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**Identity in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross*
(1980) and *Matigari* (1987)**

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Contents

Dedication.....	i
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Abstract	iv
Introduction	1
Endnotes	10
Methods and Materials	12
Endnotes.....	15
Results and Discussion	16
Chapter One: The Development of Wariinga's Female Identity in <i>Devil on the Cross</i> (1980).....	19
1. The Plight of Women in <i>Devil on the Cross</i> (1980).....	19
2. Wariinga's Self rejection.....	21
3. Revenge as a Self-assertion.....	25
Conclusion	27
Endnotes	28
Chapter Two: The Dislocated Identity in <i>Matigari</i> (1987)	29
1. Matigari's Oppressed Identity	29
2. Matigari's Quest for Identity	31
3. The Blind Judiciary in <i>Matigari</i>	35
Conclusion	37
Endnotes	37
Chapter Three: The Representation of Alienation in <i>Devil on the Cross</i> (1980) and <i>Matigari</i> (1987)	38
1. Powerlessness.....	38
2. Meaninglessness	43
3. Normlessness	45
4. Social Isolation	48
5. Self-estrangement	51
Conclusion	54

Endnotes	55
Chapter Four: Strangers in Their Own Land in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's <i>Devil on the Cross</i> (1980) and <i>Matigari</i> (1987)	57
1. Ngugi on: Home and Land	57
2. Otherness in Ngugi's Fiction	61
Conclusion.....	66
Endnotes.....	66
General Conclusion	68
Bibliography	73

Dedications

To my beloved parents, my beloved brothers and sisters and all my friends

Celia

To my beloved parents, my beloved brothers and sisters and all my friends

Sara

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Abstract

The notion of identity is a very prominent theme in postcolonial studies and literature. The exploration of such postcolonial writers as Ngugi wa Thiong'o, reveals the plight of the postcolonial societies and writers. In this dissertation, we analyzed the image of Identity in Ngugi's works, namely; *Devil on the Cross* (1980) and *Matigari* (1987) from a psychological and sociological perspectives. We attempt to explore this vast notion of identity in relation to gender, alienation and otherness. The outline of this study comprises a discussion of four important sections that includes: The Development of Wariinga's Female Identity in *Devil on the Cross* (1980), the Dislocated Identity in *Matigari* (1987), the Representation of Alienation in *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* and Strangers in Their Own Land in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*. The final conclusion that can be drawn from this study shows how identity in Ngugi's view was lost with the coming of the colonizer and has to be restored. His aim is to give solution to this loss of identity through his works, to regain his native identity and to reconstruct a link between him and his origins.

Key words: postcolonialism, identity, representation, double oppression, alienation.

“Of all relations the most universal is that of identity, being common to every being whose existence has any duration.”

David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* 1739.

I. General Introduction

All human beings, besides bearing their individual identities, also hold an identity connected to their societies and countries. However, when the individual faces struggle in his life, he is unable to identify himself with the country or culture he is living with. And due to this crisis of identity, he searches for his “self” and “home” where he can develop as an individual, find a stable life and brings a balance between his wishes and the culture and tradition of his land.

Our aim in this dissertation is to discuss the notion of identity and how it is shaped and constructed in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* (1980) and *Matigari* (1987). The latter deals with this notion of identity at length since Ngugi has witnessed the process of colonization and has been affected by it. The use of the term of “neocolonialism”¹ in our study points to the perpetuation of the imperialist oppression and colonialist domination in a different and essentially new format even after the achievement of independence.

We have raised the issue of psychological effects of postcolonial condition, by providing a portrait of the disillusioned individuals within a corrupt and ruthless neo-colonial environment. Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* concentrate on politically difficult part of global impact and culture in Kenya. In this dissertation, discussing these two novels from a post-colonial perspective, we center on how the battle of freedom is simply one more terrible for postcolonial African culture. This will be shown through taking Kenya as an illustrative example of a post-colonial state, captivated by the neo-colonizers whose main concern is to drain the riches of their motherland.

Our focus is to explore the psyches of both the oppressor and the oppressed uncovering facts about the neo-colonial circumstance and environment. To comprehend how the neo-colonial elite force their strength physical drive through assaults, seizure of work and assets,

subjugation of both the indigenous individuals and their property. This will be done in relation to the issue of identity which has not already been studied from the psychological and the sociological points of views in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*.

In this context, Ngugi reserved his most incisive criticism of this godless alliance for his novel *Devil on the cross* which he wrote in his mother tongue, Gikuyu and himself translated to English; likewise *Matigari*, his second novel in Gikuyu which he got translated to English by Wangui wa Goro. Both works show the ultimate outcome of struggle between the people and the oppressive elite which took control over Kenya just after independence. If *Devil on the Cross* is concerned with the ways in which the hardship of living under the coloniser occurs once again and might be applied to the Postcolonial setting, *Matigari* is a novel that seeks to (re)conceptualize the relation between art and reality. Ngugi is very careful in his presentation of ambivalence as the essence of *Matigari*'s subjectivity and of his complicated relation to the postcolonial world. We are going to explore in this study the questions and doubts about the postcolonial subject's identity on the motors that drive the narrative, setting up, as well as, determining its competing centers of meaning.

Review of the Literature

Ngugi's fictions have already received substantial consideration in terms of stylistic and thematic studies. For instance, Selamawit Seyoum (1996) has conducted a research under the title *Religious implications in Matigari*. In her senior essay, she has showed that Ngugi's attitude towards Christianity is negative. According to her explanation, Ngugi believes that Christianity is a hindrance to the total liberation of his country. She believes that the author tries to free the minds of the people from religious thought (Christianity) in order to incite revolutionary spirit in which he believes is there wisdom. In her book, she has concluded that Ngugi's sole purpose of writing in italics is to create a lasting impression in the mind of the

reader that Jesus Christ as portrayed in the New Testament is nothing but a mythical figure. According to Selamawit in Ngugi's successive novels there occurs a historical Chronicle. His earliest novel is about the Kikuyu which is a tribe in Kenya, and the settlement of the colonizers. In his next two novels, he depicts his childhood observation and experience of the anti-colonial struggle. Then he changes the scene of his novels from colonialism to neo-colonialism. In his earliest novel, Ngugi, reveals how the Europeans established and strengthened their colonial power using religion as their major weapon. Due to this reason, the author's view towards religion was negative as it is rejected in his works². Emenyonu quoted in Selamawit (1996) says:

Ngugi Shows the Bible(religion) as a weapon of colonization manipulated by the white Colonizer in the past to enslave the black man spiritually and physically to condition him to accept oppression and exploitation as his divine predestination³.

Sundy Deborah in her dissertation proclaimed that the breaking of family ties and the displacement of homeland caused by colonization had been a tough experience for Ngugi as for Kenya. This loss is very significant for Kenyans, as Sundy quoted Loflin: "*landscape of Kenya is itself linked to the community's spiritual, social, and political identity*"⁴.

In similar, Ogot, B.A. in "*Decolonization and Independence in Kenya*"⁵ asserts that Ngugi thinks to create home to Africans, those people in exile should come back to their original homes in what he calls a "Homecoming". After they come back, they have to take part in the making of their new homes. So, Ngugi defines home as the place where one's family lives, he states that through his novel *Devil on the Cross* when Gitutu says: "*As for my address, my real home is here at the Golden Heights, Ilmorog. I call it my real home because it's where my wife and children live*".⁶

According to Ogot, B.A, Home builds this sense of security for people who have been deprived from it for so long. This attachment to land and home is what made the basis of the struggle against colonialism and is what makes the basis now for the struggle to define

oneself in this world. It is obvious that the ties between postcolonial peoples and their lands are so strong that their lands became their reason of existing; they can no longer identify themselves away from their lands.

Babu, A. R. (2009) is another researcher who has explained in his article that *italics* is a memorable satire on the bitter experience of post independence African society and also it is an allegory, the story of every man in a neo-colonial country. Ngugi quoted in Babu (2009) says: “*An African writer should write in a language that will allow him to communicate effectively with peasants and workers in Africa language.*”⁷ Babu concludes that Ngugi addresses the necessity of right and justice to his people using the indigenous people’s language. Even if the issue of language is not the main concern of this study, the researcher believes that Ngugi has done a worldview shift in using his indigenous language in writing his latest novels such as *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*. However, the present study differs from the above mentioned research works since it reflects the shift of African Literature by focusing and investigating a single author’s contemporary African post colonial novel. Thus, the researcher, in the analysis presents how Ngugi’s *Matigari* differs from the earlier novels by mentioning crucial elements that are seen as a paradigm shift in the novel.

Another idea is developed by Robert J.C. Young in *English and the Language of Others*, who stresses the point that Ngugi thinks an African literature worth being called so, is that written in African languages, but also Ngugi's shift to writing in Kikuyu was problematic since Kikuyu is a minority language and Kiswahili is the official language of Kenya. By doing this, according to Young, he neglects a language at the expense of another:

For Ngugi, the practices of writing in English, the language of his former colonial master, became unthinkable, a betrayal of his own national culture. Ngugi’s situation, however, was complicated by the fact that his nation operates in a multilingual environment in which different languages are spoken by different ethnic groups. His decision to reject English, therefore, and to write in his native Kikuyu, was in part an anti-colonial strategy, but also simultaneously an assertion of a minority language against the dominant language of Kenya, Kiswahili.⁸

Young comments on this through asserting that even if Ngugi defends writing literature in indigenous languages, and even if he himself shifted to writing in his mother tongue, he translates his works in English, and Young takes that as a proof of the impact of English on the former colonies. Since even works written in African languages have to be translated into a foreign language to be understood not only universal, but also in the writer's homelands.

Eileen Julien's study *African Novels and the Question of Orality* is considered by Ogude as a useful means to understand the novels of Ngugi written in Gikuyu. She comments on *Devil on the Cross* saying that the use of oral language here "*is a quality of Kenyan culture now and not a tool for decoding the past*"⁹. And this orality is not only present in his works in Gikuyu, but also in his works in English. He uses literally translated proverbs in his English novels. Ogude considers the use of traditional seers and prophets, rumor, gossip and fantastic elements in Ngugi's work as a hybrid feature for aesthetic purposes.¹⁰

The same idea is developed by Simon Gikandy who argues in his book *Ngugi Wa Thiong'o* that the notion of national identity in the works of Ngugi written in English could be best understood the use of prophecy and conversion; the shift from using Gikuyu for the sake of traditions to using it for the sake of colonial stories.

Issues and Working Hypothesis

As already have been noted, a large number of books and articles have explored Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's dealing conspicuously with the subject of social injustice and the issue of language. Characters in the two novels suffer from injustice and the essayist puts the fault on the capitalist system which is the signpost of control and oppression. Yet, in spite of all the attention focused on Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* (1980) and *Matigari* (1987), little critical attention has been paid to the study of the identity deploying a psychological and sociological points of view in the two works. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's works are characterized

by an undoubted note of criticism against perceived inadmissible social practices. In his two novels that have been used for this study, Ngugi has attempted to chronicle the events that occurred in his country, Kenya after independence. We hypothesize that identity and psychology of oppression in Ngugi's novels have been largely emphasized. Thus, one of our assumptions is to study Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* from post-colonial perspectives exploring the issue of identity.

Methodological Outline

At the methodological level, our dissertation will be composed of four chapters. It contains general introduction in which we give a general idea about the issue of identity in postcolonial literature in the Kenyan society by referring to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* (1980) and *Matigari* (1987). We have chosen the theory of Albert Memmi in which we have surveyed some works. We have raised the issue in working hypothesis. In the method and material section, we provide firstly a brief summary of Albert Memmi's theory of *Post-Colonial Theory* in his book *Decolonization and the Decolonized* (2006) and an overall synopsis of the story. Then, we have relied on Frantz Fanon's two works, *Black Skin, White Masks* to comprehend the complex manners in which identity, especially Blackness is made. In this book, psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic theory are used to clarify the feelings of dependency and inadequacy that black people might experience. And *The Wretched of the Earth* in which the author supplies a psychiatric and psychologic analysis of the dehumanizing impacts of colonization on the individual. Therefore, we have discussed the degree of social, cultural, and political involvement to make a social development for the decolonization of a person and of individuals. Finally, we have employed Melvin Seeman's *On the Meaning of Alienation* (1959) in which he introduced the meaning of alienation. He states that alienation is identified by five alternative meanings: powerlessness,

meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. Furthermore, we have analyzed how that alienation is man's loss of pride and satisfaction from doing their work and therefore feeling alienated.

The result section contains the finding of our research while the discussion will focus on the study of the psychological effects of neo-colonial condition on both the minds of the oppressor and the oppressed in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Matigari* , *Devil on the Cross*. Then, our dissertation ends with a general conclusion that restates the main issues discussed in this piece of research.

Historical Background

A century of European colonization left behind an African continent surprised, taken aback and confused. This is why modern African writers see the need for and admit a commitment to reveal the abolition of western domination in their novels. African writers have an enduring inclination for social and political commitment. Their texts mostly reflect and refract the socio-political events in their societies. Therefore, African literature is always chained to the experiences of the peoples of the continent.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, one of Africa's leading writers underpins the significance of such a framework for creative literature whether it is within Africa or in other commonwealth countries. His first novel *Caitani Mutharabaini* (*Devil on the Cross*) in Gikuyu 1980 and in English in 1982, it was written on toilet paper while the author was in jail and is the first modern novel written in Gikuyu. Ngugi presented these ideas in an allegorical form. Written in a manner meant to recall traditional ballad singers, the novel is a partly realistic, partly fantastical account of a meeting between the Devil and various villains who exploit the poor.

Ngugi uses Wariinga's story of exploitation and social struggle, common to many young people in contemporary Kenya, to satirize and thus harshly criticize the political and

social situation of postcolonial Kenya when faced with the so-called devil of capitalism, which Ngugi himself considers as “*the last vicious kick of a dying imperialism.*”¹¹ Ngugi sees capitalism as an unfair system where “*the loss of the masses is the gain of the few*”¹² a system that is the root cause of the political and economic problems that affect postcolonial African countries. The novel shows that since postcolonial Kenya has embraced Western capitalism, there will always be the struggle between the rich and the poor, the exploiter and the exploited, “the hunter and the hunted”¹³:

If you look at this world ... there are two types of human being in every country: the manager and the managed, the one who grabs and the one who hoped for leftovers, the man who gives and the man who waits to receive.¹⁴

It is clear that class struggle occupies a prominent position in the novel as it portrays social tensions and violent clashes between the masses and the ruling élite. As a result, *Devil on the Cross* provides a powerful historical, political and social perspective on contemporary Kenya, with the struggle against Western domination in its neo-colonial and capitalist forms as a constant theme. In this respect, the novel functions simultaneously as a stimulus for political and social change, as it is aimed at persuading the masses to support and promote a true and authentic national culture.

Then, his second Gikuyu novel *Matigari* written in 1987 is a novel of liberation as the title means in Gikuyu language, it refers to the struggle for freedom. *Matigari* is a novel of liberation that provides survey of the history of Africa from the past to the future. It chronicles the life of the African people confronted with cultural, religious, economics of social enslavement.

The God who is prophesied is in you, in me and in other humans. He has always been there inside us since the beginning of time. Imperialism has tried to kill that God within us. But one day that God will return for the dead - and liberate us who believe in him. But if you let your country go to the imperialist enemy and its local watch dogs, it is the same thing as Killing that God who is inside you.¹⁵

The passage above, Ngugi wants to reinvigorate values like peace, justice, equality and brotherly love that are solidly based on Christian ethics.

Therefore, the author has done a paradigm shift in creating, strong and committed characters like Matigari in his latest novels. Having understood the betrayal of his people, Matigari began to preach his society to stand for truth and justice with courage and vision.

You want to know what I plan to do? I tell you, for I have nothing to hide. I have come back to the people girded with a belt of peace; a farmer whose seeds have not germinated does not give up planting. A person who seeks justice never tires of the search until he finds it. Truth never dies; therefore, truth will reign in the end, even if it does not reign today. My house is my house. I am only after what I have built with my own hands. Tomorrow belongs to me. I invite you to my house the day after tomorrow. Come to feast and celebrate our home coming! My thirst and hunger are not for material things. My only thirst and hunger are to do with my troubled spirit. I have traveled far and wide looking for truth and justice.¹⁶

This shows that Ngugi in this novel reflects a paradigm shift to attack the “sell-outs” and new settlers.

Besides, in the story of *Matiagri*, the people associate the events from the life of Matigari in searching for truth and justice as a miracle performer like Christ. Matigari’s expression in the story “*let the children come to me*”¹⁷ has a relationship with Christ’s speech in Matthew 19:14b which says “*let the little children come to me*”¹⁸ the narrator in the story also tells us that Matigari had a quality about him a kind of authority in his voice and demeanor which made people listen to him.¹⁹

The most obvious is the independence movement of the Land and Freedom Army, better known as *The Mau-Mau Movement*. The *Mau-Mau* revolutionary movement and its uprising in Kenya in the 1950s was an important factor not only in Kenyan colonial history, but also in Ngugi’s personal experience. In fact, his brother joined the Mau-Mau rebellion, and his parents and other members of his family were arrested and detained by the British Government (Booker 184). The history of *Mau-Mau* resistance against British imperialism was certainly influential for Ngugi’s moral attitude and didacticism as well as for his political and social commitment, and therefore it figures in several of his novels.²⁰

Likewise, the colonial history of Kenya dates from the foundation of a German protectorate over the Sultan of “Zanzibar’s” inshore possessions in 1885, pursued

by the oncoming of the “Imperial British East Africa Company” in 1888. From October 1952 to December 1959, Kenya was in a condition of emergency emerging from the “Mau Mau rebellion” against British rule. Despite British expects of handing power to "moderate" local rivals, it was the Kenya African National Union (KANU) of “Jomo Kenyatta” that shaped a government. The Colony of Kenya and the Protectorate of Kenya each came to an end on 12 December 1963 with independence being conferred on all of Kenya. At Kenyatta’s death in 1978, “Daniel arap Moi ” became President. Daniel arap Moi has held the Presidency, being unopposed in elections held in 1979, 1983 (snap elections) and 1988, all of which were held under the single party constitution Children are trafficked for imposed labor in street vending, domestic service, agricultural labor, herding, and commercial sexual exploitation. Poverty or the death of one or both parents, such as to HIV/AIDS.²¹

Endnotes

¹ William, Abraham. *The Mind of Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962. A discourse on neocolonialism and integrative form of culture in Africa.

² Selamawit, Syeoum. (1996). Religious implications in Matigari: A Stylistic Approach. .Adiss Ababa University. 1996. Page 142.

³ Ibid. Page 142.

⁴ Deborah, Sundy. “Mother Tongue: the use of another language and the impact on identity in Breyten Breytenbach's *Dog Heart* and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s *Matigari*”. University of South Africa, Pretoria. January 2010, P 23. (Cited in Loflin 1995: p.76).

⁵ B.A, Ogot,. “Part Three: The First Nyayo Decade 1978-88: The Construction of National Culture”. *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya: 1940*. Page 93. Ogot, B.A. and W.R. Ochieng, eds. London: James Currey Ltd, 1995.

⁶ Wa Thiong’o, Ngugi. “Devil on the Cross”. 1987. Page 100.

⁷ A. R, Babu. “Right and Justice: A Quenchless Quest in Ngugi Wa Thiong’o’s *Matigari*”. *International Research Journal*, 1/3 Accessed on May 12th 2012.

⁸ J.C, Robert. *Young in English and the Language of Others*. 2009. Page 209.

⁹ Eileen Julien “African Novels and the Question of Orality”. 1992. Page 143. (Cited in Ogude, James. *Novels and African History: Narrating the Nation*. London: Pluto Press 1999, p 94).

¹⁰ James, Ogude. *Ngugi’s Novels and African History: Narrating the Nation*. London: Pluto Press, 1999. Pages 94-95.

¹¹Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross* 1980. Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitani Mutharabaini*) London: Heinemann 1982. Page 210.

¹² Ibid. Page 105.

¹³ Ibid. Page 144.

¹⁴ Ibid. Page 78-79.

¹⁵ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 156.

¹⁶ Ibid. Page 64.

¹⁷ Ibid. Page 73.

¹⁸ Matthew 19:14b.

¹⁹ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 51.

²⁰ Odhiambo and Lonsdale, *On the Mau-Mau national movement of resistance and its part in Ngugi's novels*, 2003. Page 271-83.

²¹ Web site: <https://www.dol.gov/ilab/reports/child-labor/findings/2012TDA/kenya.pdf>

Method and Materials

a- Method

As previously suggested, attempts to show how *Devil on the Cross* (1980), and *Matigari* (1986) capture Ngugi's attitude to Kenyan neocolonialism. Each novel encapsulates Ngugi's rancorous critique of the neo-colonization which influences on the identity of the postcolonial subjects. To make it clear to the reader, we find it useful to present the theoretical framework on which we relied to reach our findings.

First, we deploy Albert Memmi's post-colonial theory. *Decolonization and the Decolonized* (2004) explores the injustice and oppressive daily humiliations of the citizens. Memmi's work is composed of two main narratives, one about decolonization, the other about immigration. Memmi refers to them as "descriptive portraits" and they are vivid, easily recognizable and seductive ideal types. Memmi's work offers a psychological rather than an economic study of the effects of colonialism. Albert Memmi is the ultimate Other, a Jew in a Muslim country, Tunisia, colonized by the French. In his book he develops questions directly relevant to the issue of mind decolonization. He considers his deep disappointment with the fact that the evils of the "postcolonial system," rather of vanishing with political decolonization, not only continue but have indeed declined. As shown by Memmi:

Widespread corruption and tyranny and the resulting tendency to use force, the restriction of intellectual growth through the adherence to long-standing tradition, violence toward women, xenophobia, and the persecution of minorities - there seems to be no end to the postulant sores weakening these young nations.¹

For this position, he reproaches "dolorism," which means "*natural tendency to exaggerate one's pains and attribute them to another*"² in this circumstance, the colonial past. Skillfully exploited by the corrupt economic, political and military rulers, that drives to the "*destruction of the present.*"³ instead of displaying a future for the good of their nations, they

*“dream only of a return to a golden age, a renewed fusion, the only productive kind in their view, of religion, culture, and politics.”*⁴

Then, we have relied on Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* to comprehend the complex manners in which identity, especially Blackness is made and produced. In this book, psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic theory was used to clarify the feelings of dependency and inadequacy that black people might experience. *Black Skin, White Masks* is the unsurpassed study of the black psyche in a white world. Fanon argues in *Black Skin* that after black people are subjected to the white colonizer’s attitude of superiority, they acquire an inferiority complex and try to rid themselves of it by assuming a white mask. The author explores the psychological damage of the black man caused by alienation, incomprehension, self-denial and racism. *The Wretched of the Earth* is the classic critique of colonialism from the Marxist left, where Fanon examines nationalism, imperialism and the colonial inheritance and manages to turn the traditional definition of the unorganized and apolitical on its head.

Finally, we have employed Melvin Seeman’s *On the Meaning of Alienation* (1959), in which he introduces the meaning of alienation. He states that alienation is identified by five alternative meanings: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement. Furthermore, we have analyzed how that alienation is man’s loss of pride and satisfaction from doing their work and therefore feeling alienated. We intend to describe the experience of Ngugi’s characters that feel disconnected from the values, norms, practices, and social relations of their communities. Thus, our objective is to investigate this research to discuss Ngugi’s characters that experienced social alienation in the two works *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*.

b- Materials

The materials selected to study and analyze the concept of identity are Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* (1980) and *Matigari* (1987). *Devil on the Cross* (1980) centers round a journey undertaken by a group of six protagonists by a matatu taxi to Ilmorog. The protagonists, namely Wariinga, Wangari, Gaturia, Muturi, Mwireri and Mwaura, gradually discover that they have been mysteriously invited to a Devil's feast arranged for the election of seven cleverest thieves and robbers. The local thieves, the Kenyan natives, collaborate with their foreign allies to loot and rob the country.

The novel opens with a disillusioned Wariinga who is fleeing modern Kenya. Wariinga as a modern Kareendi is chased from work after rejecting to give herself to her boss Kihara. Unfortunately, her Kamoongonye (young man) John Kimwana also deceives her. As a young girl she had always dreamed of being an engineer but her dreams were shattered by the old rich man from Ngorika. Moreover, Wariinga does not like herself. In her nightmares, while at school, Wariinga had always seen the devil like the European on the cross instead of Jesus. On the way, they are joined aboard Robin Mwaura's car by Wangari, an old woman, who is a victim of modern Kenya's problems. Despite her sacrifices, Wangari has reaped nothing from her fight for an independent Kenya.

Meanwhile, Wariinga and Gaturia fall in love after meeting aboard the car (Matatu), and Gaturia plans on introducing Wariinga to his parents. However, Wariinga is shocked to find that the old rich man who impregnated her is Gaturia's father. She takes her revenge and kills him. Ngugi's message to society especially about modern Kareendis is to be hopeful. Just like Wariinga does not give in to life's problems. Even after giving birth to her child, she strives to get back to school takes up secretarial studies and later ends up as a mechanic.

As far as *Matigari* (1987) is concerned, it is a political novel in the form of a parable. It is set in an unnamed African country, obviously based on the author's native Kenya but

doubtless applicable to other lands. Matigari is a former independence fighter who emerges from the forest long after the war has ended, buries his AK-47 at the foot of a tree, and goes in search of the fruits his victory has won. He goes to claim the house built by his own hands, but finds such houses are still in the hands of the Europeans and their toadies.

Matigari goes to the factory where he once worked only to find that black workers are still at the mercy of foreign investors. Everywhere he goes, Matigari asks, “*Where is truth and justice?*”⁷ however, renounces peaceful means, declaring “*Justice for the oppressed springs from the organized armed power of the people.*”⁸

End Notes

¹ Albert Memmi, *Decolonization and the Decolonized* 2004. Translated from the French by Robert Bononno. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 2006. Page xi

² Ibid. Page 19.

³ Ibid. Page 43.

⁴ Ibid. Page 41.

⁵ Collections. College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) [20364 . Gichigiri, Ndigirigi 1989. *M.A (Literature) Thesis 1989. Master of Arts Thesis* 2013.

⁶ International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science. Vol 3No.4. April 2015.

⁷ Ngugi wa Thiong’o. *Matigari* 1987. (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 62

⁸ Ibid. Page 60.

II. Results and Discussion

This dissertation reaches four major findings : The development of Wariinga's female identity in *Devil on the Cross* (1980), the dislocated identity in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Matigari* (1987), the representation of alienation in *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*, then Strangers in their own land in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the cross* and *Matigari*.

The main findings of this analysis provide a contextual and cultural milieu of the author. The first section deals with the double oppression of the Kenyan women which shows women as an object and victims of patriarchy and colonialism. African women were one of the most exploited women of the world. They were oppressed on the basis of gender, class and race. As we have seen, Ngugi's *Devil on the Cross* deals with the story of Wariinga a betrayed young woman. She represents the Kenyan working class and the struggles she faces are illustrative of a post-colonial state, captivated by the neo-colonizers. Through Wariinga, Ngugi brings to light the psychological damage caused to the blacks because of the color complex induced by the Europeans. Black women are not only silenced and oppressed in African patriarchal society but also in White culture; therefore, they are doubly colonized. Black women in their confrontation with the White suffer more severe pain than black men.

At that point, to clarify the dimension of oppression in Ngugi's account discourse and the sharp battle to keep pace with the resultant social dominion and post-colonial oppression, this ordinarily put women at the receiving end. We have seen the way in which author shaped and interpret the injustice and oppressive humiliation of the identity of postcolonial societies, and which seemed really important in the view of Ngugi.

The second section main result covers the quest of Matigari who finds himself confused about what identity does he hold: the one of a warrior who fights settler Williams and his fellows, or that of a peacemaker who bring his people together. People have always wondered about this real identity of Matigari, as a sign that Kenyan people is in a constant search for

their own identity. They don't really know who they are. However, Matigari realizes that a peaceful revolution is not possible because the oppressors cannot be stopped with words and reason. He then decides to dig up his weapons and fight for his country with violence.

The third section is about the transcending of the subjective state that the postcolonial elite had placed on the oppressed, which became the focal point in arousing mass consciousness for social transformation. Through Ngugi's two novels, people should understand that by oppression, their existence can no longer remain static and that the possibility of change, although its consequences can be quite violent, is a much brighter prospect than remaining in the oppressed state. The author reflects the presence of corruption, female oppression by the greed of the country's political, economic and social elite who, after the struggle for freedom from British rule, have not returned the wealth of the land to its people, but rather perpetuate the social injustice and economic inequality that characterized neo-colonial oppression.

The fourth section conducts a detailed examination of two theoretical concepts that have been central to postcolonial theory: home and otherness which are linked with identity that is analyzed by the author through the characters. The first one deals with the importance of Home in both novels *Matigari* and *Devil on the Cross*. The second deals with the form of Otherness, which is a western philosophical concept that postcolonial theory has primarily sought to critique and repudiate. Through Ngugi's two novels, the characters tempted to find an answer to their lost identities, but unfortunately, a lot of obstacles blocked them and show them that their land is not really the same and many things have changed. So, at the end they came to find their lands gone or divided, they are no longer the same lands they had left they felt themselves confused and displaced, strangers, outsiders and incomplete living in foreign homeland.

Finally, the general conclusion acknowledges how identity in Ngugi's view is still lost and dislocated even after the departure of the colonizer and has to be restored. He tries to give solution to this loss of identity through his works but all he does is raising more questions about this issue. One of the solution he found, or to be specific, he started to apply, was the shift from writing in a foreign language to writing in the mother tongue as a sign that those who use a foreign language wear "false robes" of identity, and that to (re)turn to the original identity they had to write in their mother tongues.

Ngugi, through his two works indicates how some black natives mixed the cultural and material performances of the west simultaneously with their values and tradition in order to merge and authorize the change they decided on. By absorbing western values, they abandon their national identity. So, the colonizer shaped the new identity of the colonized through destroying their national identity and implanting the sense of inferiority.

Not only that, but there are also social and political Others in Ilmorog and this Otherness is expressed through maintaining contact with the colonizer. This Otherness is a part of identity since the postcolonial being has the feature of bearing a multicultural identity. This concept of Otherness is present in the voices of the characters which marginalize each other; everyone of them wants to impose his own ideas on the other without giving importance to the thoughts of the other.

Chapter one: The Development of Wariinga's Female Identity in *Devil on the Cross* (1980)

In this first chapter, we intend to explore the development of Wariinga's female identity. We shall discuss how experiencing of oppression still impacts and haunts the present moments of the character. So, our focus is to investigate Ngugi's female character and the development of her identity. Wariinga lives in a state of failure, loss, despair, rejection, and confusion as a result of the oppressive events she experienced not only by white men, but also by the black men in her community.

1. The Plight of Women in *Devil on the Cross*

Devil on the Cross (1980) represents the plight of women under the degenerate neo-colonial administration of Kenya, after independence. The colonialists feel that they can purchase everything including women with their money. The Rich Old Man of Nogorika, whose child Wariinga desires to marry accidentally, is one of them. He conceives that he can purchase a second wife, a youthful one like a commodity, while having his own old wife at home. Wariinga's pain is due to the Rich Old Man who deludes her into trusting that he is superbly eager to wed her and separate from his first wife by a virtue of her affection.

In association with this thought, Ngugi sates that the predominance of patriarchal ideology in the capitalistic democratic system has increased the plight of girls in the new born Kenya. Young girls and women who might have become doctors and engineers for their nation abandon their schooling and turn up to be either barmaids or sex slaves. We can gain from the story that Wariinga's parents hope that one day she becomes effective in her education, and free them from the chain of poverty. Fortunately, she becomes brisk at learning and is regularly best of her class. Besides, it is she who often mentors her cousins at

mathematics, even the individuals who are a class ahead. She senses that she is the queen of learning and her desire is to study electrical, mechanical, or civil engineering. The “*word ‘engineer’ is what made her heart beat whenever she shut her eyes and tried to look into the tomorrow of her life.*”¹ The author is seeking to show the current reality that girls, who could have been included a lot for the prosperity of Kenya, are abused and their lives are darkened by their respective societies, for this reason even the women should cooperate in the fight against the system.

Waringas life now changed. She felt as if a door had opened onto a Nakuru she never knew existed. Suddenly she saw the world brighten; she saw a brilliant light illuminating a road that. Wariinga heard words of love whispered by wonderfully smooth and perfumed voices; Wariinga , my dear, how can you foolishly lie yourself to your books when sugary delicacies, and ripe, juicy fruits, many other wonders calculated to stir the heart and to warm the body are to be found everywhere in Kenya? ²

Indeed, we can find in the novel that Wariinga escapes the problem she had with the help of her aunt. After having her child, she can finish her secretarial studies, and once again a devil visits her as she searches a work from office to office. In each office she visits, she cannot get an employer who expects to select on the basis of her knowledge as a secretary. After observing her they all expect to make her their mistress, not a secretary. So, the post-colonial Kenyan society denies women’s rights. Women bodies are considered as a commodity that can be bought and sold.

In the patriarchal society in which this novel is composed, we see how people think that women are the sole properties of men, yet in the story we can see Wariinga tries to break these popular misconceptions. She has a strong attitude that her body or soul will no longer be controlled by men. She feels that it is herself who have got authority over her abilities. It is her own taste that now directs her how she will dress, and not her people’s figures and taste. “*She did not want to bind herself to Gatuiria or to anyone else with strings of gratitude for charity. Self-reliance was self-reliance....*”³

Ngugi utilizes the wedding ceremony of Wariinga and Gaturia and the awful incident that the groom occurs to be the child of the Rich Old Man of Ngorika, as symbolic to convey the fact that one day the dominated, especially women will become dominant. This can be viewed from Wariinga's action of shooting Githahay, her groom's father. So, Ngugi has a dream of a freed and self-reliant woman in the new conceived Kenya.

2. Wariinga's Self-rejection

Black women are oppressed and suppressed by both the experience of colonization and their male-dominated society. This issue is clearly illustrated by Frantz Fanon who argues that Enlightenment, Marxism and the entire European idea are portrayed by their infamous desire to eliminate the experience of the "other."⁴ For Fanon, this "other" incorporates an extensive variety of different experiences such as Asian traditions, female values and African way of life which are defined in terms of brutality, savagery, immorality, objectivity, impurity, illogicality, primitiveness, excessive sexuality and so on. In connection to this idea Fanon states:

As I begin to recognize that the Negro is the symbol of sin, I catch myself hating the Negro. But then I recognize that I am a Negro. There are two ways out of this conflict. Either I ask others to pay no attention to my skin, or else I want them to be aware of it. I try then to find value for what is bad--since I have unthinkingly conceded that the black man is the colour of evil. In order to terminate this neurotic situation, in which I am compelled to choose an unhealthy, conflictual solution, fed on fantasies, hostile, inhuman in short, I have only one solution: to rise above this absurd drama that others have staged around me, to reject the two terms that are equally unacceptable, and through one human being, to reach out for the universal.⁵

A similar case can be found in *Devil on the Cross* in which Ngugi stick to his identity as author and artist and he wrote the text *Devil on the Cross*, a novel of resistance and revolution against colonial oppression. It is the case of Kenyan women in the novel, speaking of both their rebellious and submissive nature. Thus, Ngugi felt it as his duty to bring out from the closet the life of Gikuyu people (especially women) and make the world come to term with

the presence of such a tribe in Africa. Ngugi through the conceptualization of the woman, Wariinga adopted a totally different and unique style to narrate the stigmatic journey of Gikuyu women from the postcolonial era to the neo-colonial period. Ngugi asserts freedom to the peasant for the Kenyan artist. The inner conflicts of young African females have been highlighted in Ngugi's novels. The enigma of the female being that makes them vulnerable to the outside corrupt world is portrayed in *Devil on the Cross*. An example from the novel which supports this idea is The Rich Old Man who finds it was easy to woo Wariinga because normally she is too young to face the world. For a young innocent girl like Wariinga, it is the beautiful world that is waiting for her outside the confines of her home. At that young age she was not aware that there are enough troubles lying ahead of her as soon as she crosses the door of her home.

Therefore, Africans not only tried to copy the white colonizers in education and religion but also in appearance. Wariinga desires a fair skin, straight hair and white teeth for which she tries innumerable ways, but ultimately ends in disfiguring her body. Ngugi portrays this self-hatred of Wariinga in a negative light. According to Ngugi, Wariinga's act of trying to change her appearance is due to her worshiping of the fair European women. The first-person narrator, a character hailing from the Ilmorog, assumes an oral persona in telling the story as "Gicandi Player" and says:

Wariinga was convinced that her appearance was the root cause of all her problems. Whenever she looked at herself in the mirror she thought herself very ugly. What she hated most was her blackness, so she would disfigure her body with skin-lightening creams like Ambi and Snowfire, forgetting the saying: That which is born black will never be white. Now her body was covered with light and dark spots like the guinea fowl. Her hair was splitting, and it had browned to the colour of moleskin because it had been straightened with red-hot iron combs. Wariinga also hated her teeth. They were a little stained; they were not as white as she would have liked them to be. She often tried to hide them, and she seldom laughed openly.⁶

Thus, it is clear that she is confused by the message of what it means to be beautiful by European cultures. Sadly out of her control, confused, and living in a chaotic neo-colonial culture, Wariinga is alienated from the notion of herself as powerful in her own right.

As long as the Negro has not worked for his own freedom, he will continue imitating his white master; as long as his obsession to the white man exists, he cannot turn freely towards the world.⁷ The Gicaandi Player lets us know that Wariinga's hatred of her appearance is sadly misplaced; she has been listening to the voice of the colonizer and deceived by his definition of beauty:

When Wariinga was happy and forgot to worry about the fading whiteness of her teeth and about the blackness of her skin and laughed with all her heart, her laughter completely disarmed people. Her voice was as smooth as perfume oil. Her eyes shone like stars in the night. Her body was a feast for the eyes. Often, when she walked along the road without self-consciousness, her breasts swaying jauntily like two ripe fruits in a breeze, Wariinga stopped men in their tracks.⁸

In fact, Wariinga's past experience at the hands of men has created a defeatist in her heart, full of promise and goals for her future. Her boyfriend refused to believe her because the profit that is associated with becoming a powerful man's "sugar girl" was thought to be irresistible to women, due to the fact that so many women gave into the temptation. In reality, this "temptation" was actually exploitation; women such Wariinga who refused to sleep with their bosses were replaced with women who would. In order to break free from her limited life, Wariinga must go on a quest to find her true identity.

Through a journey to her hometown of Ilmorog, Wariinga gradually changes the way she views herself and how she behaves in her society; she becomes a feminist. This not only means that she gets to reclaim her sexuality, she is also able to repudiate what she has assumed to be true about her identity, the work force, and the war for national Uhuru (independence/freedom). Her role in Uhuru is as important as her process of adopting feminist values. Two things Ngugi proves through Wariinga's controlled sexuality are the direct literary connection between Wariinga's body and the land of Kenya, and the incorporation of the oral tradition into the modern text, making Wariinga significant as a source of study. The narrative voice assumes the guise of a Gicaandi Player (teller/singer of oral myths and tales) to tell Wariinga's story, yet his endeavor proves troublesome from the start:

Certain people in Ilmorog, our Ilmorog, told me that this story [Wariinga's] was too disgraceful, too shameful, that it should be concealed in the depths of everlasting darkness.⁹

Moreover, the narrator is concerned lest Wariinga's story becomes known to people outside of his village, presumably foreigners, Kenyans residing elsewhere and Africans at large:

I, even I, Prophet of Justice, felt this burden weigh heavily upon me at first, and I said: The forest of the heart is never cleared of all its trees. The secrets of the homestead are not for the ears of strangers. Ilmorog is out homestead.¹⁰

The Player serves a dual purpose: to keep the village's collective memory alive and to guard it from ignorant misinterpretations and sacrilegious interpolations on the part of those whose ears are not meant to partake in the troubles of a community they do not belong to. He is unwilling to "reveal all that is hidden" because it would assimilate a betrayal of the trust the people of Ilmorog place upon him as guardian of their history and secrets. Doing what his fellow villagers expect of him would let others in and out of Kenya know about the apparent failure of the people's rebellion; plus, if the Player were to tell Wariinga's story, he would commit the sin of "selling out" The woman's secrets and those of his people to foreign oppressors and, by extension, all readers of the novel.

However, these concerns become questionable when this "Prophet of Justice" is compelled to cast light upon what lies in darkness, first by Wariinga's mother, then by a voice "like a great clap of thunder."¹¹ After much prodding and a seven-day long fast, the Gicaandi Player relates Wariinga's story to show his audience why:

The Devil, who would lead us into the blindness of the heart and into the deafness of the mind, should be crucified, and care should be taken that his acolytes do not lift him down from the Cross to pursue the task of building Hell for the people on Earth.¹²

In *Devil on the Cross*, only the female character aspires for white skin whereas men are free from the power of such inferiority complex. Other than being free from this complex, men are also the critique of such aspirations of African females. In the novel, the narrator,

Gicaandi player (an African male), even the one who is representing the trauma of African woman, does not hesitate in criticizing Wariinga on her fascination for white skin by saying, “*That which is born black will never be white.*”¹³

3. Revenge as an Assertion of Femininity

In *Devil on the Cross* (1980), Ngugi uses biblical allusions so as to get across the central idea of the novel to the target audience. In the Christian religion, for instance, it is Jesus Christ who is known to have been crucified to spare humanity from the kingdom of hell, but as can be understood from the title, it is Devil, that is crucified to create hell for the people on earth. The word, “Devil” symbolizes the Western imperialists and the bourgeois, who exploit the people and the country’s national resources.

In *Devil on the Cross* through Wariinga, we meet with the difficulties that face every young girl from a peasant/working class background, how her dreams as a young girl are threatened by the Rich Old Man who pregnanced her and snatches her away from the prospect of further education. When Wariinga is faced with her fiancée’s father and discovers him to be the Rich Old Man from Ngorika and subsequently the father of her child, the old man’s immediate response of grief and horror prompts him to kneel and request that they both pray to the Christian God. Wariinga remains standing, laughing and enjoying the irony of the situation. When the Rich Old Man’s words turn to supplication, he mimics Christ by saying, “*My happiness, my status, my faith, my property, my life, all these are now in your hands. Only take this burden from me!*”¹⁴ but he is met only with her laughter, as he kneels and she stands.

Wariinga is put in God’s position, divine meter of justice, as he prays to her mercy. The Rich Old Man’s mind revolves quickly from humility and supplication to manipulation, standing up and offering her coming back to her place as his “sugar girl.”

Jacinta! Wariinga! There is not a thing I would not do today ... Truly, there is not a thing I would not do for u today if you remove this burden from me. Pleas, Jacinta, I bag u in the name of the woman who gave birth to you! My happiness, my status, my faith, my property, my life, all this are now in your hand. Only take this burden from me!

Wariinga felt laughter in her heart. This sharps sting of pity no longer pierced her. But she did open her mouth and say: How?

Leave Gatuiria. He is my only son, and I love him dearly, although he is wayward and tries to map his own independence path instead in following in my footsteps. Besides, Gatuiria is almost your child. So your plans are impossible as long as I 'm alive, for it would be like a child marrying his own mother. It would be like my son marrying my wife while I'm still breathing. I would not be able to breathe a day longer for shame before my people and before god.¹⁵

He seeks to commoditize her body once again without consideration to his son, his wife, or herself.

I would like you to leave Gatuiria
How?
Go back to Nairobi together? When you get to Nairobi, tell him that your love affair is over. He's only a child. He won't feel thing
And me?
Suddenly he felt as he had the old time, when he used to overpower Wariinga with words.
Be mine. Remember, you once belong to me. I believe I am the man who changed you from a girl to a woman. And you are the mother of my child, although I have never set eyes on it.¹⁶

When this strategy fails as well, he resorts to threats, speaking in terms of Lucifer's fall from heaven. Overcome by her beauty, the Rich Old Man falls again to his knees and begs her to save him.

Please Jacinta stop pretending that you don't understand. I am the man of the Church. I just want you to be mine. I'll find my own ways of coming to visit you. Just like the old times, don't you remember? Pleas save me! Save the honour of my name! Save the honour of my son! Jacinta, save the honour of my home, and you'll see before you a man who know that gratitude is .¹⁷

However, Wariinga remains in the god-like position of judge and savior and after his useless words of conviction, she demands he face her, look her in the eye while he kneels before her, and then pulls her gun from her prize and shoots him dead. In this final scene, she chooses to reject the enslavement of capitalism and economic exploitation of women's body that is considered as a commodity. Wariinga maintains her purity as her own woman, and kills the symbol of the capitalist evil. This act has a double purpose, on the one hand, she kills

the man who oppressed her femininity and on the other hand, she gets revenge from this man who represents the Bourgeois. There is no doubt that Wariinga's feminization is complete. Accordingly, Fanon does suggest the use of force to accomplish freedom. He believes that liberation is a violent phenomenon.

And it is clear that in the colonial countries the peasants alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose and everything to gain. The starving peasant, outside the class system is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays. For him there is no compromise, no possible coming to terms; colonization and decolonization is simply a question of relative strength.¹⁸

Ngugi answers the question of the rightness of violence in the text when the Devil says to Wariinga: "*Oh, it becomes violence only when a poor man demands the return of his eye or his tooth.*"¹⁹ The time for turning the other cheek has come to an end; now is the time for justice. In this final act, Wariinga's revenge prompts her to new way of life, a life based on freedom and equality. The text ends with ellipses indicating that for Wariinga, the closure and freedom she gains by crucifying her devil signals a new beginning of her quest for Uhuru (Identity and justice). She takes up her role in her community and turns away to continue to fight as a feminist and an individual.

Conclusion

What comes out clearly from the above analysis is that Wariinga's journey is not only a physical movement but a spiritual journey of homecoming, self-discovery and reconnection to the roots. The journey has a lot of significance as we see Jacinta Wariinga arriving and discovering herself. Her journey is occasioned by the trouble she goes through in Nairobi for she cannot resist them. However, it is obvious that Ngugi suffered regarding the issue of identity.²⁰ He has all along his carrier struggled to redefine his identity. Jacinta Warringa, is the central character in the story. The author uses the ups and downs she experiences in her life in order to get across the central idea of the novel to the target audience. Almost the whole

story revolves around the traumatic life she is forced to lead because of the neo-colonial system since childhood. Ngugi's character portrays the displacement of Kenyan identity.²¹

Endnotes

¹ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross*, 1982. (Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitaani Mutharabaini*). London: Heinemann 1982. Page 140.

² Ibid. P. 143.

³ Ibid. P. 219.

⁴ Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*, 1967. New York: Grove Press.

⁵ Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin White Masks* 1967. Paris: Edition du Seuil. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. The United Kingdom, 1986 by Pluto Press. London 1952. Page 197.

⁶ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross*, 1980. (Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitaani Mutharabaini*). London: Heinemann 1982. Page 7.

⁷ Fanon Frantz, *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove Press, 1952. P. 219.

⁸ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross*, 1980. (Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitaani Mutharabaini*). London: Heinemann 1982. P. 11.

⁹ Ibid. Page 7.

¹⁰ Ibid. Page 7.

¹¹ Ibid. Page 8.

¹² Ibid. Page 7.

¹³ Ibid. Page 11.

¹⁴ Ibid. Page 250.

¹⁵ Ibid. Page 250.

¹⁶ Ibid. Page 251.

¹⁷ Ibid. Page 253.

¹⁸ Fanon, Frantz. 1961.

¹⁹ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross*, 1980. (Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitaani Mutharabaini*). London: Heinemann 1982. Page 191.

²⁰ Ngugi wa thiong'o, *Moving the Center: The Struggle For Cultural Freedoms*, 1993. Page 102.

²¹ Ibid. Page 106.

Chapter Two: The Dislocated Identity in *Matigari* (1987)

Our purpose is to explore the dislocated identity in *Matigari*. We intend to show the oppression experienced by the epic hero Matigari and to investigate his loss of identity. *Matigari* portrays the African continent as one which has been robbed, raped, and sentenced to perpetual servitude by the so-called leaders, right from the colonial period to the post colonial era.

1. Matigari's Oppressed Identity

“When the peasants lay hands on a gun, the old myths fade, and one by one the taboos are overturned: a fighter’s weapon is his humanity. For in the first phase of the revolt killing is a necessity: killing a European is killing two birds with one stone, eliminating in one go oppressor and oppressed: leaving one man dead and the other man free.”¹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*.

Sociopolitical factors consequently set breaking points of sorts to the kind of identity we have accessible to us. More than this, though, one ought to equally commit to understand how personal psychology may repeat, internalize and further establish such political results at the level of personal identity.² Matigari, the main character whose name provides the title for the narration, is the epic hero par excellence, a fact made more than evident by his physical, ethical, and moral traits, his relationship with fellow human beings, nature and the supernatural, as well as by the character of his inscrutable destiny. The birth, childhood, and teenage years of Matigari are not presented. He comes into the tale as a man of indeterminate age who has the mysterious capacity to look old, complete with wrinkles, young and fresh the next.

Age crept back on his face; the wrinkles seemed to have increased and deepened. How everything had changed. What was this world coming to? ³

The courage of truth had once again transformed him. It seemed to have wiped age off his face, making him look extremely youthful. ⁴

Matigari felt sad.... Age seized him. His pace slackened, and he merely dragged his feet along. ⁵

His eyes shone brightly. All the creases on his face had gone, and youth had once again returned to him.⁶

His physical size is also a matter of mystery. At one time, he is reported to be “*a tiny, ordinary-looking man*,”⁷ at another, he is described as “*a tall, well-built, elderly man*,”⁸ and still at other times it is said of him that “*The man is a giant*.”⁹ In what we can only describe as an epic understatement of time duration, he remarks

I have seen many things over the years. Just consider, I was there at the time of the Portuguese, and at the time of the Arabs, and at the time of the British.¹⁰

In addition, Matigari also has supernatural personal traits that link him with such African, European, and other cultural epic heroes. His voice, for instance, sounds like thunder.¹¹ His snoring is “like the roar of a lion in the wilderness.”¹² His look penetrates one’s soul¹³. He has the gift to communicate with animals.¹⁴ He has a superhuman capacity to sustain hunger.¹⁵ He fears no man but rather strikes fear into others.¹⁶ He accurately foretells the future, as is the case with the prediction that John Boy will not live in his house as long as he, Matigari, is alive.¹⁷

Matigari is credited with performing miracles. The stones that are hurled at him by children, for instance, are miraculously deflected¹⁸ and he “*seemed to be protected by some magic power, for the bullets [shot at him by soldiers] did not hit him.... It was as if on reaching him they turned into water*.”¹⁹ He escapes prison, a mental hospital, a burning house, and he outwits the combined team of the police and the army who are hunting and shooting to kill him.²⁰ Also, he traverses the whole country, making mysterious appearances to different people at different times and places, and all in one day.²¹

However, his name, Matigari ma Njiruungi, which identifies him as a veteran of the Mau Mau patriotic army that waged the Ten-year Guerilla War (1952-1962) that finally compelled the British colonial administration to grant independence to Kenya, invites a more respectable comparison with the heroes of return epics such as Odysseus. Just as the ancient

Greek hero, for instance, comes back to set his house in order, so Matigari returns, consumed with righteous indignation against those who have wrongfully appropriated what he calls his home. The mission of Matigari, as the symbolic embodiment of the Kenyan people, is to regain his kingdom, which has been lost to the ethics of greed and avarice, and to restore it to its traditional philosophy of communal sharing

How can I return home alone? ... What makes a home? ... We shall all gather, go home together, light the fire together and build our home together. Those who eat alone, die alone.²²

Here, Matigari calls for a national unity, there is a quest for rebuilding the country's chattered identity. His home, we soon discover, is a symbol for the Kenyan nation.

2. Matigari's Quest for Identity

Matigari fought for the independence of his country, then he came back to find out that his land is no longer the same. He struggles to find out his place in the new home which seems to be a foreign homeland. This state of being is best illustrated by the theorist Albert Memmi who explores and describes the psychological impacts of colonialism on the colonized; "*It is not easy to escape mentally from a concrete situation, to refuse its ideology while continuing to live with its actual relationships.*"²³

The principal aim to which *Matigari* (1987) devotes most of its plot is to claim Matigari's "house" from which he had fought to dislodge Settler Williams. This Struggle for ownership is clearly intended to symbolize the general populations offered to assert their heritage at the end of the freedom struggle. In addition, Matigari's quest becomes more visible as he finds himself confused about what identity does he hold. People have always asked about this real identity of Matigari, Ngugi here uses this quest as an allegory to show that Kenyan people are in a continual search for their own identity. They don't really know who they are. They are fighting to find out their position in the new cultural atmosphere of

Kenya. They still believe that one day Matigari ma Njiruunji will come to reveal their real identity and bring them back to their original culture and tradition.

To explain more, analyzing the minds of both the oppressor and the oppressed, Memmi reveals truths about the colonial situation and struggle.²⁴ “*Colonialism denies human rights to human beings whom it has subdued by violence, and keeps them by force in a state of misery.*”²⁵

Frantz Fanon who studied the impact of colonialism on colonized people concluded that the use of violence to remove injustice was justified to break the emotional oppression caused by colonialism. Fanon’s work was widely cited in defense of struggles to achieve national independence. He states, “*However, revolt is the only way out of the colonial situation, and the colonized realizes it sooner or later.*”²⁶

In the case in *Matigari* (1987), Matigari’s mission turns into a rebellion when the state begins running its oppressive machine in the face of his growing popularity. So, the government says: “*He is a very dangerous person, and he has very dangerous intentions in his head.*”²⁷

Matigari’s journey into this landscape only serves to emphasize the radical division between the ideals of national restoration and its ill-fated history in decolonization. As a result, his quest, rather than affirming the ideals of national regaining, becomes a journey of a dislocated idealism. This dislocation is most apparent in the three movements, or structural division of the novel. Matigari’s awareness of the marginality of the national aspiration in the post-colonial economy (part one), his rethinking of the project of decolonization (part two), and the ambiguous establishment of a new narrative of identity (part three).

In the first part of the book, Matigari’s journey can be read as a kind of quest, and a journey that involve to scrounge Miriam Hansen’s words, “*both a temporal dimension, that is, duration, habit, repetition and return, and a degree of risk to the experiencing subject.*”²⁸

Matigari's journey is one in which the temporal dimension (the hero's return) is defined by a degree of risk. Displaced from the real experience in the post colony, Matigari need to rely on other for his training in the ways of the new world. The characters who educate him have names which, at first recognition, seem to affirm Matigari's ideals and expectations: his new companions are Muriuki (the resurrected one), Nguaruro (the sign of transfiguration), and Guthera (the pure one). But these subjects display the apparent irony, they live in a world in which the ideals and names which they represent are disprove. Also, before the end of the first part of the novel, he has confronted all the risks that have come to define the post-colonial economic decline, the abuse of political power, and the crisis of culture. The crucial question for him now is how he can raise the challenge posed by these unexpected experiences.

You've dared to raise a whip against your own father? he asks Boy.
Your're not my father! Boy shouts back.²⁹

Here, the conflict involves more than mere semantics: Matigari falls back on the language of tradition in which the father-son relationship is fixed by the age-class system.

The second part of the novel is concerned with the search for moral or ethical values, most notably, truth and justice:

My friends! Tell me where in this country where one can
find truth and justice.
People raised their heads. Who was this who interrupted
the sweet tale about Matigari?
Who are you, Mr Seeker of truth and justice?
That is who I am, Matigari answered.³⁰

Confronted by the failures of the grand narrative of nationalism, Matigari enters on a journey whose goal is nothing less than the restitution of "things long forgotten"³¹. For Matigari has now become the subject of what the Gikuyu text aptly calls "Uhoru". The later means both an event and discourse: as an event, he is a symbol of the past, of history: but as a figure of discourse he belongs to the present, the moment of diction. It is significant, then, to see Matigari as generating a historical narrative defined by his own mystical character and his

doubleness (his commitment to a decolonized future is predicted on the recovery of old values).

Through the post-colonial landscape, Matigari's journey forces a rethinking of the culture and economy that has emerged after decolonization.³² In the first part of the novel, as we saw earlier, Matigari is educated in the ways of the world when his ideality is confronted with the realities of post-colonial power, in the second part of the book, the pedagogical motif is reversed in fascinating ways. As Matigari goes around the country asking people where he can find truth and justice, he makes these values, rather than power and property, central to the discourse on nation and identity. People seem more interested in the stories surrounding Matigari rather than his concrete existence, but this does not mean that his fiction has no political function. In being able to talk about the phenomenon of the strange man seeking truth and justice, the populace is able to overcome the culture of silence sanctioned by the state.

In addition, Matigari's stories become the subject of public discourse. Again, the Gikuyu text captures this function well: "*Guothe caai Wahoraga andu mathitiriie ngoga iria iri cama gukira uuki kana cukaari.*"³³ (Everywhere the tea went cold as people listened to astonishing which were sweeter than honey or sugar). In the end, as these stories are repeated again and again, they deny the state of its monopoly of discourse and call its version of the national narrative into question. By the end of the second part of the book, it has become apparent that what appears to be the narrative locus, Matigari's quest for truth and justice, is not as important as the way this is received or interpreted.

As Memmi states: "*However, revolt is the only way out of the colonial situation, and the colonized realizes it sooner or later.*"³⁴ Similarly, in the final part of the novel it is apparent that Matigari is disillusioned. His recognition that the "belt of peace" he has been wearing is useless when confronted by the heartless machinery of power.

However, Matigari's abandonment of his peaceful quest and his resort to armed resistance should not conceal even more radical shift in Ngugi's narrative, for the novel has moved us from its initial preoccupation. "*Justice for the oppressed comes from a sharpened spear.*"³⁵ After saying these words, Matigari removes his belt of peace and crush it down on the ground. After trying to start a peaceful revolution, he realizes that his plan has failed because the imperialists are not responding to reasoning. He recognizes that he cannot hurt them and eject them with words alone. He, therefore, chooses a violent approach to fight for a better life for his people.

Matigari is still the focus of the last part of the narrative, but his story is broken up into montages and other forms of dispersal lexical units, each denoting a set of values and series of meaning in competition with one another. This break-up of forms signals Matigari's definite discovery:

The world is turned upside down, but it must be set right again. For I have seen that in our land today lies are decreed to be the truth, and the truth is decreed to be a lie.³⁶

Matigari's knowledge is not so much a coming to consciousness, as is often the case in the bourgeois novel, but a recognition of the irony that defines his relationship with the world he seeks to change. The final movement of the novel can actually be read as Matigari's performance of his newly acquired irony. While at the beginning of the novel he had sought to recover his house by appealing to his natural and social rights, he now realises the significance of ironic strategies and thus arrives at the house disguised as a "dignitary."³⁷

3. The Blind Judiciary in *Matigari*

In *Matigari* (1987) Ngugi exposes the ironies in the institution of the judiciary established in Kenyan society. These ironies are presented through the judicial officers and the other characters that represent the judiciary as an institution.

The ironic portrayal of the judiciary is depicted in *Matigari*. The judiciary is said to be independent when it is not. The character known as the minister for Truth and Justice is in fact of a symbol of injustice. In the novel, there is irony in the following statements made by him: *"I am the Minister for Truth and Justice. ... I too am under the law, and I believe in the independence of the judiciary."*³⁸ The irony in these statements is that the judiciary which is claimed to be independent does not function without the influence and interference of the government executive. This means that the judiciary delineated in *Matigari* allows itself to be manipulated by the executive arm of the government. A demonstration of this is shown in the sayings of the Minister for Truth and Justice: *"... I am the only minister in the whole world who travels with a whole law court, so as to be able to carry out instant justice."*³⁹

In addition to this false claim, the unjust character of the judiciary is highlighted. The judiciary which Ngugi depicts in *Matigari* is notorious for its unjust verdicts. The number one judicial representative, the Minister for Truth and Justice, is an epitome of lies and oppression in the society of Kenya. No single rich person is indicted before a neo-colonial court of justice in Kenya for the crimes he/she commits. All the existing crimes in the society are blamed on the poor. The manifestation of this is shown in the dispute between the two company directors, Robert Williams and John Boy and the workers.

Matigari ma Njiruungi and Ngaruro wa Kiri, the novel's change agents, who fight a just cause are charged with insanity and are taken into a mental hospital where they are detained. It is because *Matigari* is desperate to know where truth and justice can be found in Kenya that "the judges have found him insane."⁴⁰ The other nine are remanded in prison.

Another example of the unjust nature of the judiciary is that while two university students who appear in court on charges of possessing books on Marxism are detained without trial. The five other students who are charged with illegal demonstration in protesting

against the support of the South African apartheid regime by the United States and Western Europe are “sentenced to five years imprisonment in a Maximum Security Prison.”⁴¹

Conclusion

We can say that, Matigari learned that “truth” dies and justice is something that the government is capable of writing into history but incapable of performing. Even though Matigari feels “all alone in the entire country”, it is natural that he should feel that way since he is the only one deceived into the naïve notion that wars are won and justice prevails.

Endnotes:

¹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 1963. Translated from the French by Richard Philcox 2004. Grove Press, New York. Page Iv.

² Hook, Derek. *Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko, “psychopolitics” and critical psychology*. Ed., Critical psychology. Lansdowne, South Africa: Juta Academic Publishing, 2004 © 2004 Juta Academic Publishing. CP_Chap04 11/2/04 10:21 am Page 90-91.

³ Ngugi wa Thiong’o. *Matigari*, 1987. (trans. from the Gĩkuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 29.

⁴ Ibid. Page 31.

⁵ Ibid. Page 41.

⁶ Ibid. Page 43.

⁷ Ngugi wa Thiong’o. *Matigari*, 1987. (trans. from the Gĩkuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 75.

⁸ Ibid. Page 111.

⁹ Ibid. Pages 76 – 159.

¹⁰ Ibid. Page 45.

¹¹ Ibid. Page 80- 124.

¹² Ibid. Page 137.

¹³ Ibid. Page 123.

¹⁴ Ibid. Page 143.

¹⁵ Ibid. Page 12.

¹⁶ Ngugi wa Thiong’o. *Matigari*, 1987. (trans. from the Gĩkuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Pages 31- 114 - 115.

¹⁷ Ibid. Page 124.

¹⁸ Ibid. Page 73.

¹⁹ Ibid. Page 173

²⁰ Ibid. Page 80 - 161 - 169.

²¹ Ibid. Page 67 - 113.

²² Ibid. Page 6.

²³ Albert Memmi, *Decolonization and the Decolonized* 2004. Translated from the French by Robert Bononno. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 2006. Page 30

- ²⁴ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Matigari*, 1987. (trans. from the Gĩkuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 34.
- ²⁵ Albert Memmi, *Decolonization and the Decolonized* 2004. Translated from the French by Robert Bononno. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 2006.. Page 171.
- ²⁶ Ibid. Page 20.
- ²⁷ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Matigari*, 1982. Page 124.
- ²⁸ Albert Memmi, *Decolonization and the Decolonized* 2004. Translated from the French by Robert Bononno. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 2006. Page 100.
- ²⁹ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Matigari*, 1987. (trans. from the Gĩkuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Pages 48.
- ³⁰ Ibid. Page 75.
- ³¹ Ibid. Page 56.
- ³² Ibid. Page 72.
- ³³ Ibid. Pp 123-25.
- ³⁴ Albert Memmi, *Decolonization and the Decolonized* 2004. Translated from the French by Robert Bononno. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 2006. Page 171.
- ³⁵ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Matigari*, 1987. (trans. from the Gĩkuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 131.
- ³⁶ Ibid. Page 137.
- ³⁷ Ibid. Page 164.
- ³⁸ Ibid. Page 121.
- ³⁹ Ibid. Page 117.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid. Page 123.
- ⁴¹ Ibid. Page 90.

Chapter Three: The Representation of Alienation in *Devil on the Cross* (1980) and *Matigari* (1987)

In this next chapter, we plan to investigate the representation of alienation in *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*. National identity involves a great deal of how an individual thinks about himself in relation to the world; the most obvious demonstration of what he knows as the world being the culture in which he lives. We will treat the isolating, dehumanizing, and disenchanting effects of living within a capitalist system.

1. Powerlessness

The individual who encounters social alienation does not feel very much incorporated into society, its gatherings and organizations. Besides, he is socially disengaged from the standard. Starting with the primary characteristic which is “Powerlessness”, alienation in the sense of a lack of power has been technically defined by Seeman as, “*The expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behaviour cannot determine the occurrence of the outcomes, or reinforcements, he seeks*”.¹

Seeman asserts that this is the notion of alienation as it originated in the Marxian view of the worker’s circumstance in capitalist society: the worker is alienated to the extent that the exclusive right and means of decision are deprived by the ruling entrepreneurs.²

In fact, this idea is formed in Ngugi’s two novels *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*. Wariinga starts considering over her misfortune very early and the scary possibility of the end of her studies manifests large in her mind to the matter she becomes traumatized. Trauma drives her to think suicide would be a resolution to her plight as she realizes that her dearest ideal is trampled upon. As she declines to offer sex, she is rejected on Friday morning and her lover John Kimwana, instead of comforting her, rather leave her the same day, Friday in the

evening, as she can no longer gain anything. The next day, Saturday, her proprietor fires her out after having raised the rent. Wariinga in her situation is paralyzed and confuse; the heroine is therefore oppressed and without any power to change her situation. By series of tournament she attempts to commit suicide for the second time as the only solution to make an end to all her problems. Suddenly Wariinga heard a voice within her, *“Why are you trying to kill yourself again? Who instructed you that your work on earth is finished? Who has told you that your time is up?”*³

After being saved by a mysterious man, Wariinga asks herself after recalling her pains *“...Now what did I do next? Where did I go...?”*⁴ Wariinga then makes a decision to journey back home, but not knowing what to do and from where to begin. Fortunately, on her way home she encounters with helpers such as Wangarii who confronts with the black short man and his white boss for elevating their awareness about neo-colonialism, capitalism and their actions as the evil of all the fellowmen and women. Thanks to this awareness rising, the helpers come to comprehend the cause to fight for is common, noble and notable to engage in. They therefore collect masses of peasants, workers and students. But Wariinga somehow passively regards their process towards the cave to struggle against the devil and his followers for she does not see it worth to take active hand in the fight while she has not overcome all the lessons on self-reliance, stability to purpose, sacrifice, courage and prospect.

The Devil who would lead us into the blindness of the heart and into the deafness of the mind should be crucified, and care should be taken that his acolytes do not lift him down from the to pursue the task of building Hell of the people on Earth.⁵

These are the feelings and emotions that skim through the imprisoned Ngugi's body and mind - and the last two pages of *Detained*, as prison warders confiscated the rolls of toilet paper on which he had written the work.

Thus, Ngugi, as a prophet of justice, incorporates in the narrator, felt it his charge to tell out the social evils reigning in his society. The paper portrays the way Ngugi takes courage to

inform the existence of the 'devil' and calls for the proletariat, including the exploited oppresses people and masses of peasants for freeing themselves from imperialism and neocolonialism. It is fairly informed by heavy emotions and deep personal feelings.

On the other hand, the protagonist, Matigari is in search of his family to rebuild his home and start a new and peaceful life in his future. But his search becomes a quest for truth and justice as he finds people helpless, powerless and still dispossessed. People were taken to jail without concrete or sufficient reason, people in the prison were discussing how they had come there teachers had been arrested and accused of teaching Marxism and communism in school. Having found his country in economic, social, political crisis, Matigari feels disappointed.

The author clarified in the story how harsh is neo-colonialism after independence; we can see that workers, tailors and peasants could not get what should be given to them.

How can the tiller go on working for the benefit of those who reap-where-they never sowed? Yesterday it was whites. Today they have been joined by some blacks. Matigari asked the people in the restaurant 'my friends! Tell me where in this country one can find truth and justice.'⁶

The above statement reveals us the people are under the bad regime of neo-colonialism. The imaginative, hopeful, far sighted Matigari systematically keeps fighting against neo-colonialism by agitating people who are paralyzed by fear to make them stand by his side. In the opening of the novel the society appears to be under fear and disillusionment due to the existence of greedy, selfish and dictator leadership. People are pessimistic and feel hopeless at the beginning and attempt to endure Matigari's progress. However, propagandist under the government policy advocates the society speaking on the radio and in the meeting so as not to trust Matigari's ideology.

Let us now forget that such people as Matigari Ma Njiruungi ever existed. Let us with one accord, like loyal parrots, agree that Matigari Ma Njiruungi was just a bad dream. That bit of history was just a bad dream, a nightmare in fact. We have qualified professors here who can write new history for us.⁷

I want you, together with our visitors from USA, Britain, West Germany and France, to witness how the law works in a country under Christian

democracy ... For instance I am the minister of truth and justice, but even I must abide by the law ... The teacher and the student will be detained without trial. The court cannot allow educated people to mislead the public with Marxist doctrines and communistic teachings.⁸

Actually, Matigari meets a woman in the river during his quest, “*Too much fear breeds misery in the land,*”⁹ so the woman signifies that if people are afraid, they will not challenge to rise up against their oppressors. In this scene, she whispers in Matigari’s ear, which shows that she herself is scared to be detained should someone discover that she encourages his cause. It demonstrates that the several informers of the government are a real warning to free thinking. They are everywhere, which strengthens distrust in society.

Home, father motherland, exile? I, a writer in exile? I had just arrived in Britain on June 8, firmly intending to leave for Kenya on 31 July. In my book, *Detained: A Writer’s Prison Diary*, published the same year as Andrew Gurr’s *Writers In Exile*, I had rejected the option of exile [...].¹⁰

Ngugi trusts that Home and exile are very significant themes in African literature. He himself went through this situation, he was disconnected from his homeland and he wrote novels to retrace the link between him and Kenya to re-identify himself with his country. He wrote in *Moving the Center: The Struggle For Cultural Freedoms*:

Then in 1983/84 I wrote *Matigari*, a novel of return, in the Gikuyu language, and I felt a sense of belonging such as I had felt when in 1978 at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison in Cell N°. 16, I had written *Caitani Mutharabaini* (*Devil on the Cross*) as an attempt to reconnect myself to the community from which I had been so brutally cut by the neo-colonial regime in Kenya. Now I had done the same thing and experienced not dissimilar emotions.¹¹

Ngugi experienced the same case as Matigari, when he tried to speak for his people, Ngugi was put in jail. *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* reinforce the class-based division of Kenyan society through their elaboration of the impact of class conflict in Kenya through imposition and system of corruption. The lower classes are characterized as passive because they are ignorant, poor, powerless and scared until they learn the source of their poverty and impotence. Before their realization people are incapable of becoming a collective threat to depravity and exploitation. The upper classes exploited poor people.

2. Meaninglessness

When a person feels that he is not meaningfully connected to his community through shared values, beliefs, and practices, and/or when they do not have meaningful social relationships with other people. A sense of meaning has been defined by Seeman as “*the individual’s sense of understanding events in which he is engaged.*”¹² It is a consequence of powerlessness, Seeman writes, “*Meaninglessness is characterized by a low expectancy that satisfactory predictions about the future outcomes of behaviour can be made.*”¹³

Whereas powerlessness refers to the inability to control outcomes, this refers to the sensed ability to predict outcomes. In this respect, meaninglessness is closely tied to powerlessness. He argues:

The view that one lives in an intelligible world might be a prerequisite to expectancies for control; and the unintelligibility of complex affairs is presumably conducive to the development of high expectancies for external control. (that is, high powerlessness.)¹⁴

Through *Devil on the Cross*, Satan as the “invisible voice”¹⁵ talks to Wariinga, it was on the day of the Devil’s Feast. Wariinga unable to witness the testimonies of, it introduced itself to Wariinga as “a roaming spirit”, “a tempter and judge of souls.”¹⁶ Wariinga questioned, “*But won’t the workers refuse to let their bodies be exploited like that?*”¹⁷ Satan in turn asked her, “*Why have you never prevented your own body from being exploited?*”¹⁸ Which was very true. Wariinga did not have the maturity to protect her own self from being exploited. The voice then asked her why she did not put up a fight when the Rich Old Man exploited her and Wariinga replied:

What else could I have done? ... I’m a woman. I’m weak. There was nothing that I could do, nowhere that I could go and no one that I would turn to for help.¹⁹

As it is shown in Wariinga’s expression “... *I’m a woman. I’m weak. There was nothing that I could do*” illustrates her higher powerlessness and meaninglessness for the truth that Wariinga was helpless and has no confidence. Wariinga begins to concentrate to the voice

because every word said about her was true. However, the dream itself is reflected both in the personal freedom and freedom of the capitalist people. Then, the devil throughout the book represents the capitalists. Even when Wariinga was kicked out of her house by the hired thugs, they leave a note back which said:

We are the devil's angels: Private Businessman Make the slightest move to take this matter to the authorities. And we shall issue you with a single ticket to Gods' kingdom Or Satan's, a one way ticket to Heaven or Hell.²⁰

However, as long as we are dealing with a class-divided society, human labour power is exploited. Reiss says that workers are exploited if they get the compensation which is not appropriate to the products they produce²¹. Workers do not have control over their labour. Guthera tells Matigari to begin the quest on plantations because that is where most people are. These workers are physically and emotionally exhausted without getting fundamental reward in return. They are utilized as knockers to establish a product that belongs to someone else. Consequently, they have no rights to use Melvin Seeman's word. The workers are not only paid less but also being tortured by the police *"was not just the other day that the workers were badly beaten, and some of them have their legs broken?"*²² Indeed, This occurs to workers because they are on strike asking what is rightful theirs. The workers are being exploited by the bourgeoisie. They have worked hard all their life and make a lot of profit which unfortunately belong to their bosses. The machines have sapped them of their forces, now what are left are just bones. Even if they work hard, at the end of the day there is no reward. They don't get pensions once they get retired; they get a thank-you clock for long and loyal service. What kind of work that does not award pension to employees once they get retired? Generally, workers do more than necessary and are not rewarded for their work. The workers are not permitted to register their complaints. The government is siding with the private owned companies instead of turning to the plight of its own people. When the workers go on strike the police and soldiers are appealed to beat and break the workers legs. The law

imposing agency is always trying to silence the workers when they want to voice out the truth:

I am a worker, he began his tale. I have worked with the company for ages, and the words matigari has just spoken are absolutely true. I have been a servant to those machines all my life. Look at how the machines have sapped of all strength. What is left of me? Just bones. My skin withered even as I kept on assuring myself: a fortune for him who works hard finally comes; a person who endures, finally overcomes. What can I now expect when I retire? Just a clock as a thank-you for a long and loyal service. My fortune? Old age without a pension. do you know something else? I spend all these years opposed to strikes. I kept on saying: if I go on strike and lose my job what will my children eat tomorrow? But look at me here I'm in prison. For no reason whatsoever. What went wrong?²³

Ngugi indicates us that these workers are exploited and there is no one to protect their rights. After receiving a cheque the minister tells the workers that there will be no strike ever against the company. *"From now onwards, anyone who goes on strike against this company will actually be striking against the government."*²⁴ The minister on the name of the government gives the verdict on the dispute that all the workers must return to work and close the strike as soon as possible. The workers are aware that the strikes are prohibited in the country. The minister does not care if the workers are glad or sad in work locations.

3. Normlessness

This aspect refers to the inability to identify with the dominant values of society or rather, with what are perceived to be the dominant values of society. Seeman adds that this aspect can manifest in a particularly negative manner, *"The anomic situation [...] may be defined as one in which there is a high expectancy that socially unapproved behaviours are required to achieve given goals."*²⁵

African societies that for long have been considered under the yoke of colonial oppression and hegemony, struggle to remain pace with the resultant cultural imperialism and post-colonial oppression, which usually place women at the receiving end.

Devil on the cross elaborates an image of norm of human society, social life through demonstrating how modern day Kenyans have untied themselves from cultural values that praise the principle of fighting for a communal objective to take the principles and system of self interest that glorify the conquest of money. What perplexes Wariinga's individuality is her own identification with her society and the sharp state of crisis so many single women are imposed into.

On the one hand, Wariinga was so disillusioned in life that she decided not to have love affairs with any man. Ngugi discards light on the sexual exploitation of the African women at the hands of other Africans. In the cave, the bar maids are made to be like doves with skin tight dresses before the thieves. In the world where love and sex between sexes have got the things that can be gained easily and ordinary, the word love has lost its value in its true sense. Bar maids carry bands inscribed, "I love you" in an exploitative sense. In the "Devils Cave", a demonstration of the exploitation of women by the thieves is shown. The thieves have to expose the number of wives and mistresses they have and also the events of adultery and sin they have pampered in. Ndaaya wa Kathuria is well qualified in grabbing the purses of women in public places. Gitutu wa Gataangura says that his old arrogant father would send for any beautiful woman he sees to make her mistress. As far as his getting mistresses, he argues like Satan who quotes from The Bible and earns his argument. He states, "*He who keeps something in reserve never goes hungry and when a European gets old, he likes to eat veal.*"²⁶ There isn't any value of marriage among the thieves in cave. Even the women from bourgeoisie class have become "flesh sellers."

On the other hand, Wariinga's presentation as a round character, cements her role as an agent of both cultural compatibility and agreement. Cultural imperialism or colonization of the African mind in *Devil on the Cross* is provided through the Jacinta Wariinga of the first chapters. She is neither proud nor satisfied with her identity as an African woman, as is

illustrated thus: “*She was convinced that her appearance was the root cause of all her problems.*”²⁷ The writer’s main thrust in portraying Wariinga as a developing character is to highlight the difficult situation that Africans find themselves trapped in.

Likewise, Gutheria in *Matigari* was also sexually exploited. Though she was a girl of church with great morals before her, she easily gave herself to be sexually exploited as a bar maid. Her father on earth was arrested under the accusation that he was a terrorist. When Gutheria visited him in the prison, the police there attempt to exploit her afflicted conditions.

Give me your purity, and I will give your parent back to you... You are carrying your father’s life between your legs.²⁸

We can see a shape of confusion in Matigari’s question for the crowd who are laughing instead of going to save her.

What is going on here? Are you going to let our children be made to eat shit while you stand around nodding in approval? How can you stand there watching the beauty of our land being trodden down by these beasts? What is so funny about that why do you hide behind a cloak of silence and let yourselves be ruled by fear? Remember the saying that too much fear breeds misery in the land.²⁹

Ngugi feels that the police represent savagery and oppression. The cops, who were after defenseless Gutheria, lead their dog on her mercilessly. “*What kind of law is this which allows policeman to harass defenceless women?*”³⁰ Everyone in the street “*observed the police leaving terror on her*” as they are petrified and stoned in their place.

She was kneeling on the ground. The dog would lead towards her....Some people laughed to find the spectacle highly entertaining. A gush of urine rushed down her legs. She was starving death on the face.³¹

The police, who were supposed to protect a lean woman like Gutheria in such a situation, released such a terror on her in the broad day in the main way of the city before the full public view. This easily mirrors the nature of the people and also the savagery of policemen in independent Kenya. Gutheria expresses her anger thus:

I will never go to bed with a policeman. I will take money from strangers, thieves, and murderers even. But I will never open my legs for any policeman.³²

After being saved by Matigari, She realizes how mean her life has been without any meaning and specific purpose, in her own words:

I have not been satisfied with the kind of life I have been leading. You see, my entire life has been dominated by men, be they our Father in Heaven, my Father on Earth, the priest or all the men who have brought my body and turned me into their mistress.³³

She has been a mistress on which the men who bought her scrapped their feet. Her problems and social situations have imposed her to result in such a life. She carries “blinkers like a horse” and lived like an animal. Then, she has recognized the new power in her as a woman.

What can we as women do to change our lives? Or will we continue to follow the paths carved out for us by men? Aren't we, the majority, anyway?³⁴

These lines expose the emotions of a new woman who wants to conserve the rights of women against the dominant values which strive to rut them down.

4. Social Isolation

Social isolation refers to “The feeling of being segregated from one’s community.”³⁵ Wariinga’s plan in *Devil on the Cross* is to come out from the prison house of self-hate and victimization and to affirm her identity outside the culture and economy of arrested decolonization.³⁶ In order to break from her imprisoned identity, Wariinga has to go on a quest for the identity she wishes by rejecting the cultural voice that tells her she is ugly and weak and discover her power as a woman and an individual. Wariinga’s sexuality is an important issue in the text that raises questions about her feelings of validity on an individual standard, but also helps as a forum to demonstrate the sexual oppression of women on a societal level.

Submitting to the neo-colonial voice as a schoolgirl, Wariinga became the sugar girl of a man whom the text mentions solely as the Rich Old Man from Ngorika. This man remains

significantly nameless for two reasons; he is a figurative representation of the Kenyan upper class who ruins the labor of poor workers and the sexuality of poor women, and because the text later uncovers him as her fiancée's father. Her uncle, wishing a grace from the Rich Old Man, planned the rendezvous between him and Wariinga for his personal favor. It took the Rich Old Man months to weaken Wariinga's determination to be a good Christian schoolgirl, but when she fell prey to his attractiveness of money, riding in a Mercedes-Benz, and taking journey to hotels she lost her determination, trusting his lies that he would leave his wife for her.³⁷ When she became pregnant Wariinga was awakened to the hardness of reality. Here, we see how Wariinga is socially isolated by these two men who represent patriarchy, there is no one to help here.

The question that starts awakening Wariinga is similarly the question Ngugi is persistently, suddenly posing from behind his pen, "*But had she really chosen hell, or had the hell been forced on her?*"³⁸ The men engaged in Wariinga's life appropriated her sexuality and truly made it a commodity; her uncle basically sold her to the Rich Old Man. Wariinga herself has not been taught by her culture what she has worth, or that her physical prediction are more than a commodity.

The co-conspiracy between Wariinga's uncle and the Rich Old Man, exchange the flower of her youth and beauty for men's success and sexual gratification. This is an example of cultural imprinting on the body-the process by which cultural norms, standards, or pressures show themselves in literature through the body of the individual. Wariinga's pregnancy is a result of intercourse, but what allowed that intercourse was male favor in Kenyan society.

Likewise, in *Matigari*, The workers are working on Saturdays and are not compensated for that. The workers are alienated from the society they live in when they are doing this ennui and meaningless work that is controlled and under skilled. When the government is

favoring the capitalist, workers have no right to reform. When the workers defy their employers the one to act first against them is the government. There is an example when the minister of Truth and Justice demonstrates that he encourages the capitalist. When Ngaruro stands up to voice the workers troubles and needs; the minister answers that Ngaruro has broken the law before everyone. The minister advocates clearly that workers do not have a say about anything *“how can industries run if the workers are the ones to decide who is to be employed and what wages to be paid?”*³⁹ According to the minister’s words, the workers cannot take part in decision making of their work and so they are obliged to work according to their employer’s orders without questions. Ngaruro is arrested because of his voice. Other workers who want to voice out their discontentment are warned not to do it now or in the future.

During the meeting with the workers, the Minister of Truth and Justice notes that there are tourists from western countries and he wants them to see “African socialism” at work. He further says that Kenya is ruled by democracy and the regulation of law. One would say that unless they do know not what democracy is, if they struts what the minister states. How democratic is Kenya if workers are rejecting the right of expression? *“May be he is the one of those who is preaching the teachings of Karl Marx in this country”*⁴⁰ Where is democracy and socialism then, if not in the teachings of Karl Marx? Ngugi is telling us that not only those who work in plantations and factories are being exploited. Through Ngaruro, he tells us that *“security forces are being used by the government of capitalist, landlords and imperialists as watchdogs.”*⁴¹

The workers worked harshly for long hours but they do not profit from the products of their own hands as much as they distanced from their families, friends and other things that they like. They work for long hours and become alienated from their families, friends and other things that they enjoy doing. They do not find no time for anything even for themselves

because they pass long hours at work. Settler Williams because by alienating people from everything means he is in control of them.

Matigari seems somehow detached from the temporal flow of the now, alienated by his timeless war in the woods from the engagement as a witness to the postcolonial experience. And this rupture in his becoming sets him aside from his own people, his own “family.” He is the utopian dweller, the hero who interrogates the social space with old Christian mores:

Why could not everybody gird themselves with a belt of peace so that all wars and conflicts on earth would end? ⁴²

Where have you been living, old man? Have you been living on the moon or in space perhaps? [...] Matigari held his chin, sadly contemplating what had taken place. Age crept on his face; the wrinkles seemed to have increased and deepened. How everything had changed. What was this world coming to? ⁴³

The question raised by Matigari’s identity constitutes in itself the entry in the theory of social alienation; Matigari is presented, in his allegorical writing, as a multitude of lost identities. Ngugi creates the premises for a significant encounter with the true savage, the absolute stranger, an encounter with something which the social representations cannot explain.

5. Self-estrangement

Self-estrangement is an elusive concept in sociology, as perceived by Melvin Seeman, although he included it as an aspect in his model of alienation. He perceived the issues inherent in defining the “self”, while post-modernism specifically has questioned the very possibility of defining precisely what the “self” constitutes.

In fact, within the social psychology, the self is considered inherently interpersonal “*because relating to others is part of what the self is for.*”⁴⁴ The self is viewed as a build which would be occupied, changed, and perceived as methods of connecting the individual to the group. In *Devil on the Cross*, Ngugi’s principle concern in this context is the psyche of the black woman and her struggle for survival. In dealing with the cultural conflict between the

natives and the settlers, Ngugi reveals how the intruders shared the emotions and feelings of the people and set their own people against the poor.

Independence is not tales about the past but the sound of money in one's pocket.⁴⁵

In fact, *Devil on the Cross* is a *tour de force* which digs out the corrupt and oppressive political as well as economic and social systems of Kenya, which was driven upon them through the results of colonization. This idea is apparent early on in the novel with the character Jacinta Wariinga, a newly jobless woman who often doubts her self-worth. The narrator's words:

Wariinga was convinced that her appearance was the root cause of all her problems. Whenever she looked at herself in the mirror she thought herself very ugly. What she hated the most was her blackness"⁴⁶

The words used in the quote above, are witness to her psychological inferiority complex, as she questions her own norms of beauty. The author continues by mentioning Wariinga's orientation to "*rush to copy the ways in which other women dressed, whether or not it flattered the shade of her skin or the shape of her figure*"⁴⁷. From a Marxist viewpoint, one can determine that Wariinga's inner turmoil is charged by the influence of imperialism. Through the rule of Britain over Kenya, social norms as well as attitudes were carried over from one nation to the other, resulting people to feel inferior and doubt themselves. Circumstances such as this one are just one example of the prejudicial impact of colonialism over the human mind.

The ruined effects of capitalism also act a damaging effect on human psychology as is quite obvious throughout the Novel. Turned into a mere commodity by Wariinga's boss, Kihara, who managing to make her his mistress through sweat promises like "beautiful things" such as dresses and high heels imported directly from Europe and Asia, Wariinga, rejects directly, mentioning her Kamoongonye (her young lover) but to no gain. Guided by the capitalist ideal to commodify human life and values, Kihara does not take no for an

answer and jumps on top of her, later firing her from her position as a secretary, as her young lover also leaves her. Wariinga is hopeless as she has nothing and no one left to turn to, before she unsuccessfully tries to commit suicide to end all her miseries.

Similarly, after independence, Wangari in *Devil on the Cross* had tried to find a job in Nairobi after the loss of the two acres of land that was auctioned because she could not repay the loan. But finding a job was not easy, and in the end she was arrested for being a vagrant in Nairobi.

I, Wangari, a Kenyan by birth, how can I be a vagrant in my own country?
How can I be charged with vagrancy in my own country as If I were
foreigner? I denied both charges: to look for work is not a crime.⁴⁸

Being called a vagrant in her own land, Wangari's courage made her speak to the judge in a firm tone after which she was left on the condition that she would help the police to find the thieves and robbers of her country. She decided to start her job from her home town of Ilmorog and that is how she was with them on her journey back to Ilmorog.

However, the rupture in the fabric of time and Matigari's self-determined anchoring in the past magnify the feeling of strangeness which avoids his social perception. An alien language is used to explain the inexplicable, a language very much similar to the language of the Holy Bible, simple, but so remote for the mature reader, that, "*Now it seemed as if it was Matigari who was explaining complex things to a child, in a language which only a child would understand.*"⁴⁹

Matigari sees himself as a stranger in an alien space, which he used to know, but now he is so altered that he has lost its meaning. And this insignificance was reflected on the representations that Matigari seemed to have about his country.

Matigari calls for a return to the woods, in the bushes, where the past will inform the future. But even an icon as Matigari must belong, and this belonging, although it does not fall

within the framework of the established acceptations, must be identified by signs, extraordinary or not.

But how do we know that you are really Matigari ma Njiruungi? How can we identify you? Where is your sign? The sign? Matigari talked as if the man had asked him about the signs of the Second Coming. [...] I don't need anything to prove who I am. I don't need signs or miracles. [...] Our kingdom come as once decreed by the Iregi revolutionaries: The land belongs to the tiller and not to parasites and foreigners! ⁵⁰

Tomorrow belongs to me. ⁵¹

And this affirmation once again underlines the distance produced by the alienated system of African values in their post-colonial framework between the reality of the internal struggle against the strangeness about future, and the understanding, or the lack of it, which characterizes the close contact between members of the social group. The migration of Matigari's presence between the modest appearance of the commoner and the overwhelming stature of his pious interpretation do not justify the commitment of a socially connected hero.

Conclusion

As shown above, Social alienation is relevant to the analysis of *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*, in the sense that the whole of the society's political, economic, and social life is dominated by the imperialists. The Kenyans themselves are alienated, bereaved and disinherited of their natural rights such as national economy and political power.

Effectively, *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* opposed to capitalism, protest against the way western capitalism has destroyed and annulled traditional communal values. The individual alienation of community members is transformed in the last two novels into the absolute alienation of working class. The core characters, across sections of contemporary Kenyan society; jointly provide a wide-angled view of the impact of neo-colonialism, highlighted the class tension dividing the nation.

Ngugi's later novels also stress one of the more positive aspects of individualism in postcolonial Africa that of the individual's capacity to express his or her individualism through class solidarity, and a commitment to serve the people. In highlighting the social and economic problems of postcolonial Kenya, for Kenyans, Ngugi also draws attention to the potential for unity among, not only Kenyan peasants and workers, but the entire world's oppressed (Decolonising the Mind 108). Ngugi clearly appears as a Marxist novelist and a committed writer. Ngugi contribute all the elements of alienation to the development of character's identity.

Endnotes :

¹ Seeman, Melvin. "On the Meaning of Alienation" 1959. Page 784.

² Ibid. Page 784.

³ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross* 1980 (Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitani Mutharabaini*). London: Heinemann 1982. Page 12.

⁴ Ibid. Page 15.

⁵ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross* 1980 (Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitani Mutharabaini*). London: Heinemann 1982. Page 1.

⁶ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Matigari* 1987 (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 75.

⁷ Ibid. Page 118.

⁸ Ibid. Page 121.

⁹ Ibid. Page 76.

¹⁰ Ngugi WaThiong'o. *Moving the Center* 1993. P102.

¹¹ Ibid. Page 106.

¹² Seeman, Melvin. "On the Meaning of Alienation" 1959. Page 786.

¹³ Ibid. Page 786.

¹⁴ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross* 1980. Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitani Mutharabaini*) London: Heinemann 1982. Page 184.

¹⁵ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Devil on the Cross* 1980. Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitani Mutharabaini*) London: Heinemann 1982. Page 184.

¹⁶ Ibid. Page 184-185

¹⁷ Ibid. Page 188.

¹⁸ Ibid. Page 188.

¹⁹ Ibid. Page 191.

²⁰ Ibid. Page 10.

²¹ Reiss, E. (1997). Marx: A clear guide. London: Pluto Press.

²² Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 59.

²³ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Matigari* 1987. . (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 56.

- ²⁴ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Matigari* 1987. (trans. from the Gĩkuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 108.
- ²⁵ Seeman, Melvin. "On the Meaning of Alienation" 1959. Page 787.
- ²⁶ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Devil on the Cross* 1980. Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitaani Mutharabaini*) London: Heinemann 1982. Page 90.
- ²⁷ Ibid. Page 11.
- ²⁸ Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Matigari* 1987. . (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 35.
- ²⁹ Ibid. Page 31.
- ³⁰ Ibid. Page 31.
- ³¹ Ibid. Page 30.
- ³² Ibid. Page 37.
- ³³ Ibid. Page 140.
- ³⁴ Ibid. Page 140.
- ³⁵ Kalekin, Fishman, Tracing the Growth of Alienation: Enculturation, Socialization, and Schooling in a Democracy. In: F. Geyer (ed.) *Alienation, Ethnicity, and Postmodernity*. Connecticut: Westwood, 1996. Page 97.
- ³⁶ Simon Gikandi. *Ngugi Wa Thiong'o* 2000. Page 220.
- ³⁷ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Devil on the Cross* 1980. Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitaani Mutharabaini*) London: Heinemann 1982. Page 143-47.
- ³⁸ Ngugi waThiong'o, *Devil on the Cross* 1980. Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitaani Mutharabaini*) London: Heinemann 1982. Page 147.
- ³⁹ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 109.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid. Page 110.
- ⁴¹ Ibid. Page 136.
- ⁴² Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989, Page 3.
- ⁴³ Ibid. Page 7.
- ⁴⁴ Roy F. Baumeister and Jean M. Twenge, The Social Self, in Theodore Millon, Melvin J. Lerner, Personality and Social Psychology, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sopns, Inc., 2003. Page 327.
- ⁴⁵ Ngugi waThiong'o. *Devil on the Cross* 1980. Tans. From the Gikuyu: *Caitaani Mutharabaini*) London: Heinemann 1982. Page 37.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid. Page 11.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid. Page 11.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid. Page 15.
- ⁴⁹ Roy F. Baumeister and Jean M. Twenge, The Social Self, in Theodore Millon, Melvin J. Lerner, Personality and Social Psychology, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sopns, Inc., 2003. Page 45.
- ⁵⁰ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. (trans. from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro), Oxford: Heinemann Publishers Ltd., 1989. Page 63.
- ⁵¹ Ibid. Page 63.

Chapter Four: Strangers in Their Own Land: *Devil on the Cross* (1980) and *Matigari* (1987)

In the final chapter, we will explore the form of otherness in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*. The form of Otherness is the result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group ("Us," the Self) constructs one or many dominated out groups ("Them," the Other) by stigmatizing a difference, real or imagined, presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination. To state it innocently, difference belongs to the realm of fact and otherness belongs to the realm of discourse. Thus, biological sex is difference, whereas gender is otherness. So, our purpose is to discuss Ngugi's characters that feel strangers and outsiders in their own land.

1. (Re)thinking Home and Land in *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*

*Home, father/ motherland, exile? I, a writer in exile? I had just arrived in Britain on June 8, firmly intending to leave for Kenya on 31 July. In my book, Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary, published the same year as Andrew Gurr's Writers In Exile, I had rejected the option of exile [...].*¹ Ngugi wa Thiongo *Moving the Center*, 1993.

Ngugi thinks that Home represent an important theme in African literature. He himself has gone through this position, he was untied from his homeland and he wrote novels to reconstruct the connection between him and Kenya to re-identify himself with his nation.

In his novels Ngugi has dealt with the issue of land. Land, in Ngugi's fictions, becomes a political and social issue. It was the property of the native people but it was taken away by the colonizers so the colonizers became the new masters of the land. The land was the first and the foremost issue in peasants' lives. As it is related with the identity of the peasants, the peasants revolted against the dominant group to recover their land back. The native people are the owners of the land and the white settlers also want to possess land. The natives were forced to emigrate from their land as the colonizers took the charge of it.

Besides, Ngugi touches upon the idea that two types of black people spring up in the colonized countries: those who want to make their native land regain its full-fledged independence and those who aim to help the colonialist nations keep on their colonization, which Matigari, the main character in the novel, emphasizes by saying that:

There are also two types of people in the land: those who sell out, the traitors, and those who serve the people, the patriots.²

As has already been highlighted, historically and sociologically in Africa, the child is seen as the representative of the health of the society. In this context, the significance of the family as a cohering, enabling unit has to be recognized. Interestingly, *Matigari* uses the “house,” home that Matigari has built with his own hand as the metaphor for the country.

After all, the struggle was for the house, wasn't? A home... a shelter...with children playing on the veranda or in the open air.³

As is evident, children are integral on the wholesomeness of the picture of “home” which is the symbol for the country. So, in the first part of the novel, for Matigari his mission was to search for “Ciana Ciakwa” and his “Mucii” which means “My children and Home.”⁴ And this, is illustrated in the novel, when Matigari says: “*And so today is my homecoming, and I want to bring my family together.*”⁵ Then, Matigari’s notion of home is quite telling. One question that he asks himself as he begins his quest is: “*What makes a home?*”⁶ Then he answers himself: “*It is the men, woman and children – the entire family. I must rise up now go to all the public... and call up my people, my parents, my wives, my children.*”⁷ Matigari’s idea of home is shaped by the egalitarian and communal ethos of Gikuyu culture where a “home” is not merely a dwelling but the family that lives therein. His people turn out to be all the oppressed.

In addition, Ngugi through *Matigari* expressed that Matigari resented coming back home alone, and wanted to find his family first to take them with him and share their home. She quotes Matigari as follows:

We shall all go to home together. We shall enter the house together. We shall light the fire together. After all, the struggle was for the house wasn't it? ⁸

This attachment to land and home is what made the basis of the struggle against colonialism and is what makes the basis now for the struggle to define oneself in this world. It is obvious that the ties between postcolonial peoples and their lands are so strong that their lands became their reason of existing; they can no longer identify themselves away from their lands.

On the other hand, Ngugi thinks that to create home to Africans, those people in exile should come back to their original homes in what he calls a “*Homecoming*”. After they come back, they have to take part in the making of their new homes.⁹ This idea is based on the fact that the majority of African nations is in a state of being built, with the variety of people living in those countries which constitute a variety of identities brought together. So, Ngugi defines home as the place where one’s family lives, he states that through his novel *Devil on the Cross* when Gitutu says:

As for my address, my real home is here at the Golden Heights, Ilmorog. I call it my real home because it’s where my wife and children live.¹⁰

So, for him this is what defines a real home because he carries on saying that he owns other houses; he does not even call them homes, in other places in Kenya but he feels his real home is Ilmorog where his family is.

According to Gikandi in his book *Ngugi wa Thiong’o*, the major topic that won the novels of Ngugi between 1963 and 1968 was that of “homeward journey” experienced by those detainees who returned home to find that it is not the same as they envisioned it. They discovered their home’s pain. As example we can take what Ngugi has written in his novel *Devil on the Cross*:

Kenya is our country. We were born here. We were given this land by God, and we redeemed it from the hands of our enemies with our own blood. Today you see us clothed in rags, but we, the Peasants and the workers, are the same People who were around at the time of Kimaathi. No, look at me closely again. I am not a thief. I am not a robber. If you want to know who the real thieves and robbers are, follow me and I will show you their lairs and caves in Ilmorog. Give me a few policemen, and we’ll go right now to arrest the thieves and robbers who have always troubled us. I don’t know about

Nairobi or other places, but in Ilmorog, our Ilmorog, thieves and robbers don't even bother to hide.¹¹

This is to state that Gikuyu individuals stick to their lands, when they returned they discovered their lands gone, taken by people who resembled Gikuyu people, yet who clearly wore the robes of the colonial control or by white people. Ngugi alludes to them as thieves who don't need to cover up, however, who trouble the others since they are not like them and want to lead them to end up westernized. The native people were dislodged and regarded as robbers, they were homeless and they need to regain their lands from the ones who stole them. But lamentably, the genuine thieves are the ones who discovered out their situation in society, and the credible people could not just fit in. They came to find their lands gone or isolated, they are never again the same lands they had left, and they felt confused and displaced.

Then, this notion of land, Ngugi always draws a relation between land, home and nation. And this is also the case of Matigari, who is looking for his home, but he finds life in the newly independent state is far from his dreams, with business continuing very much as it did before and at the end everything changed and becomes a foreign homeland: "*This wasn't here when I was last here.*"¹² So land or place could be felt as home in any way, and through whatever means.

Besides, this sense of home and belonging reflects on the writings of Ngugi. He wants to regenerate his pre-colonial identity through his character Matigari. To explain more, in the novel, Matigari fought for the independence of his country then came back to find out that his land is no longer the same; he struggles to find out his place in the new home which seems to be a foreign homeland. She carries on saying that the displacement of Matigari "allegorizes" the fact that ex-colonized communities try hard to come back home which becomes a strange space for them, and then they no longer belong to it, or they find it hard to identify with it. This part of *Matigari* illustrates best the feeling of these people and thus the feeling of Ngugi:

Many questions crossed his mind. He thought about Muriuki and about all his people. When he had come out of the forest, he had thought that the task of

bringing his family together was going to be an easy one. But now? It was already afternoon, and he had not yet made contact with his own; he didn't even know where or how he would begin his search.¹³

So here, Matigari cannot reach his people not because he doesn't know where they are, but because they are in front of him and he doesn't recognize them; they have been transformed. He certainly feels lost and dislocated since he is at home, among his own people, but he can't recognize them; as if he were not at home. And the allegory here is that Matigari was in a forest wandering, just like Ngugi who was in his exile, and then he came out of the forest to regain his home which in fact he finds but no longer recognizes it, and no longer fits in it.

Likewise, the land for the Gikuyu people used to be a symbol for a vast home where the original mother and father, Gikuyu and Mumbi, lived and had as children all the Gikuyu people. They lived together as one big family on their land which constitutes their home.

2. Otherness at Home

The form of Otherness is due less to the difference of the Other than to the point of view and the discourse of the person who perceives the Other as such. Opposing Us, the Self, and Them, the Other, is to choose a criterion that allows humanity to be divided into two groups: one that embodies the norm and whose identity is valued and another that is defined by its faults, devalued and susceptible to discrimination. Only dominant groups (such as Westerners in the time of colonization) are in a position to impose their categories in the matter. By stigmatizing them as Others, Barbarians, Savages or People of Color, they relegate the peoples that they could dominate or exterminate to the margin of humanity. The otherness of these peoples has notably been based on their supposed spatial marginality. In addition, certain types of spatial organization, like segregation or territorial constructions, allow the opposition between the Self and the Other to be maintained or accentuated. Similarly, according to James Ogude's Ngugi's *Novels and African History*, it is a metaphor for native identity:

The house is mine because I built it. The land is mine too because I tilled it with these hands. The industries are mine because my labour built and worked them. I shall never stop struggling for all the products of my sweat. I shed blood and I did not shed it in vain. One day the land shall return to the tiller, and the wealth of our land to those who produce it.¹⁴

Ngugi's earlier texts bear that powerful evocation of land, both as a signifier of a glorious past in which man and woman were in harmony with nature and thereby presupposing a stable identity associated with landownership, and land as a signifier of loss whose recovery would imply the recovery of identity.¹⁵

As explained by Albert Memmi in his study of the relationships between groups in a colonial setting, the colonized emerges within such context as the image of everything the colonizer is not.¹⁶ Otherness is the end result, the product and the consequence, of perceiving someone else as the complete negation of oneself, the perceiver. It is a condition in which certain individuals or groups are seen as irreconcilably different when compared to other groups within society.

Colonialism's usurpation of the land is tantamount to a disruption of identity because land is transformed into a chronotope, a "space for cultural and political contestation."¹⁷ The hero of Kenya's independence, Jomo Kenyatta, in his autobiography, *Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu*, also emphasizes the importance of land in Gikuyu culture. Land, he says, is inextricably linked to Gikuyu identity and "when the European comes to the Gikuyu country and robs the people of their lands, he is taking away not only their livelihood, but the material symbol that holds family and tribe together. In doing this he gives one blow which cuts away the foundation from the whole of Gikuyu life, social, moral and economic"¹⁸. Land is a site for the struggle between two different cultural specificities, Kenyan and English.

Frantz Fanon in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* asserted that the colonizer through his ongoing quest to negate the Other forced the colonized to ask himself a very intriguing question about himself, and that question is: "Who am I in reality?"¹⁹ And this could be illustrated in what people ask about the personality of Matigari as who he was:

Who is Matigari? they asked one another. How on earth are we going to recognise him? What does he look like? What nationality is he? Is Matigari a man or woman anyway? Is he young or old? Is he fat or thin? Is he real or just a figment of people's imagination? Who or what really *is* Matigari ma Nijiruungi? Is he a person, or is it a spirit?²⁰

So, through this novel, Ngugi wanted to insinuate that Africans have to choose between incarnating the person of Matigari, or being an “Other” in their own country. So the world of Matigari is divided into two worlds:

There are two world, Matigari said to the teacher. There is the world of those who accept things as they are, and there is that of those who want to change things. Which world do you belong to? ²¹

This split in the African world occurs in the first place because of the hegemony that the colonizer creates towards the colonized; and the “west” applies on the “rest”. Then Ngugi holds, as Gikandi postulated, a “utopian desire for a „non-alienated mode of cognition.”²² This concept of Otherness however does not apply only in terms of colonizer/ colonized, it could exist in the same society among people who share the same background or within the same person. This can be illustrated in the character of Wariinga in *Devil on the Cross*, this young woman who is having an especially bad day. In quick succession, she loses her job (because she refuses to sleep with her boss), her boyfriend leaves her, and she is kicked out of her apartment. Wariinga blames herself for these incidents:

Wariinga was convinced that her appearance was the root of all her problems. Whenever she looked at herself in the mirror she thought herself very ugly. What she hated most was her blackness, so she would disfigure her body with skin-lightening creams like Ambi and Snowfire, forgetting the saying: That which is born black will never be white. Now her body was covered with light and dark spots like the guineafowl.²³

This shows that Wariinga is having an inner struggle to determine who she wants to be. She does not want to be black but can do nothing about it; she tries everything to seem to be white but does not succeed in it. All she gets is a make belief that she is white from the outside but she remains black from the inside even if she doesn't want to be so. She now is an Other to herself. She tries to convince herself that she can be more white than that, she doesn't want to surrender to the fact that she is black:

Wariinga also hated her teeth. They were a little stained; they were not as white as he should have liked them to be.²⁴

This is to say that hybridity strengthened the feeling of Otherness within a society that supposedly shares the same traditions, the same beliefs and culture. In addition to this sense of Otherness within the same society, Ngugi portrays the sense of Otherness between the tribesmen and the Westerners.

The character of Wariinga herself, in *Devil on the Cross*, is perceived as an Other in the view of his people. She is the one who has been educated in Western institutions. Wariinga, who has now transformed herself into a student of mechanical engineering, she is portrayed as an independent lady who depends on odd jobs like working on cars at a mechanic's garage to finance her education.²⁵ Just like Ngugi, and as Woode asserted:

The alterity within his identity creates a colonial desire to displace the "other", the white man, by using Western education, the white man's magic to create a position of privilege for himself in society.²⁶

It is a thing that could be reflected on the person of Ngugi himself when he wanted to displace the "Other" (colonial language) using his novels (white man's magic) to regain his status in his society. But as Homi Bhabha, in *The Location of Culture*, stated:

The question of identification is never the affirmation of a pre-given identity, never a self-fulfilling prophecy – it is always the production of an image of identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image. The demand of identification – that is, to be for an Other – entails the representation of the subject in the differentiating order of Otherness.²⁷

This description denotes that the feeling of Otherness was implanted by the colonizer into the mind of the colonized so as to perpetuate the idea of the distinction centre/periphery. The centre being the West and the periphery being the "rest"; of course the West perceives the rest as Other.

Furthermore, in Ngugi's *Matigari*, it is suggested that one has to believe in himself and in his identity to overcome the challenges that colonialism put them in. For, if one does not believe in his identity he is going to become a reflection of the colonizer as portrayed through

the character of John Boy “*the only difference between the two men was their skin colour*”²⁸ as a sign that John has wholly embraced colonial culture and became almost a white man if he were not distinguished by his skin color.

Ngugi’s representation of the transformation of John Boy’s family from servants within the British colonial system to élites within the postcolonial Kenyan nation further emphasizes his argument that the colonial state provided the occasion for particular individuals within society to perpetuate their selfish interests. The white colonialist had given a few people (elite) like John Boy colonial education. Furthermore, he was brought up to see his own people through the lenses of the colonialists. Now, this education which instills ideology of the colonizers was given by the oppressors for their own benefits. The elite Africans, to white colonizers are still collaborating servants, and not much difference from the masses.

Through this colonial education, the colonialists retained power over the colonialized land. Just as it has been cited by Fanon:

When a bachelor of philosophy from the Antilles refuses to apply for certification as a teacher on the grounds of his color I say that philosophy has never saved anyone. When someone else strives and strains to prove to me that black men are as intelligent as white men I say that intelligence has never saved anyone: and that is true, for, if philosophy and intelligence are invoked to proclaim the equality of men, they have also been employed to justify the extermination of men.²⁹

Therefore, in the novel *Matigari* Ngugi states that though liberation was achieved by the Africans from the colonizers, their minds were not decolonized. Ideology of the oppressors still lingers within the leaders and it creates more subordination, poverty, oppression to the African society. For example in the novel, Africans have this strong sense of communal bonds and in the novel *Matigari* calls almost everyone his child. However, John Boy JR prefers the “individual” over the term “masses” because it is primitive. The change of thought within John Boy JR is brought about by colonizers:

Our country has remained in the darkness because of the ignorance of our people. They don’t know the importance of the word “individual”, as opposed to the word “masses”. White people are advanced because they respect the word and therefore honor the freedom of the individual, which

means freedom of everyone to follow his own whims without worrying about others.³⁰

Besides, the dream of Matigari and others that someday John Boy JR will be the future patriot was dashed. These elite Africans become the neo-colonizers and imperialists, who continue the oppression taught by the settlers. Through the colonial education, the colonialists perpetuate colonized land.

Conclusion

As has been noted, Ngugi wa Thiong'o pretends that decolonization is not finished really simply as colonialism is transmitted to the hands of the natives elites who dash their local people's hopefulness by operating as slaves of the antique white colonizers. As we have seen in *Matigari*, Ngugi uses the character of John Boy Junior to represent the actual roles of the local elites in the colonized lands. Ngugi addresses the idea that two types of black people raised in the colonized countries: those who wish to regain their land and its complete independence and those who attempt to help the colonialist nations to stay on their colonization. Ngugi's acrid satire is a furious attack against the postcolonial African of high society and new African leaders, which is so-named "local watchdogs" (Devil 97) who perpetuated Western domination and thereby were pawns of the white man whose existence on the African continent was no longer tolerable.

Endnotes

¹ Ngugi wa Thiongo *Moving the Center*, 1993. Page 102.

² Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. Translated from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro Heinemann 1989. Page 37.

³ Ibid. Page 10.

⁴ Ibid. Page 14.

⁵ Ibid. Page 22.

⁶ Ibid. Page 6.

- ⁷ Ibid. Page 6.
- ⁸ Ibid. Page 10.
- ⁹ Bethwell Allan Ogot, William Robert Ochieng'. *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya, 1940-93*. London: J. Currey 1995.
- ¹⁰ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Devil on the Cross*, 1980. London: Heinemann, 1982. Page 100.
- ¹¹ Ibid. Page 40.
- ¹² Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. Translated from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro Heinemann 1989. Page 14.
- ¹³ Ibid. Page 26.
- ¹⁴ Ngugi wa Thiong'o *Matigari* 1987. Translated from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro Heinemann 1989. Page 124.
- ¹⁵ Ogude, James. *Ngugi's Novels and African History: Narrating the Nation*. Sterling, Virginia: Pluto, 1999. Page 46.
- ¹⁶ Albert Memmi, *Decolonization and the Decolonized* 2004. Britain, Souvenir Press (Educational & Academic) Ltd in 2006. Page 82.
- ¹⁷ Ngugi wa Thiong'o *Matigari* 1987. Translated from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro Heinemann 1989. Page 47.
- ¹⁸ Kenyatta, Jomo. *Facing Mount Kenya: The tribal Life of the Gikuyu* 1938. Harvill Secker. New York: Random, 1962.
- ¹⁹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. Paris: F. Maspero, 1961. Page 182.
- ²⁰ Ngugi wa Thiong'o *Matigari* 1987. Translated from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro Heinemann 1989. Page 170.
- ²¹ Ibid. Page 91.
- ²² Gikandi, Simon. *Cambridge Studies in African and Caribbean Literature: Ngugi Wa Thiong'o*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Page 12.
- ²³ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Devil on the Cross*, 1980. London: Heinemann, 1982. Page 5.
- ²⁴ Ibid. Page 5.
- ²⁵ Ibid. Page 221-222.
- ²⁶ Edward Winston Babatunde Woode, *Alterity and Hybridity in Anglophone Postcolonial Literature: Ngugi, Achebe, p'Bitek and Nwapa*. Ph. D., U. of Oklahoma, 2001. Page 36.
- ²⁷ Bhahabha, K. Homi. . *The Location of Culture* 1994. Oxon: Routledge, 2004. Page 64.
- ²⁸ Ngugi wa Thiong'o *Matigari* 1987. Translated from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro Heinemann 1989. Page 43.
- ²⁹ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*. Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1952 Page 28-29.
- ³⁰ Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Matigari* 1987. Translated from the Gikuyu by Wangui wa Goro Heinemann 1989. Page 48.

III. General conclusion

This research has led us to discover that the African writer Ngugi wa thiong'o works *Devil on the Cross* (1980) and *Matigari* (1987) deal in an extensive way with the notion of identity. The study was carried out from different perspectives. We have relied on Frantz fanon theory outlined in *black skin white masks* to show how colonialism destroyed characters mind through unjustness of racial and sexual domination and exploitation. We have also used Albert Memmi theory to show the oppression experienced by the epic hero Matigari. Finally, we have deployed Melvin Seeman's *On the Meaning of Alienation* to depict the impact of the capitalist system through the thinking of the individual about himself in relation to the society. Then, we have considered the theme of the development of the main characters identity under the oppression in *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*.

In the first section, the focus has been on Wariinga the female character in *Devil on the Cross* by discussing how her oppressed experiences still hunt her and the impact that has been left through these experiences on her psychological state. The oppression that she undergoes was a central element in the formation of her identity. Therefore, the novel captures the position of African woman as complicated by a mixed of oppressive forces, making her situation single in case and separated from that of woman from the Western world, and analyses Ngugi's firm belief that change is a gradual process as presented in the novel.

The second section is concerned with the dislocated identity in *Matigari*. We have attempted to show the oppression that is experienced by Matigari after his coming back from the forest after killing Settler William. We have presented how the loss and dislocated identity in Kenya has been robbed and corrupted by the so-called leaders. Matigari in his quest for the lost identity of his people, is always asking where truth and justice could be found on earth looking for a place to revive the lost traditions and culture and thus identity. It is evident that

Ngugi suffered concerning this issue of identity. All along his carrier, Ngugi fought to redefine his identity. And his novel *Matigari* is the best way to demonstrate this struggle.

The third part of this analysis is devoted to the representation of alienation in *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*. This section explores psychological, social and physical reaction by the Kenyans to the neo-colonial experience through the main characters of both novels. They wanted to develop some kind of coping mechanism in trying to come to terms with their changed environment and challenged identity. The main surge of the study is the concept of alienation as developed by Wariinga in *Devil on the Cross* and Matigari in *Matigari*. We have focused on how isolating, dehumanizing, and disenchanting effect the living of the main character's mind within a capitalist system. This is achieved through the emphasize on Melvin Seeman's five features of alienation.

In the final section, the focus has been on the importance of land and the form of otherness in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*. This notion of otherness is depicted in the voices of the characters in the two novels which marginalize each other; every one of them desires to impose his own ideas on the other without giving importance to the thoughts of the other. We have discussed how Ngugi's characters feel strangers and outsiders in their own land.

Throughout our dissertation, we reached the conclusion that Ngugi reveals oppression and crisis of identity in his both works as a form of control. In fact, *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* draw upon the identities of the characters: Wariinga and Matigari, focusing on their struggle against the oppressive system left by the colonizer aftermath the independence. It is a literary representation of postcolonial identity in Kenya, or Africa in general after colonialism. The works mirror how this identity has been distorted at first and then gradually replaced to take its actual form. Ngugi illustrates also through his characters that the return to a pre-colonial identity is nearly impossible since this latter is built through experiences of

people, and Ngugi cannot delete or negate their colonial experience which became a section of their personalities and lives. Ngugi's characters speak his mind; he voices his desire to regain his original identity and his ask for rebuild a connection between him and his origins. He also presents those who try to embrace western traditions and the élite who split from its motherland. .

Besides, Ngugi illustrates the wrongs to which women are subjected such as injustice of racial and sexual domination. As it had been clarified through Waringa in *Devil on the Cross* and Gaturia in *Matigari* that African women have been subjected to negative stereotypes and their participations have been neglected or even omitted. Women are exposed to the hard reality of being exploited both in terms of their gender and their race; they don't find mercy even in the hands of the black men. White man regards them as objects of watching and sexual enjoyment; they have no respect for their identity as black women or as women. Ngugi In his novel shows women as victims of patriarchy and colonialism. He fairly depicts the image of African society that is essentially patriarchal. It is a man made world where woman is bound within the narrow confines prescribed by man.

Then, it appears that Ngugi sees identity from different angles. For him, national-political identity and his determination to land are vital, but eventually, it is his mother tongue and cultural identity at the foreground of his philosophical beliefs. Ngugi affirms the idea that the native elites can set threats for those nations that have just gained their independence nonetheless they are not afraid of this danger. The native society can be disillusioned by the landscape where they are also exploited by their local elites as ruthlessly and selfishly as they were in the past by the Western nations.

Furthermore, this identity has been assumed by the imperial reality that these peoples went through. The postcolonial societies lived in harmony without annoying themselves about fighting to find an individual or a collective identity. They had their lands to identify with and

their traditions and beliefs as they knew exactly who they are. The procedure of educating an élite and introducing the colonial ways to these peoples, all these procedures together engaged in alienating the postcolonial subjects from their own people and from the world. This alienation prompts them to feel inferior and to reproduce western perspectives. This speed change of societies led to establishing the mobility and to framing the multicultural characteristics of the new world.

Moreover, it has been derived that the writer Ngugi has experienced his own loss of identity; since he has been exiled from his home long ago, he wishes to preserve links with his community so that he does not remain alone or alienated in both worlds: the world he lives in and the world he normally belongs to. By keeping this link with his origins Ngugi, writes about his people's reality and traditions, about their experiences and beliefs. This desire to be attached as mentioned above is maintained to keep in touch with home. However, the notion of home is also very important in shaping one's identity. This is depicted in his two novels *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari*, where Ngugi through his characters portrays how people need to have a place to identify with and call home. This home was corrupted by the colonizer at first. After their departure we see through the novels that the African leaders so-called "local watchdogs" perpetuated Western domination.

That is what makes the characters of *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* confront the failure to understand themselves the oppression, corruption and injustice within a capitalist system. Ngugi has always pictured the notion of identity. He has introduced this notion in his characters; in their behaviors, in their way of thinking, speaking, and even dressing. To depict the realities about how imperialism has reformed African identity. Ngugi through his novel *Devil on the Cross*, as Paolini asserted, is a projecting how the evil ways of modernity and Western ways can affect their pure identity. Those people who posses Mercedes-Benz, drink western beer and organize ceremonies where they do anything to celebrate wealth. The

products they buy to render their skins white. The same could be found in *Matigari*, where we have seen how there are always binaries: “Two worlds”, “two types of people,” and *Matigari* comes out suddenly reminding people that they have to choose, in fact he himself is in a quest for the lost identity of his people, he is always wondering where truth and justice could be found on earth looking for a place to resurrect the lost traditions and culture and thus identity. Ngugi thinks that writing is meant for the “quest of identity”, and he made that clear especially through writing his novels *Devil o the Cross* and *Matigari* in which he has portrayed how the people of Kenya were alienated from their lands and from their social and psychological background.

Ngugi through depicting this very important notion of identity is in fact revealing his own quest for identity. He shows his wishes to regain his native identity and his need to reconstruct a link between him and his origins. He also reviews implicitly those who desire to perpetuate western traditions as it is an attempt to reconstruct the connection between his people. But this does not negate the fact that he is, together with the postcolonial societies, of a hybrid multicultural nature; and that it is not easy to regain a pure identity in the new world order.

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