youth has towards himself. They explicitly state his self-awareness as someone whose life cannot deviate from fighting to achieve the ends of social justice. This is best read in his words as he states:

Maybe I'm a priest who has not yet been ordained... But I belong to an order that has been called to serve by the poverty of people of Kenya. (p.27)

Through the use of the word "priest" to describe his role in the face of class struggle, this youth evokes the sense of pre-destination towards his identity. He also reveals his attitude to Kenya and its people in the phrase "to serve". In a conversation with Wariinga who is asking a question, "When will they ever discover laughter?" (p. 26), one learns of both his empathy with Kenyan young women as well as his pledge towards their emancipation. Gaturia states:

There are countless Kareendis in Kenya, as you may say. But I don't agree with you that our children will never know laughter. We must never despair. Despair is one sin that cannot be forgiven. It is a sin for which we would never be forgiven by the nation and generations to come. (p.27)

Several attributes of a social activist are captured in his own statement above. Firstly, he is expressing an awareness of the future whose foundation is built on the present action. Secondly, it prepares the mind of his audiences for mental readiness requisite to revolution. This rousing of the mind is encoded in the clause, "We must never despair." This to him is a thing they should never allow to happen.

Like Karega, he too refers to the new leadership as fleas, jiggers, and bedbugs...and human paracites (*Devil*, p.131). It is this naming which makes him get to a conclusion that there is a deliberate effort by these leaders to impede if not destroy life. He represents this youth as someone possessing a well cultivated mind which assists him to analyze the political economy of his country. He enlightens the reader about his deliberate cause of poverty which is carried out by the modern rulers of his country as he states:

They know where they can dam the water so it does not reach those who are downstream. They know where they can dig canals to divert the river so that it waters only their own fertile fields. (Devil, p. 186)

This awareness is a literary representation of the first comments made on poverty engineering strategies and manipulation discussed earlier on. In expressing this view, this character is insinuating that those who rule are actually the cause of poverty.

6.6 Youth as agents of social re-construction in *Wizard of the Crow*

6.6.1 The representation of Nyawira

Central to the plot and communicative purpose of this novel are two protagonists, Nyawira and Kamiti. These two also prove themselves and the age category they belong to as a force against socio-political injustices of their country, Aburiria. The discussion begins with Nyawira, the female youth. As a matter of convenience, the discussion begins with the linear development of her character. This development is introduced by a brief discussion of her victimization. Nyawira's victimization manifests in her condition as a helpless young woman. She is however, eventually used by Ngugi to negate two myths that, one, youth are self-centred and secondly, that a lamb always takes after its mother. With the object to reveal the generosity of youth and the power

of Art as he did in the case of Gaturia and his fiancé, Ngugi creates a scene in which the younger character that is born in wealth, educated and socialized in a profit driven home demonstrates the ability of youth to defy imprinting from their immediate socio-political and economic environment and exercise choice. Before self-realization, Nyawira is reported to have lived a life of debauchery and racing until she got involved in an accident. Through this accident, Ngugi resurrects the humanness, firstly, of her self and then that of the poor people, and as it were, "holds the mirror up" against the selfishness of her social class as none of its members possesses the will to help the poor. Her recovery from accident wounds allows her an opportunity for introspection. This introspection is most probably aided by the arts, music in particular. From this playing of the guitar, she becomes more humanized and acquires the fifth and sixth levels of Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning. At this stage, she can be said to have attained self-realization which according to Prabhupata (2004) is the highest goal of human existence. This self-realization and sense of purpose inevitably brings her head-on with her father who is still lagging behind and trapped in the first stages of moral reasoning. In herself discovery, she begins to align herself with an old adage which states "I am because you are". She too has her artistic talent being heightened by music. Her world view completely makes a roundabout turn, and she begins to see African history as the scene of many crimes. It is this naming of one's world as insisted on by Freire (1970) which pushes her into social issues and uproots her from selfishness. It is; however, unfortunate that her new *weltanschauung* ushered in by the art of the muse creates conflict with her father as he awaits her to be married to a rich man. On the contrary, in order to live to the creed of a social reformer, she opts for a simple self-made man. She too can be said referred to as having committed class suicide instead of succumbing to intra-class marriage in which she would have to marry Kaniuru. Though they do eventually marry, their marriage does not last long as their ideologies are naturally at war. Nyawira espouses a new philosophy of socialism. She believes in egalitarian and wealth redistribution. Additionally, she also champions the rights of women. This is evident in the scene where she demonstrates her insight on the literary accomplishments of women who wrote from a feminist point of view.

Ngugi venerates the young woman by creating a condition which induces ideological shifting in Kamiti's mindset. He achieves this by enacting a scene in which Nyawira lectures Kamiti on the realities of women particularly in Africa. Through this scene, he

represents her as a very knowledgeable young woman who is so conversant with African women writing which includes *So long a letter* (1980) by Ba of Senegal, Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous conditions* (1988) and the *Joys of Motherhood* (1979) by Buchi Emecheta of Nigeria. She emphasizes her point of the universality of women experiences in Africa. Another trait of this female youth which attests to her capacity for socio-political activism is made evident by her ability to forge a global sisterhood of women think tanks even from India. (p.83)

This representation of the young woman as a *connoisseur* in literary worlds redeems women from being viewed as perpetual children. Despite the fact that Ngugi does it in a manner that shows her to be more knowledgeable than her male *comrade*; he does this to restore the fact that women have always been interested in human affairs. Through this young woman, Ngugi is actually asserting that literary arts as Palmer has insisted in this very study should take the primary place in the socialization of individuals if we are to avoid the heartlessness with which the international and local thieves treat their subjects in *Devil On The Cross*(1980). We consider the following fact in order to support the assertion above. Kamiti, the male youth, has studied in India, but he does not know the aforementioned writers (p.83)

It is; however, very interesting to note that Kamiti, unlike The Ruler and Tajirika does not allow her *phallogentric* upbringing to prohibit him from seizing an opportunity to consider facts and change his attitude towards the truth. He finally admits that he has started reading women literature. In this way, he is certainly "purged" of the possibility of making judgments on women without having heard from them first. We add to this by inferring that he is beginning to demonstrate interest in women, and thereby positions himself as an agent of progressive gender relations. This mirrors one of the infinite possibilities about human behaviour.

While simultaneously celebrating the resilience of the human mind, one cannot ignore the fact that it is this character's gift of youth which allows him this flexibility of the soul. He models the fact that ideological stances are changeable. The decision he takes is actually therapeutic towards the *neurosis* of patriarchy. Its implication is that, he is unlikely to be a predator like the Ruler who locks up his wife into an asylum because

he does not want to hear the truth (pp.7-8). This egalitarian way of looking at relations is accredited to the logic initiated by a woman.

The scene discussed above nevertheless represents the male youth as ideologically, a little more advanced than some elderly characters such as Tajirika in *Devil on The Cross* who reacts violently to his wife's expression of her desire to equally have sexual appetites satisfied (p.181). The lecture by Nyawira induces "purgation" and opens him up to new possibilities of manhood. This attitude has been made cultivable in his *psyche* through the benefit of intellectual generative capacity which is an attribute of youth. It also reinforces the selflessness he demonstrated earlier on in allowing Wariara to live her life as she chooses (p.91).

Laudable also in the personality of this youth is the fact that her *sheroic* exploits begin with altruism. She dies as Kihika elsewhere insists in the novel *A Grain of Wheat* a point raised by Ngugi himself that the middle class should commit class suicide. Knowing his" rhetorical situation," that is to say, the socio-religious background of his primary and secondary audiences/readers, Ngugi evokes memories of historical and religious figures such as Moses, Jesus of Nazareth, Nelson Mandela, Che Guevara and many others. She has resolved to join the poor. Together with the poor, she turns the self-glorification of the *nouveau riche* into a political rally against them.

Her conversation with Kamiti leads her into *praxis*. It leads to her discovery of Kamiti's situation to which she pays no lip service. She treats it as an opportunity to provide and not to take as it is probably the case with her father and the fifty year old former husband Kanuira, who in Ngugi's terms are mercenaries and not visionaries (see addendum). It is in their relationship that Ngugi sounds a warning and interprets the power relations between the borrower and the lender. The borrower is perpetually subjected to the position of the servant of the lender. This aphorism magnifies the stature of the younger woman as it reveals the insight she possesses with regard to political economy. This is not obvious to Kamiti who has done economics as opposed to humanities. It is again, the connection of the youth which provides political education on Africa as Kiarie has done in an earlier novel. The youth also do and it becomes more powerful as it comes from the young woman and not the male one. Ngugi

represents her as a socio-political analyst as he “paints” a socialist definition of politics as a determinant of materialistic world through her observation as she states:

The water I drink, the food I eat, the clothes I wear, the bed I sleep on, are all determined by politics, good or bad. Politics is about power and how it is used. Politics involves choosing side in the struggle for power. I believe in humanity divine and invincible, we all need to look deeply in our hearts and the humanity in us will be revealed in all its glory. The greed and the drive to humiliate others will come to halt. (Pp.86-87)

Like, Stephen Howlands and Njoroge in *Weep Not Child*, they too continue to deconstruct the phenomena of exploitation, socio-political and economic relations of their lives. Nyawira’s decision to part with Kanuira is life affirming and it shows that she is different from her father. She divorces her father’s class for an almost pauper. This female youth is also represented in this relationship with Kanuira as an agent of egalitarianism. Her relationship with Kamiti is a rebellion of some sort. It defies the prescriptions of a stratified society ushered in by the post – colonial era of Aburiria. Additionally, she demolishes the stigma that comes with a patriarchal belief that women are materialistic. Her choice to divorce Kanuira who has links with the *nouveau riche*/mercenary class for Kamiti attests to this.

The amount of space allocated to Nyawira and Kamiti is indicative of the author’s interest on these characters. The remaining chapters of the text apportion three quarters of the novel on their exploits. This amount of publicity allotted to the youth is empowering in as far as propaganda in their favour is concerned. It conveniently provides more space for their progressive ideological position to be publicized. While on one hand, it relegates elderly characters to a state of no participation against social injustice, on the other hand, it augments their status by almost partially “muting” their enemies who are simultaneously the enemies of the people. There is of course another character, Constable Arigaigai Gatherer who is an elderly character but also enjoying a relatively high representation. However, he does not exist in the textual world for his own sake; he is there as the oracle of the “rightful” rulers, the youth. He also serves as an epitome of the possibilities of a resilient mindset which in the context of this study becomes possible only after an encounter with young activists. It must be

acknowledged; however, that there is another youth by the name Wariara, a one time girlfriend of Kamiti who has succumbed to the *status quo* and she is not allocated an equal amount of textual space as these protagonists. Arigaigai transforms from a hard core police officer who has always been serving the comprador class (neo-colonial state) into an admirer and crusader for youth power. Not only, do Nyawira and Kamiti become critics of the political status of Aburiria, but its fiercest opponents too. Their first act of disturbing the peace of the comprador class, the ruler and cabinet, is recorded during the dinner that is held for the guests of the Global Bank organized. Of the two, it is Nyawira who plays a more active role especially, intellectually. She joins the beggars who have come to disrupt the party and express their dissatisfaction with government economic policies. Being the daughter of an opulent man, she resolves to take side with the scroungers and disrupt the socio-economic arrangement of which she is a beneficiary. This is altruism at its best. It is this act which actually introduces Constable Arigaigai Gatherer or AG as we shall call him henceforth. While on this mission to disrupt the peace of those who exploit the masses, Nyawira meets with Kamiti again and their meeting turns into an opportune moment for her to demonstrate her noble character. It is in this scene where she adopts one of the beggars. In this scene, Nyawira emerges a more exact definition of a politician who according to Aristotle should be the guardian of the goodwill of the city. She is represented as the original chiefs of the Bantu whose chieftdom would be the consequence of generosity and not violence or starvation; those who would lease cows to the poor among their people.

This meeting which seems accidental is not only the beginning of problems for the novice politicians of Aburiria, but a revealing moment for the altruistic personality promulgated by the youth. Ngugi seems to have enacted this co-incidence to conceive A.G as a character and to cause a bilateral whose mission in addition to disturbing the peace, is to provide political education for the reader, and to demonstrate that virtue is resident with the youth.

At this stage, it would be appropriate to revisit how Ngugi introduces Nyawira to the reader. Firstly, her accommodation of Kamiti is referred to as an act of metaphysical intervention by the recipient, Kamiti himself. The event sets Nyawira's humanness in contradiction to the politicians who by virtue of their social standing are obliged to

dispense virtue. All that they do is to set the police against them. Unlike them, Nyawira adopts a vagabond, gives him shelter and food *ex gratia*. What emerges from this report by the narrator, is the exultation of this young woman to a more powerful position compared to that of elderly politicians of her society. Ngugi juxtaposes her personality against that of her boss Titus Tajirika. Their conversation is revealing of their characters. While Nyawira has just left her house having turned Kamiti into her “son,” her boss, an elderly character, is rather upset by newspapers for mentioning that beggars protested. With the reader enthralled in some sort of dramatic irony, that is, Nyawira’s pretence not to know anything about the event that has made her boss livid. Nyawira is positioned as a “smarter” and more powerful member in the conversation. She also receives sympathy as the reader wishes that Tajirika should not know the truth about Nyawira’s relationship with the beggars, and that she is helping one of them who was at some point directly besmirched by Tajirika. It can deductively be concluded on the basis of the above that, Nyawira is placed superior, intellectually. She becomes an anti-thesis of Tajirika who is expressing his *paranoia* towards the beggars and contorts the truth as he alleges that beggars are agents sent by the political adversaries (p.102). This is a similar psychotic disorder suffered by Nderi wa Riera (*Petals*). Their ivory tower approach to social reality denies them an opportunity to react progressively to their own failures and exigencies towards the electorates. This very paranoia is necessary for character elevation when it comes to Nyawira. In her favour, the psychosis provides an opportune moment to inform her more on the nature of her adversary. The narrator states: “Nyawira thought that this was the perfect moment to milk information” (p.102). In this scene, Nyawira is represented as a “predator” while the elderly character is represented as a “prey”. This capacity to outwit the elderly characters especially when she is fighting on the side of virtue can be attributed to the benefit of art. This assertion is supported by Cohen (1994:17) who states that, “...art can provide integration, synthesis, and lasting satisfaction. One might, of course, find similar values in religion or philosophy as well; but art, lacking formal dogma, is accessible without catechism: it is an ecumenical and open-ended responses- and a refreshingly civil approach- to life’s unending puzzles.”

The conversation between Kamiti and Nyawira in the morning equally reveals an important aspect of her personality. She demonstrates that serving even those who might have to depend on you materially, is one of the attributes of a desirable human

relation factors. For instance, she wakes up in the morning, makes breakfast for Kamiti and even cautions him that his breakfast is getting cold. Nyawira does not show generosity to Kamiti in materials only, but her feminine and maternal instinct is readily available for the benefit of Kamiti, the victim of post-colonial failure. She diagnoses that Kamiti is over-whelmed by anger and that he has no plans for the day. This is probably the result of an encounter with Tajirika as mentioned above. It fills him with awe and Nyawira, who has discerned his down trodden spirit, subsequently “orders” him to spend the whole day in her house so as to save him from murdering. Two positive traits which are philanthropy and gallantry emerge from this scene. This is deduced from the character profile Ngugi has already provided on Kamiti. Kamiti has been introduced as a beggar, a man, and a stranger and yet the young lady dares leave him in her house. On the contrary, the boss is complaining that “these beggars are too much”(p.101). That is to say, while the youth is releasing her *noblese oblige*, the elderly character is arrogantly expressing his avarice. Unlike the ANCYL who conducted a research on youth problems and reported on them, this elderly character does not show this commitment to knowledge. On the contrary, he is so zealous to dispense it.

Ngugi continues to reveal the steadiness of character this youth is capable of. In the conversation with Kanuira, Nyawira continues to show assertiveness and the fact that she too is still in possession of higher knowledge compared to some men and elderly characters. Her psychic powers, which have probably been inhibited by enjoying her father’s wealth, is eventually released. She has just been referred to as a channel for God to bless Kamiti and she does not want to be thanked. Now she is faced with a political sham/psychopath who is making claims to Biblical knowledge only to expose himself as he flouts Grice’s maxim of quality in conversation (cited in Finch, 2005). Kanuira talks about the children of Israel building the tower of babel. He is attempting to impress with knowledge, but then expresses ignorance. His statement is replete with anachronism as he mentions an agent/subject in his historical presentation. Israel as a nation had not yet been conceived when the tower of Babel was built. Secondly, Kanuira is not aware of his interlocutor who is a historian. He should have rather asked instead of attempting to explain.

6.6.2 Kamiti, the *vates* and the state of Aburiria

Having successfully directed the reader's attention to this character's poverty and attempted to extort pity for him through the representation of his squalor, Ngugi leads the reader towards a realization of some act of resurrection on the young man. He actually represents him in the image of a superhuman who can only be appreciated when observed in the light of Greek and Hindu Mythology. For more information on the concept introduced above, we resort to insight provided by Dodd as cited in (Le Guin, 1996). Le Guin cites his work entitled *The Greeks and the Irrationale* in which Dodd describes the people who are "spiritually gifted" as *shamans* or mad magician poets. One of them is Orpheus as mentioned by Horace in his poem *The Art of Poetry*. (Horace, 1987). They were known to possess transcendental powers which when visited by, would temporarily suspend physical existence of the individual. This is the perception Ngugi attempts to evoke towards Kamiti.

In a similar manner, when the reader meets Kamiti during the reading of the novel, he has been turned into a lifeless body; he lives with and is counted as one with rubbish, but then he scares the rubbish collectors when they realize that the 'rubbish' they are collecting is animated. Symbolically, the rising of this youth from the rubbish heap mirrors the desire of the author. That is to say, there is a life which has been inhibited and declared unimportant. Symbolically, the covering of a living youth with 'rubbish' is a statement to say there are young lives, ideas and contributions which are obscured by trashy beliefs. We need to abruptly stop and ponder upon some act of communication by the author here. This scene is loaded with the author's communicative intent. Firstly, it is symbolic of a generation, a missing "link" in the society, that has just through the pen of the writer and his *mumbing powers*, symbolically been resuscitated. Not only, does it allude to that, but it also points the reader back to the "pathologisation" of the youth by Aristotle as we have seen earlier.

We now return to our earlier thread and explain the mythology of the *vates* and *shamans* further. The intention here is to show how Ngugi represents Kamiti as a young person with the power to influence the destiny of his nation. According to the aforementioned system of belief, the departure of his soul would escape from the trepidations of the carnal state of being and travel beyond to acquire what is called *summon bonum* or *numinous* (Dodd, 1996: 147) which in eastern mythology would be

called *nirvana*. This is the realm which inculcates, some sort of a spiritual decoder to acquire messages from God. It is the plane of revelation which Wariinga transcended into, in an earlier novel, *Matigari*. In the section below, the discussion taps more into this young man's life with the view to demonstrate how Ngugi represents him in other aspects of his life. The major area of focus here revolves around his relationship with female persons.

Despite the fact that Nyawira and Kamiti are not married in the conventional sense of the word, theirs as compared to that of the ruler and his wife's, is a typical mutualistic modern model of what has been lost in marriages compared. It is a dramatic model of what an erotic relationship should, and can be. The sixteenth chapter starts with a very important and "culturally/traditionally controversial" observation. In it, Ngugi represents these youths as agents of the possibilities in a modern society. He directs the reader to Kamiti, a liberated young man, who has transcended the gender role assigned to him by his tradition. It becomes very interesting for the reader to note that while the role to preserve the African heritage has hitherto been the province of his youth, it is youth again who decide the direction in as far as ameliorating the relations between men and women is concerned. In so doing, Ngugi is also attempting to represent the image of the African man which has been dented by the publishing houses of the occidental world. This image represented the African male as a sex monger and a stud (Burrell, 2010). In the paragraph below, an attempt is made to elaborate further on this point.

This degrading of the people of Africa is also recorded in Ashimolowo (2007) who cites the work of Funk and Wagnalls (2007: 193) in which an African or Negro is described in the following manner. "The negro and the negroid people are sometimes said to represent a stage which is lower in evolutionary development than of the white man and to be closely related to the anthropoid apes because they often have very long arms, protruding jaw, and a flat nose..."(p.193). These beliefs about Africans have precipitated a whole lot of stereotypes about Africans. The stereotypes included even some moral assumptions about them. Ashimolowo further observes that:

The spirit of racism thrives on mis-information and stereotyping. Instead of portraying people in the likeness of God; it seeks to devalue the worth of people that are different from us or as not being as good as we are. (p.195).

Additionally, he cites renowned philosophers of western thought such as Immanuel Kant, David Hume and George Hegel who contributed to this mental distortion which the younger characters in Ngugi's novels are reversing. For instance, Kant claims that the "Negroes" of Africa have received from nature no intelligence that rises above the foolish. This is probably one of the many reasons why this young man has been represented as highly knowledgeable. This is also supported by some names such as Guthera and Gatuiria which Ngugi assigns to his youths. They become a direct reversal of the mental distortion wrought in these philosophers of the racist west.

Ngugi does not mention anything about his sexual advances to Nyawira, whereas in the case of his elderly counterpart/antagonist, he mentions numerous girlfriends. The documentation of these youth's sexual moral standards to the reader's consciousness further reverses the symbolic importance of skin-tone myth invented by the occidental world against the natives of Africa. This myth revolves around the imagined psychic disorder of the African soul which is erroneously inferred from his/her complexion. The inference, as captured in *Ashimolowo*, defines blackness as "deeply stained with dirt, soiled, dirty, foul, malignant, deadly, baneful, disastrous, sinister, iniquitous, atrocious, horrible, and wicked." (p.199). With this young character, Ngugi is attempting to bring into mind, forgotten African heroes and ancient wisdom. It counteracts the imperialist lie which has a potential to re-create the youth and make them think that it is being African to be sexually promiscuous. This youth is represented as possessing the capacity for sexual restraint.

6.6.3 Kamiti and gender roles amelioration

We now proceed to the representation of Kamiti as a member of the model family that has been lost through patriarchy. This includes a discussion on the entrapment of some elderly men of his ethnic group and nation at the initial stages of moral reasoning. The representation of this youth with regard to this aspect confines the reader to his involvement in the home. For this, we rely on the verbatim testimony of the narrator who states:

What struck Nyawira when she got home was the tidiness of the house. Kamiti had dusted away all the cobwebs, washed the floor and the walls, cleaned the entire kitchen, and made up the bed with fresh sheets. He had also washed, dried, and ironed the old ones. She was ecstatic after her ordeal at work and at the Mars cafe. Now she felt embraced by warmth and neatness. Kamiti had even prepared a broth of tomatoes and spinach, and all that remained to complete the supper was Ugali. In all the months she had lived with Kanuiru, he had never done as much. Even when both had arrived home at the same time after all day, Kanuiru would always sit down and expect Nyawira to cook, serve him, and wash the dishes. (Wizard/120)

The excerpt above catalogues the stark contrast between the traditional male and the modern one. As opposed to his counterpart, Kaniuru, who has grown beyond the age of forty and does not qualify to be categorized as youth, Kamiti is revolutionary in his attitude towards the chores of the house. His mental outlook is revealing of the fact that an African man on the continent is capable of a similar altruistic attitude towards fellow human beings irrespective of sex. He is represented as a reasonable man. This progressive thinking which manifests in him as he takes over the household chores, places him in a superior position when compared to Kaniuru. The narrator captures their conversation in the plaintive voice of Nyawira as he states:

“Even when both had arrived home at the same time after working all day, Kaniuru would always sit down and expect Nyawira to cook, serve him, and wash the dishes.” (p.120).

As opposed to Kamiti, Kaniuru is portraying a lesser civilized attitude towards women, one which craves a feminist revolutionary step Nyawira has taken towards him. This is even manifest in the manner in which Kamiti reacts to being corrected by a woman. During their conversation, Kamiti wants to validate a point by quoting Africa's socialist icon, Mwalimu Nyerere. Before he finishes it, Nyawira completes it. This character trait of complementing each is carried on throughout the text. Within the same scene, Ngugi represents them in a feat of constructive competition. For instance, while Nyawira comes back home after an encounter with Kaniura, she gets welcomed by

an extra tidy house which is brought to this state by a man who has been acquainted with dirt to the point of being one with rubbish (p.7). The house she rents has been dirty to the point where it is reported that spiders had begun build their webs in it. On one hand, Kamiti's silence about the condition of the house is yet another expression of his capacity for logic. The narrator has already described Nyawira's daily routine as being characterized by activism which could be done only after work. It could be inferred from that, that she was more worried about accomplishing social justice. It follows logic that she could not be perfect in everything as a normal human being. On the other hand, the narrator foregrounds Nyawira's tolerance and generosity as he makes no mention of Nyawira complaining that Kamiti is a parasite.

A number of incidents on the afternoon of Nyawira's coming home after work further reveal a symbiotic relationship between them. Besides the cleaning and cooking mentioned earlier on, Kamiti welcomes Nyawira by making her tea. During the making of tea, their competition which bothers on complementing each other continues. While Nyawira is accompanying Kamiti by standing in the door post into the kitchen, their conversation is interrupted by the boiling kettle, and they compete to complete the making of tea for Nyawira. Nyawira beats Kamiti in the exigent reaction to attend the boiling pot, though it might be thought that she is prompted by a sense of guilt emanating from a feeling of laziness. However, the youngman, Kamiti, reclaims his opportunity to serve the once Kaniuru's servant by snatching the tea bags from her. This is symbolic of the extent to which serving others and not one's self should be treasured. Yet another scene which foregrounds the strength of youth occurs a short while after Kamiti has added tea leaves into the pot. It occasions yet another opportunity for "space" to serve and to demonstrate an unwillingness to direct other people's energies towards one's self. This time around, the pot is suddenly boiling again with tea leaves in it. She attempts to save the situation, but Kamiti holds on to his right to serve a woman. This becomes a competition of the sexes whose aim is not to subjugate, but to appreciate each other. Kamiti surrenders his unethical patriarchal privileges. This representation shows that his relationship to a woman is more gender friendly and progressive compared to that of the ruler towards his wife.

Prior to the incident above, Ngugi has represented the youth as highly informative agents of ideological re-ordering. Their conversation which has been initiated by the

act of making tea evolves towards issues of hegemony in both culinary and political matters. During their exchanges, Kamiti is represented as the more knowledgeable member of the couple. Earlier on, when it comes to political matters, it was a young woman who was represented as more knowledgeable, but this time around, it is the male youth who shows better understanding on matters that patriarchy could have apportioned more knowledge to a woman. Nyawira expresses her naivety on the history of tea which then misappropriates honour. In her orientation, she has granted the English the honour of introducing tea to the civilization of Aburiria and probably the world but Kamiti corrects the myth. He tells her that it is the Indians who introduced tea, gastronomic pleasure, to Aburiria. In terms of disturbing the hegemony of the English, there is a lot this conversation by youths is achieving. Firstly, as a drink of status in the colonial era, it certainly was associated with the colonialist and could reward them with admiration in return for the status and pleasure fulfilling role it had on the *psychic* space of the colonized people. The psycho-social consequence would be a lessening of animosity towards the colonizer. This state of mind is requisite to the cultivation of inertia towards those whose presence should be undesired, especially, as agents of the 'Scramble for Africa' and not as persons. It also removes undue honour from where it is not deserved, and demonstrates that the human race is predistined to an eternal need for one another. It refutes the myth that some do not need others.

6.6.4 AG, the eye witness and his testimony on youth

Several other important facts on youth as a socio-political force are embodied in the personal testimony of the character Ngugi calls AG. This character's existence contributes immensely to the re-presentation of youth as a socio-political force. His existence in the "cast" advocates for a change of perception towards the youth. However, this elderly character who is also a police officer has a challenge which emanates from his audiences' unbelief towards the subject of his new-found reality. Despite the dramatic irony of this scene, this character, persistently, demonstrates his anxiety with regards to the possibility of gaining credibility among his audiences. This very struggle by an eye witness of what youth can do is symbolic of the general cynicism on youth which has necessitated this study. However he attempts his best to encode this necessary truth in what might eventually translate into an idiosyncratic portrayal of him. His hope on convincing them then rests on the vernacular phrase,

Haki ya Mungu which is the equivalent of the English expression, “I swear to/by God”. This expression is used more than 19 times between the pages 598 to 695. It has actually been used more than this and it indicates the zeal with which this character and by extension, the author himself, wants his report about the youth to be conceived.

As a character, he is “blessed” by Ngugi with the gift of storytelling. He is represented as having no life of his own, as we see destiny turning him into a servant of the new leaders who are being legitimized by their moral choices and ingenuity. In the following paragraphs, an investigation on his gift as both a poet and a storyteller, is conducted with the view to reveal his contribution towards a more liberated and transformed perception of youth. It thus contributes yet another rationale for conducting this study. Empowered by the fact that he is an eye-witness of the events he narrates, providence seems to have given him a talent and, through intertextuality, evokes in him the memory and the role of John the Baptist who shouted in the wilderness, alerting people that they should prepare the way for the Christ. The Christ in the context of this study is embedded in the younger characters, Kamiti and Nyawira. In this way, the youth are represented in messianic terms. His talent does not actually serve him, but rather serves the youth who are, in turn, serving the ends of justice.

He has made a hundred percent turn-around both intellectually and spiritually. In service of the new master now, A.G gives testimony that the ruler is a cruel man. This is an observation he could not make prior to this encounter with the youth, let alone pronouncing it. He continues to describe them as people who do not have regard for life and that they hate whoever threatens them. A.G: reveres the youth-“wizard of the crow” to the level of spontaneously composing a poem about him. In a counterfeit of the African griots singing the praises of Kamiti, AG opens his lips and releases his praise as he states:

*You who can make the birds lose the power of their wings.
Yes, you who can bring down even crows and hawks from the sky,
How can a mere mortal resist your power?
As a spirit or wizard of the crow
Your very name is a proof of the powers you possess. (p.115)*

The significance of this poem is its encoding of the perception the griot, AG, has towards the youth. Its interpretation yields several factors about the youth and their capacity to change their socio-political conditions. This poem is, therefore, interpreted in the light of its rhetorical situation. Analysis is done by inseting some pieces of insinuated information and inferences which have been substituted for by names which for security and creativity reasons, had to be fictional. This information is written in bold, interspersed between original lines and is put into brackets.

You [reference to the **youth-Kamiti**] who can make [**youth power in the verb phrase emphasized by the use of the modal “can”**] the birds [**Kimeria Hawkins and Nderi wa Riera and the Ruler himself who has regressed into the nature of these birds of prey**] lose the power of their wings.

Yes! [**Expression of the conviction that rulers are *not invincible* and passion about his new revelation**] you who can bring down even crows and hawks [**implicit and allegorical reference to the predatory and scavenging nature of the ruler/birds of the sky, they also have no clue about the people’s realities; they are too astronomic to feel the people’s pain; in this context, astronomic is pejorative**],

how can a mere mortal [**reference to the ruler and removal of the fear he has instilled among the citizens**] resist your power, [**the ruler is not *omnipotent***]

As a spirit or wizard of the crow

Your very name is a proof of the powers you possess. (p.115). [**his name (subject of praise) is Kamiti which literally means, he of trees, the first sense may imply where the birds (including hawks) will eventually come home to rest. Another sense is that of mithi which in Gikuyu, is a cognate of muti/mithi in Nguni languages and it suggests that he has the power to bring about health**]

Further analysis of the poem yields insight in the following discussion. This poem addresses the youth in reverent terms. In order to augment the persuasive power of his text (poem), AG infuses his poem with phonoaesthetics. In the next few sentences, we conduct a semantic and pragmatic analysis of the lines. Line number one describes the youth in hyperbolic terms. Line number two starts emphatically with an affirmation, “yes” and continues to imbue the praise subject with a larger than life attribute, an ability to bring down two birds of prey. In the context of this poem, the two

birds of prey are politicians, the comprador class-the ruler and his cohorts from oversees, and by extension the African ruling elite. In order to ensure no deception, the poet also uses a rhetorical question in line (5) "as a spirit or wizard of the crow". The line also indicates the tempo/urgency with which he wants to persuade and induce into his intra and extra-textual addressees some sense of urgency.

Also, the poem reveals the significance of the study which asserts that, youth have always been a significant part of the socio-political solutions, but have not been recognized as such. Evidence of this claim emerges from AG's 'nicodimus' consultations with the youth. As a citizen of a country engulfed in tyranny, he is tempted to do that for personal security. This results from the fact that A.G has enemies. Gathering it from his personal testimony, he has been to "all" the traditional doctors, but was not helped (p.115). Now he has reached a youth, and he confesses that his problems have now been solved. The dramatic irony of this scene in which the elderly character is obsequiously constructing himself before the youth is that he does not recognize them as "youth," but as a powerful and larger than life beings who parallels both the general perception youth have endured in the African political and literary circles. This naivety is symbolic of the fact that the youth have always contributed significantly in the socio- political lives of their societies. However, it is unfortunate that even though their contribution has been so evident, they themselves as agents have been obscured.

We could add to the above argument by stating that, youth power and prowess which are geared towards influencing individuals for the benefit of the collective becomes more evident when the scene is interpreted against Foucault's theory on the discourse (Foucault, 1993) of confession which puts the youth and AJ in asymmetrical power relations. In this relation, the youth is a more powerful member of the discourse. A similar incident occurs later in the novel when The Ruler is subjected to interrogation by the same youth who has been his prey. Power relations indeed show the youth being exulted above the ruler himself.

The power of youth is at work in the life of The Ruler has been attested to even by A.J. who confesses that "maybe the enemy was hidden within my actions."(p.118). He is healed of his neurotic and *paranoiac* disorders, and for the first time, he realizes that

his life would have been spared a lot of trouble if he had time to do self-introspection. This can be extended to say the whole of Kenya and its élites would be spared the same problem. It also represents youth as possessing the capacity to induce reflection in this elderly character. It effectively and simultaneously associates youth with change and thereby makes them synonymous to literature in their effects on human progress. It fosters an opportunity for a review of the self-concept. In the Aristotelian theory of tragedy this would be termed *anagnorisis*. This state of the soul is inculcated by Kamiti, a younger character. Indeed Kamiti becomes the healer, the restorer of sobriety to the mind that has been “injured” by police training. He, the younger character, teaches the “old monkey” new ways of seeing.

Yet another manifestation of youth agentativeness in remaking their world is recorded in their relationship which evolves from adoption to romance. Despite the fact that Nyawira and Kamiti are not married in the conventional sense of the word, when the reader first encounters them, their relationship (co-habitation) is a typical mutualistic modern model of what should be restored to romantic relationships. In spite of its foundation which is not culturally sanctionable, its owners handle it in a manner which outclasses some of the conventional marriages in this novel. Justified by the economic state of the youth who could not even feed himself and therefore unable to pay lobola, Ngugi does not fail to show that some real men who understand relationships and value women are often “locked out” of marriage by the society which has forgotten the real essence of love. Having represented Nyawira in generous and altruistic terms, Ngugi turns his “camera lens” to the male youth in the “duet.”

Against this adversarial milieu within which Ngugi’s youth are besieged, the author achieves two things. Firstly, the reader is lured into sympathizing with them and secondly, they emerge victorious against the odds. This results into their representation as s/heros. The claim above is authenticated by textual evidence in the scene where the the Ruler is being deified, and commotion starts with the beggars who are joined by his younger characters, Kamiti and Nyawira. Ngugi adroitly weaves his plot such that it eventually fore-grounds their astuteness. He does this by causing the police to chase the beggars and while doing that, one of them A.J. bumps into Kamiti and Nyawira who have joined the beggars. Prior to that, he has already capacitated Nyawira with the skills that pre-destine her, the winner in the ensuing

battle with the trained agents of the unjust system. In her vocation so far, Nyawira, the female youth, is been represented as having done both English language and theatre Arts and is probably responsible for the notice which is symbolic to the power of youth. As occupants of the house the police officer is about to attack, they are protected by the sign which reads

WARNING! THIS PROPERTY BELONGS TO A WIZARD
WHOSE POWER BRINGS DOWN HAWKS AND CROWS
FROM THE SKY. TOUCH THIS HOUSE AT YOUR PERIL.SGD
WIZARD OF THE CROW [sic].

In this case, the youth are represented as intellectually superior to the police officers. They are able to design and engage in psychological games of witchcraft on the police officer and scare him away despite the fact that he is obviously armed with a gun. They; therefore, serve as a demonstration of Ngugi's conviction that those who have the word will always conquer, as it is the word that in the beginning brought change to the universe during creation. For further appreciation of the preceding observation, the reader is advised to read Ngugi's *Pen-points, Gun-points, and Dreams* (1998). The power of youth is symbolically represented in the diction of the notice. As a text, it becomes better understood in the context of its milieu. The youth are, through that text, representing themselves as adversaries of the hawks. In this socio-cultural context, hawks are the predators and the largest of eagles. Ngugi has used this name in line with the Judeo-Christian mythology which has become part of their world view since the advent of colonialism as "mirrored" in the *River Between*. The reader is here reminded of the explicit naming of post liberation politicians as predators in *Petals of Blood* and *Devil On The Cross*, among them Nderi Wa Riera and many others. Through this representation, Ngugi's youth succeeds in reducing the fear that has always had influence in the perception towards The Ruler.

The decision to make inference on Ngugi's characterization above is advised by the fact that, it is difficult to avoid the religio-socio milieu in which the novels were written. Additionally, it is authenticated by the fact that in his autobiography, the author explicitly states that he attended a mission school and the most important and readily available text for him was the bible. The appreciation of his fiction cannot be fully arrived at without an application of these religious schemata.

Ngugi further adds magnanimity to the youth as opposed to the elderly characters by creating a scene in which the youths who are mere civilians out-wit the trained police officers in what is usually called the art of deception in warfare. While the police are looking for them, they successfully make it impossible for the police to recognize them.

6.6.5 Conclusion

In view of the discussion above, it can be surmised that Ngugi has through his youths, managed to show that the social ills emanating from the effects of colonization and capitalism are redeemable. He has also provided certain realities which expose sinister forces behind their under-development as well as factors responsible for their failure to attain full development of their capacities as humans. Among other things, he has demonstrated that racial harmony is not a mirage; that youth are resilient and are free from the inertia that sometimes characterizes older members of their societies. He has affirmed them as people in transit (signifying movement and change) and thereby drawn a parallel between youth and literature as agents of social transformation. He has further managed to represent youth in a manner which testifies to the fact that their transitive and generative powers both physically and intellectually impose themselves as the *sine qua non* of socio-political advancement.

7. CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Using seven of Ngugi's novels, this study has argued that Ngugi represents the youth as the main agents in altering the socio-economic and political landscape of their societies. The study sought to provide a new perception about the youth as well as to foreground the fact that Ngugi's works represent the youth as a formidable force against social injustice which was and still is widespread in Africa and most third world countries. Additionally, the study attempted to draw attention to the youth as an age group that does not only possess enormous generative powers in their physique, but even in their intellect as well.

The study was divided into seven chapters which are: the introduction, literature review as chapter two, background to literature/ the arts, Ngugi's biography and the synopses of the novels as chapter three. Then follow the main chapters of the study which deal with analysis. In addition to the chapters, the study also has two appendixes. The first one is an interview conducted with Ngugi wa Thiong'o on 25 May 2012 during his visit at the University of the Free State and the second one is a glossary on Gikuyu names and expressions acquired through the help of a gikuyu native speaker, Ms. Sharon Mbugua, who is a language teacher at Danville High School in Mahikeng, the city where this study is conducted from.

Chapter one covers the following aspects: contextualization of the study and problem statement, purpose of the study, hypothesis, rationale of the study, objectives of the study, thesis of the study and the question(s) the study intended to answer. Chapter two is literature review and it surveyed the literature on the youth as a socio-political force both in non-literary and literary worlds. The review does not limit itself to literary works only nor does it restrict itself to the youth in Africa or Kenya as geographical spaces whose milieu produces the texts that were analyzed. A body of literature survey revealed a vast pool of sources from the continent and abroad. It also included critical comments on Ngugi's youth found in the studies preceding this one.

Chapter three is divided into four sections. Its importance was to create a background against which analysis was done. Arranged in a linear order, the sections are Ngugi's brief biography, the role of art and the artist in the society in Africa and its Diaspora as well as Ngugi's own views. The third section of this chapter surveys the aspects of characterization as a literary technique that creative writers employ to create fictional persons. This was included with the view to create a background against which the representation of youth as a socio-political force could be interrogated. It provides the background against which inferences on the writer's attitude towards his characters could also be made. It is these sections which inform the reader on the attitude the writer wishes his readers to adopt towards his fictional personage. The last section is a summary of the individual texts selected for this study.

As mentioned already, Analysis chapters follow the pattern below. Chapter four dealt with some background on naming and the contribution of youth towards the decolonization of Kenya. The first one is the general introduction. It is followed by a chapter on naming of characters as an attitude-engineering strategy as second. It is entitled character naming, the youth and activism during colonialism. The last but one discusses youth as victims of post-colonial betrayal and then the last chapter is entitled youth as agents of social re-construction. It discusses the contribution of youth from the very first novel to be published which is *Weep Not Child* until *Wizard of the Crow* which is the last in the list of the novels used for this study.

Guided by the view that an artist does not invent the material he works on, but derives it from the reality he comes into contact with in life, it becomes logical to conclude that the youth in Ngugi's fictional works are represented as victims of both colonial and post-betrayal. They are also represented as agents of change in the society he writes within and for. Analysis took into consideration, the interaction with imperialism and empathy with his elder brothers who were activists. This advised the inference and the thesis of the study that Ngugi's schemata could only provide him with youth as socio-political agents when his creative genius had taken the better of him. What it means here is that the actions and reactions of the youth are the only material that his senses could provide him. All he could do was to represent that reality artistically. This conclusion is supported by Ngugi himself who confesses that writing is a form of self-confession of private reactions to various individuals and situations. In other words, it

is an artistic representation of the personal experiences accrued over time. With literature being perceived as, "holding the mirror up for society to see itself" (Shakespeare as cited in Sutherland, 2009), it follows logic that Ngugi's world as mirrored in his texts is constantly subjected to conflict between virtue and vice, between economic freedom and global tyranny of economics and textual evidence show that the youth are protagonists in that struggle.

He has successfully re-presented the youth as being full of life as well as a model for young people in every society. Their representation can be useful in policy development with regards to youth affairs for any society. Studying his younger characters against the literature surveyed during the study shows that his representation of the youth are real. Their contributions in the political, religious, educational and economic struggle justify the need for performance space as a matter of exigency in every progressive society. Their concerns are universal and do not only stem from idealism and rebellion caused by a desire to have privileges of elderly people. They can neither be equated to juvenile delinquency. Textual evidence has shown that where they rebel against authority, there is always a morally justifiable reason for that. Ngugi has adequately developed their characters such that their motives are always geared towards liberation and social amelioration. Where they fail, he also provides sufficient background which informs and enriches their representation as normal human beings. From Boro, Muthoni, Nyambura, Mukami, Ole Maasai, Chui, Karega, Wanja, Kamiti and Nyawira, the trend is the same. The authorities are in the wrong, be they parents, politicians or educational administrators. These young people are re-presented as prepared to fight all the social ailments within their immediate socio-political and economic environments.

Ngugi does not only dwell in what they are capable of doing, but he also diagnoses the root of their behaviour back to their source. For instance, he has been able to trace back why Boro decided to become a ruthless assassin. His sympathy lies with Wanja who has become a remorseless prostitute and the killer of the blood sucking trio, Chui, Mzigo and Kimeria, without losing her sense of virtue. Through her, he has been able to show the cruelty that could arise from the conservatism of parents while at the same time demonstrating the ruthlessness some young girls are suffering because of old men who abuse them sexually.

Based on the discussion, it can also be concluded that as a writer, Ngugi seems to be more favourably predisposed towards youth than he is to elderly characters. His representation of youth approximates near veneration or rather evolves from admiration to veneration. This is evident in the names he gives them as well as incidents which unfold around their persons. For instance, he has given important and luminary names such as Guthera and Gatuiria to the youth whereas in the case of elderly characters he has apportioned names with negative meanings which imply their predatory and carnibalistic personalities. Besides names such as Abdulla which means servant of God, he graces the personalities of his young characters by representing them through incidents which show that they are in contact with the supernatural. This refers to the visions of Kamiti and Wariinga as well as the confession of Gatuiria that he is a preist. In the cultural and religious context within which the novels are produced, all aspects of characterization place these youth in the category of *shamans*.

For parents who are still rearing youth, a lesson on parenting can still be learned from Ngugi. Through the character of Ole Maasai, he has been able to represent their likely courses for resorting to juvenile delinquencies such as robbery, pick pocketing, violence and even early pregnancies as creations of a society. This is accompanied by a subtle caution that it might not always be wise to attend to such behavioural detours punitively, but rather empathetically. The novels chosen for this study answer the question on certain behavioral forms of youth, which have always turned them into victims of cynicism and skepticism. With some social ills such as prostitution being abhorred, the author reaches deep into the root of this social taboo whose cause has often been ignored.

It should; however, be mentioned that Ngugi's mission has not been to represent the elderly characters and members of society negatively, but to represent an alternative view of youth using a medium which depends on the reality which has been deposited into his conscience over a protracted period of time. His literary works renew hope on the revival of Africa and youth are the most likely source of these qualities. They stand for the voices of the Njoroges of the continent who are poor and uneducated not because of their will, but because of the overwhelming conditions which surround their lives. Through youth such as Steven Howlands, he has demonstrated that racism is

induced and that it is also a temporary *psychosis* which the individual, with the inherent sense of justice in them, can rid themselves off.

The observation that Ngugi's youth are a more formidable force in the socio-political lives of their societies as compared to their parents or elderly characters can be proved by means of statistics. Empirically, the youth show themselves to be more on the side of virtue than elderly characters. This is proved by the following findings as derived from evidence in the texts. Compared to their children, particularly in cases where both children and their parents form the cast of Ngugi's selected novels, very few elderly characters were represented as agents of social change. For instance, Wariinga is like her father, they both are agents of social reformation. On the contrary, Mwhaki's attitude towards the poor is more humane than that of her father's. Nyawira is not avarice driven like her father whose opulence cannot be shared with the poor. The siblings, Muthoni and Nyambura have a more contextualized and liberating interpretation of the scriptures than their father Ezekiel Waweru who is an agent of western imperial Theology. Gatuiria, son of a rich man offers love and support where his father engendered worthlessness and despair. Yet another youth with an attitude parallel to her own father is Mukami who provides for Karega physically, materially, and intellectually where poverty engineered by her father and his class is obstructing Karega's personal development.

A synthesis of Ngugi's biography, history and his novels lead to a conclusion that youth have always been actively involved in the socio-political salvation of their societies. Owing to several factors such as their capacity for ideological shift and reception of new ideas, their instinct for survival as well as their generative power, it becomes a sign of progressive thinking to have them provided with more space for performance in the socio-political and economic aspects of their societies. With abounding evidence shared in the texts within this study, and real life expression through the arts such as music as in the case of Kenya's Redykyulass generation, Kwaito and Hip Hop abounding with social commentary, there is beyond any shadow of doubt that there is a need for the inclusion of youth in the socio-political vision of every society.

Textual evidence has also attested to the author's inclinations towards youth. For instance, the author's first text, *Weep not Child*, opens with sympathy towards youth as

encoded in Wheatman's poem. The first of his post liberation novels, *Petals of Blood* also borrows a poem from the same poet and demonstrates the confrontational and immortal spirit which resides with the youth. The last of the novels selected for this study, *Wizard of the Crow*, which might be the last of the author's creative production so far, also demonstrates the zeal of the author to have the youth recognized as a socio-political force through the voice of a police officer, Arigai Gai Gatherer, in his phrase, *Haki ya Mungu*.

Further still, evidence abounds in Ngugi's texts on the youth who are represented as responsible, visionary, altruistic, patriotic, and ready to take on life's challenges in a milieu that is *necrophilic* and subversive. With the view to preserve democracy and responsible citizenry, one, therefore, recommends that Ngugi's novels, both pre and post-colonial, be made a part of Africa's curriculum on Language arts.

Arising from the fact that words have the capacity to control thoughts and attitudes, it is therefore recommended that some words such as parliament be subjected to a critical lens. This word, which has over a period of time, accrued some sense of prejudice against the youth should be looked at through the lens of postmodernism. Originally, this innocent word meant an assembly which constitutes the supreme legislative body of a country. However, in practice the word has become more of a synonym of the word "senate" which is the sense common in America and borrowed from the Romans. For a number of reasons this word should be rendered obsolete or be subjected to a form of amelioration. Firstly, the word has the capacity to induce a myopic view of governance and social activism. The view aligns itself with the Aristotelian view of youth participation in politics which is exclusivist and prejudiced. It does not align itself with advances in knowledge production and empiricism. Foolhardy and idealistic as it may seem, the re-ordering of attitudes towards the agentiveness of youth in socio-political issues demands that the word be rendered either obsolete or replaced with a new term which possesses the capacity to ameliorate attitudes. In the paragraph below, an attempt to highlight the negative effect of the word will be made with the view to justify this assertion.

Firstly, the use of the word senate renders its users prejudiced against youth as part of any normal society. Evidence as presented by the literature review and Ngugi's novels selected for this study have shown that in some cases, youth are even more

active than elderly members of society. With the etymological definition of the word derived from the Latinate base SEN- which means old as can be seen from the words senile, senior, senescence which all include the sense of the word “old” or aged in English, it becomes evident that the word is self-serving to the elderly members of the society where the word is selected (Ayers, 1986). Its use presents the outdated way of perceiving age relations by apportioning certain privileges to elders while simultaneously dis-enfranchising youth from socio-political affairs except only as voters.

In this study, it is unfortunate or rather fortunate that the youth have evidently outclassed the elderly characters in as far as positive contribution to society is concerned. That is to say, those who are favoured by the use of this noun have been denounced by textual evidence from the study. Despite the fact that the study relied entirely on fictional works, the assertion cannot be dismissed by those who are conscious of the mirror concept of literature. In fact, it would, indeed, be a grievous mistake to relegate the assertion above into a mere game of semantics.

Emerging from the study is a realization that there is a need for further research on this age group. With the study conducted under the auspices of the human and social sciences, there appears a need for an inter-disciplinary investigation of this age group. Subsequent studies to this one might have to probe into what Natural Sciences might reveal as possible causes for the militancy which is common among the youth, but then diminishes when old age sets in. Another area of exploration which emerges from this study is the harmonization of the two age groups with the view to foster mutual appreciation between the youth and the elderly members in society.

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Appendix A

Interview with Ngugi

Below follows the transcript of the conversation with Prof. Ngugi

Venue: University of the Free State-South Africa

Date: 27 May 2012

Seleka: Firstly I would like to express my appreciation for allowing me to have this interview with you. It is for me a dream come true. But before we start with our conversation, I would like to confess that most of the questions I will be asking are based on my subjective reading of your texts.

Seleka: Thank you Prof; my first question is based on *Weep Not Child*.

Ngugi: Ok.

Seleka: Prof. I have been reading secondary texts on your works particularly on women; something I really applaud. However, my observation has been that throughout your novels including *Matigari* where the main character is elderly, young people seem to be the vehicles for your ideas. This is why I felt I must investigate the presentation of youth in your novels. I actually feel that very many people are not aware of the fact that we have younger characters than elderly ones in your works of fiction.

Ngugi: You know what? Before we continue, when I look at him (pointing at my son) and you, I see the future; he represents the future, a coming into being. How he is right now, and what ideas he grows up with, is very important.

Ngugi: Correct.

On that score, I would like us to start with the two characters, Njoroge and Stephen Howlands. My observation is that their discussion sets a tone for a new world order.

Seleka: Now my question Prof., has there ever been a time in your life when you had to evaluate the fear that you had had towards another race?

Ngugi: Actually in my memoir called *Dreams in a time of War*. Do you have that?

Seleka: No.

Ngugi: Just read it alongside *Weep Not Child* and see what things I have drawn from my childhood. The second volume of my memoir is called *In the House of the Interpreter*. In that memoir, I do actually describe similar personal encounter with a

white boy, a moment in which we discuss some of those things you know. It was like a moment of revelation.

Seleka: Mhh. I like that.

Ngugi: So look out for that one. The book is coming out in September (2012) So you will be able to make reference to that also.

Seleka: Something very important which I have gathered from Pen-points Gun-points and Dreams about the definition of an artist. The English equivalent for an artist of the Gikuyu word is “Mumbi” which means the creator, and something very interesting for me as a Motswana is that these words are cognates. In Setswana, we use an almost similar word Mmupi.

Ngugi: [He attempts to pronounce the word]

Seleka: Yes that’s correct. Mmupi.

We use this noun for someone who molds pots with clay, and at the same time, we use the word to refer to the creator –in the religious sense, that is to say God.

Ngugi: In my language, we say Mumbi wa igo nani; the moulder of heaven and earth

Seleka: Ok!

Ngugi: You know Mumbi is one of the [most] beautiful names I know.

Seleka: Oh yes. Now focusing on the word mumbi/mmopi, I’ve got a question coming from the novel, Devil on the Cross. Something very interesting that comes from Devil on The Cross pertains to music as it is introduced by this younger character Gatuiria.

Ngugi: The one who is researching music?

Seleka: Now the music by Gatuiria in Devil on the Cross demonstrates the ability of the artist to make and remake the world whereas his father shows a philistine attitude towards music and the arts in general. Now my question Prof, would you attribute his deformed character to his aversion towards the numbing force of the muse. You see I say this because of the evidence I gathered from the text. You seem to present Gatuiria as a more morally alert character than his father. I mean, look at the way he relates with the child his father has abandoned; look at the way he relates with the girl whose future was almost destroyed by his father. You seem to be saying, he outclasses his father. So I was thinking you juxtaposed them to say, this young man has a good character because he respects the arts and his father who is a friend of politicians if not a politician himself, is a model of moral decadence. Is it because he undermines the arts?

Ngugi: Yes. Now look, for the way he looks at the arts...the art is inherently a rejection of staticness. You know even music, that music somehow captures the idea of motion, the idea of change because motion by itself cannot be still, and good art always captures the idea of motion; therefore, the idea of change.

Seleka: Great!

Ngugi: So art seems to me the idea of – to be antagonistic to the idea of a frozen state. So art is always imagining possibilities, whereas other people like Gaturia's father see things, sort of, in a frozen state. They don't see possibilities; they only see the present.

Seleka: Still on Gaturia Prof, I was thinking...we have yet another interesting character in *Petals of Blood*- Ole Maasai. Apparently Ole Maasai is a hero among the Gikuyu people. He becomes interesting for me because of the role he plays ideologically. His role can be described as showing resistance to what is sometimes described as erotic imperialism. This I say because of the obvious. He is born by a Kenyan native woman to an Indian man, but Ole Maasai does not want to associate himself with his father who is privileged as a rich person, but on the contrary, he identifies with the poor and the oppressed natives. In some way again Prof, I guess it's in *Weep Not Child*. You talk about Africans not supposed to have sexual intercourse with other races especially those who oppress them. Having children with Italian prisoners who constructed the road is the cause of the statement. The reader is warned against racial annihilation. This emanates from the fact that the Italian prisoners who were bought from Kipanga had left a name in the form of children for themselves. This is where erotic imperialism comes in to play for me. Your comment Prof.?

Ngugi: First of all, two things: one is when I'm reacting to your question, I'm also ...I don't have a monopoly of answers to my novels because the whole problem of art is often expressed beyond the author's intent. Consciously, I don't actually oppose the idea of inter-racial sex because what is more interesting about the idea of love is that, love is almost like art, because love always shows possibilities; there's a moment when it captures what is possible in human beings. There is a level, if you go back to your own; even with yourself you go back to the moment when you are in love. There is a moment when love is almost in perfection. Love seems to express possibilities of what human life can be, but obviously in the contexts of oppression, love does not express that. But when it does, even across races, it expresses another possibility

which is against the structures or divisions of society. Then love almost triumphs even in a strange kind of way. Even sexual love has a way of opposing a social rigidity imposed by politics and economics.

Seleka: Very interesting. You know it takes me back to Mukami. You know she ends up falling in love with this other guy from a lowly socio-economic background. We also have... think of Mwhaki with Njoroge; they come from two different backgrounds.

Ngugi: Yes! Yes! Because love is another way of undermining those social rigidities. Look at it even in apartheid how even in the very heyday of apartheid, people would be killed for or declared mad for...but still you find love sometimes [laughter] undermining that all the time [laughter again].

Seleka: Yes! Yes! You know in the case of Bessie Head. Her mother was white and her father was a black (Zulu) stable boy.

Ngugi: Yeah!

Seleka: And the mother was declared insane because of that.

Ngugi: Now you can see there is a moment when love can undermine the whole structure of society, of rigidity and so on.

Seleka: Now Prof. Still on the issue of Ole Maasai. Let's bring this to Africa. Do you think in this modern era, it could still be possible for Africa to fall victim to other continents or empires who might want to build their empires with the booty from Africa?

Ngugi: Look! Look! Africa has been...the resources of Africa have always been used to...by others, particularly, the West from the days of slavery. Think about the Dutch and the English when they came to the Western Cape. You will remember what they did with the Khoi, the Xhosa, and the whole land thing in the area and so on and then turning the Khois and the others into slaves. You know we have always been the giver to the West. The key for Africa even today is how we harness our resources as Africa so that they are serving us as the African people then we negotiate with the world on the basis of our own strength and not from a position of weakness. That's why I believe, by the way, in Pan-Africanism. In African unity, but you look at the way life is going; the world is uniting. Europe is uniting you know; they used to laugh at us when we were talking about the idea of Pan-Africanism. They used to say eh...err, but look at them today; they are uniting. America is organizing in blocks and the only continent which is splitting is Africa.

Seleka: Oh no! This is bad news.

Ngugi: When others are uniting, we are splitting into little things that now connect to the giant and you can see it coming. Another problem is that governance and inequality that we should address and then we have development from the standpoint of those who are below the mountain. Many of these problems would be solved, but if we do not look at development from those who are below the mountain, but from the standpoint of the middle class, but again if we had a policy in which the small person in South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and other places then we can see how we will reinforce each other. Precisely because the objective is the same, but when it comes to the middle class, Oh! Oh! Then we have a looting mentality (laughter). A looting mentality, we have to find a way of saying no. The mercenary must be replaced by the visionary. Now we have a mercenary class whether it's Angola, Uganda, Kenya, I don't know about your situation in South Africa. The visionary looks to unite and even to maximize forces by uniting. The mercenary wants to split.

Seleka: He destroys life hey!

Ngugi: Yes he wants to split. That's the mercenary mentality of the middle class.

Seleka: My question has come back now, and it's on Gaturia. I have read something in this book, *Intellectuals and African Development: A pretention and resistance in African Politics*, by Beckman and Adeoti (2006). They are saying Marx believed that it is not the middle class who are interested in the social and political change, but now you are saying something for me. Like I said it is subjective. I think Gaturia had all opportunities; he is from the middle class; he has been to America, he studied there, but he comes back to his country, he does not want to enjoy the booty amassed by his father, but rather he decides to struggle with the ordinary people and that's with the lady who he later falls in love with and decides that "I am going to take care of the child my father abandoned" (dramatic irony of course) and finally through him again, we see the lady getting vengeance on the perpetrator. From this, we learn that youth are presented as people who are able to shun the privileges of their class.

Ngugi: Because they are the future, but the question of the middle class it - is still very important. Because the middle class, they have better opportunities for amassing wealth and knowledge, so they have to decide where do they put knowledge in service to. In the service of the ordinary person or they either become visionaries or mercenaries. Or they let their energies... the middle class must be able to commit class suicide and actually put themselves in the service of the people.

Seleka: Prof. I have got another question here and three more. To create a background to that, the Setswana culture labels a man who dares have sexual intercourse with a lady young enough to be his child as a cause of bad luck to his family or community.

Ngugi: Which one is that?

Seleka: Setswana, my culture. You know in the Setswana culture, what the old man of Ngorika did is ominous to ill fortune. A man such as that is viewed as a cell of the body which is cancerous and therefore deserves to be removed from the body. What is meant here is that the legal system of the Batswana would have that man killed.

Ngugi: Ok.

Seleka: Now my question Prof, what would the Gikuyu culture do with a man like the old man of Ngorika?

Ngugi: eh... eh...m there would actually be a purification ritual you know. He would have to undergo a ritual of purification because there is supposed to be a kind of respect between youth and elderly people. But since they still married out of their age groups sometimes, but when that happened, you would be subjected to a kind of fine, but you would be purified also. What also happened was that the woman would be promoted into an age group above hers. But it is the man who is purified to allow him to...

Seleka: Very interesting. My next question is on the name Mau Mau. There are contending ideas concerning the name. A friend of mine from East Africa told me that, and I hope I got him right, the name Mau Mau is actually a shortening of a sentence: Mzeugo ayende ulayi, mweusi apate uhuru. I saw something close to this. Does this make sense to you Prof.?

Ngugi: People try to give meaning to these words. They are trying to give a rational answer because nobody seems to quite understand the meaning of Mau Mau. They try to give a rationale. You see people who were fighting did not call themselves Mau Mau. Mau Mau was a coinage of the British not the coinage of the fighters themselves. They called themselves Land and Freedom Army. Now you call yourself a freedom army. Your aim is very clear, isn't it?

Seleka: Sure it is.

Ngugi: But the British wanted to bring something else which is mystical, something strange which is mumbo jumbo- which is, they don't have clear objectives; they have fallen mentalities and they have these Mau Mau like mumbo jumbo. Actually, it comes

from during those days the people had an oath and the name for an oath in Gikuyu is called muuma.

Seleka: Ok.

Ngugi: [repeats muuma] so somebody who does not know the language hears the sound muuma so he will probably say Mau Mau-muuma you see but you don't hear it.

Seleka: Oh, I see they are "muuma" people. So the problem is the sound filtered in through the foreign language ear.

Ngugi: Yes! They sound Mau Mau. It sounded mystical and they started turning it mystical, more irrational. Their objective is clear; a foreigner hears what his linguistic background says to him.

Seleka: Thank you Prof. My next question - it is well known that writers of fiction and plays often name their characters in a manner which positions them either for or against the moral of their stories. For instance, here in South Africa, we have a play called Bopha.

Ngugi: Bopha.

Seleka: Yes. Bopha, which means arrest.

Ngugi: Which language is that?

Seleka: It is one of the Nguni languages; like isiSwati, isiZulu, isiNdebele, isiXhosa

Ngugi: Oh! I see.

Seleka: In this play, we have a young character whose name is Zwelakhe and two others Njandini and Naledi. Both are related to him. Their names foretell their roles in the story and even in the struggle as the major theme of the story. Zwelakhe means "His land", Njandini means "bloody dog" and Naledi means "a star". Now the conflict of the story arises from the fact that Zwelakhe is a student, a political activist and is involved in socio-political issues (1976 uprisings) in which the government is the perpetrator. On the other hand, his father is a policeman, and his uncle, Naledi, is jobless and while looking for a job, he gets arrested, but then is given a choice to either go to jail or join the police force. Inevitably, he joins the police force, but as a "star", he temporarily like stars get obliterated and his anti-apartheid activities are suspended only to re-surface right at the police training college where he questions the racial prejudice of the influx control, a law that forbids Blacks to be found at some of the metropolitan cities of South Africa at certain times.

With the names you already have in the cast, it is obvious that Zwelakhe will always be fighting for his land that has been usurped by the Whites.

Now comes my question Prof, you have some interesting characters like Ole Maasai and many others.

Ngugi: Maasai people are warriors. First of all, let me retract because there are no people whose profession is war it is colonial invention to describe some people as warriors. Are there people in their lives who do not do anything but fight as if it's a profession? But anyway, the Maasai were fierce resisters. They resisted inroads to slavery. Historically, they were feared by the Arabs; they had a reputation and that slave route was avoided. The Maasai warriors and all that are adjoining the area. Ole Maasai means son of Maasai.

Seleka: I like this other one Maruri wa Kimeengemege [laughter], which means something huge, hopeless and ugly.

Ngugi: Yeah, yeah. I use [that] particularly in Devil on the Cross. I did actually use names in a morality sense. I do not always do that, but I was very conscious like in the name of Gatuiria, the researcher. What I do is, I use real names that people use. Like I use names which for me have a symbolic meaning. There are names I invented in Devil on the Cross, and in the cave scene among the thieves, I used insects as a means of characterization. I use insects which are dangerous insects. Like eh... there is one character who ... I forget the name. I used the name Jigger - you know what Jigger is?

Seleka: No.

Ngugi: A Jigger! Its feet oh Jigger you don't know it. Oh it's a very dangerous insect. It gets into you and gets huge. Jigger you don't have Jiggers here?

Seleka: No we don't have them. In my area, maybe not, because the area is not humid

Ngugi: Oh! They eat human beings. They are little like flies. You know flies? But when they enter you, they become round [contorts his face]. Ugly. So one of the characters, I use the Jigger as a physical attribute; I do that quite a lot. There's the other one. Animals which are long. Some others I use animals as characters.

Seleka: Yes it reminds me of this one Nderi wa Riera, bird of prey.

Ngugi: Nderi is a hawk, always in the sky; the hawk but not in the positive sense of the word.

Seleka: Another question is on Nyambura and Kihika.

Ngugi: Nyambura means of rain, Mburi of rain.

Seleka: More like in my language (Setswana) and Chishona.

Ngugi: Kihika more like one who is always in a hurry. He doesn't have patience, he wants to bring change. Kihika, being in a hurry, is impatient.

Seleka: We are now approaching the end Prof; you seem to be writing a lot about depressing issues here. Do you think in a way writing about them has helped you not to get depressed. Because I think they are depressing. Does writing help you, hold yours against such.

Ngugi: Yes I see it as some kind of struggle... struggle is not only on the physical. It is also in the realm of ideas as well, and you will find that most ferocious battles are fought on the level of ideas and images. How to see the world; you see the ruling class? And that battle is on all the time and then you need a counter. Change from below.

Seleka: I think this is my last question Prof, and is based on Wariinga and Wanja. If I'm not wrong, Wariinga is the one who finally kills Gaturia's father in Devil on The Cross and Wanja also ends up killing three gentlemen in Petals of Blood, and there is yet another lady in Matigari; her name is Guthera.

Ngugi: Yes. Guthera means clean - in your language? It means light as opposed to darkness, the concept of nothingness, enlightenment. It means now everything is clear – when there is nothing. Nothing is there, the idea of... It also means theri [laughter]. It is a philosophic concept of self-realization, self-enlightenment, and nirvana - nothingness everything clear. Guthera-Gutheree-light-nothing.

Appendix B

Glossary of Gikuyu words and phrases

This glossary has been compiled with the help of Ms. Sharon Mbugua, a language teacher, who is also a Gikuyu native speaker residing in Mafikeng-South Africa.

Abdullah Servant of God

Arigaigai Gatherer: An expression to warn the people about the coming of the police during the curfew in colonial era. They would report with this question tag to say why are those people not in the hiding place? It also has the sense of a person working for whites, but protecting the interests of his people. Enemies coming behind –alarm. Now the name of a character.

Boro: name which means Gútú-(Pills/Medication)

Chui: leopard

Gathuira: monitor, another sense is spy.

Gikonyo: name, meaning belly button.

Githua: to limp (lame person).

Gitogo- a rich, wealthy person.

Guthera- to be clean or to hit something.

Haki ya mungu: I swear in the name of God

Ihii Cia mutitu: the boys who resides in the forest.

Kamiti: Prison/ committee

Kamoongonye: Just a name

Kaniuru-Ka: small, little; naira/naira-dry.

Karanja: name.

Kareendi: Concubine, small unofficial house

Karega: Rebel, chopper or cut. Also a rebel by Sichertman

Kiarie: please talk.

Kihara: bald head.

Kihika: name, to block, prevent, protect or move fast/hurry up. Ngugi himself states that the name expresses a sense of urgency for reform.

Kimeria: The oga, always swallows.

Kimwana: either my son or son of ... always,

Mau Mau- comrade e.g. same party, slogan also the short form of *Mwafrika apate uhuru Mzungu a yende/akwende ulaya*(Europe)

Mriuki: revive, reverse

Mugo: witch/traditional doctor or fortune teller

Mukami:to milk, skimmer, user

Mumbi-name: meaning creator (God the creator of heaven and earth).

Munira: well organized

Muthoni: In-law's, you can't talk freely (limitations).

Mwangi:name, age mates during circumcision (initiation) season/year etc.

Mwihaki: to bribe / the judge

Mzee: a way to show respect when addressing seniors.

Mzigo-luggage

Nderi wa Riera:Hawk of air.

Ndigure:to purchase yourself (own self).

Nyakinyua:loud, vocal or limited secrets.

Nyawira: likes/ enjoys to work, always working

Nyakabi: name: Masaai/ nilotes (plains/highland nilotes)

Tajirika: to be wealthier- Tajiri means wealth.

Waigoko: Nickname for someone with a hunch back/ disabled person, a lame person who is still naughty.

Wakambozi- saviour.

Wanja: outsider.

Wariinga: always forgets/ forgotten.

Warui: rui-river; wa- belongs.