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FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

RELIGION AS AN EXPLOITATIVE TOOL IN NGUGI WA THIONG'O AND NGUGI WA MIRII'S *I WILL MARRY WHEN I WANT*

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree

"Licence en Langue et Littérature Anglaises"

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DEDICATION

To my parents of blessed memory;

To my adoptive parents; for their unforgettable care;

To my wife and children;

To my maternal uncles;

To my brothers and sisters;

To my late primary school teacher, Thérence Riragendanwa;

I warmly dedicate this work.

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Special gratitude also goes to the teaching staff of the Department of English Language and Literature of the University of Burundi. The moral and academic training I got from them constitute the cornerstone of this work, which is the fruit of their labour.

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ABSTRACT

This work sets out to examine the role of religion as a seductive tool for achieving one's material ambitions throughout exploitation. But if this fails, the bourgeoisie class people use force to maintain the proletariat class under their own control; and make them work on their behalf. The work also intends to analyse the religiosity of the post-colonial native rich people as represented here by the Kiois on one hand; and on the other hand, the blindness of the poor masses in the matter of religion of the Kiguundas, the poor working class representatives. Religion, in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii's *I Will Marry When I Want*, has no less intention of uniting people as brothers and sisters in Christ; but it is somehow a tool for a socio-economic and materialistic exploitation. It is, therefore, in this perspective that this work, by using the Marxism Approach, which advocates revolutionary sentiment or vision of the voiceless and alienated people by the bourgeoisie class, lights the Kenyan poor working masses in order to know about what is religion as a poison of the mind. This study also helps them realize how the so-called Christianity is acting on them as a tool for earning life in the hands of the leaders. This work concludes that Kioi is represented as a native rich figure whose prevailing motive is to keep the new converts trapped in the "well" of religious absurdity.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the idea of becoming rich as quickly as possible was at the bone of contention. Within the period of Daniel Defoe's writings we realize the total search for strategic places and commercial centres by Europeans in general and British people in particular. This was not the cause of a rapid expansion of Europeans all over the world. The idea of selling religion also counts much more as far as over populating the world's concerned. At that time some Europeans suffered from religious persecutions and left for America. The concepts of religion, savagery, were much relied on in order to dominate, exploit others by some category of people in Europe and in Africa as well. It goes without saying that the actual remarks of Christianism is that when you get people spiritually, you also get whatever materials you want from them.

In this regard as mentioned above, most African writers, especially Ngugi Wa Thiong'o of Kenya, highlighted the resemblance religion of what happened in Europe and there as to be applied in his home country. The concept of Christianity was the motive behind a materialistic exploitation throughout religious preaching.

The deleterious western religions that infiltrate Africa brought with them some changes within Africans. The implanted churches brought some divisions amongst Africans. They inculcated in their societies a new religion, and thus, a new way of believing. There were those who believed in it and those who did not do so.

Although Christianity tries to teach Africans the right way to behave and act in their everyday lives, the western Christians often work with some hidden agenda as a way of life. In fact, great attention was put on these new believers who were still exercising the white imperialists' footprints in Africa particularly in Kenya. There was no difference between the Kenyan authorities, those in charge, and the white religious imperialists (the foreigners) with whom they collaborated so much. The new coverts became the Kenyan rich leaders. Throughout their good preaching, they exploited the Kenyan poor masses (peasants) to wealth themselves.

The post-colonial Kenyan society is a society with people unable to raise their children. Gathoni is lazy and disobedient towards her parents on accounts of being

influenced by modernity. "...go away from here" says Kioi. "...why are you unable to look after your children?"

God was at the forefront of the Kenyan Christians, and therefore, was to motivate and determine all their actions. Africa was said to be continent without history, without good/right religion; and that Africans need to be taught about it. They were said to believe in pieces of stones and woods.

Contrary to what is mentioned above, Chinua Achebe, as presented in his celebrated fiction *Things Fall Apart* (1958), has center-staged religion as a rallying point in the disintegration of Umuofia Community.

Despite its undeniable advantages, in contemporary times, many African writers have come to view religion as an ideological weapon in Africa. It was used for multiple purposes in Kenya and led to challenging Kenyan minds.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o attacks religion as an instrument of exploitation and impoverishment of the poor. The Christianizing mission came with colonization. The missionaries are accused of holding the Bible in the left hand and the gun in the right one. Africanization of European churches is a scheme for further blindfold the black man because the focus of the preaching has not gone beyond. "Blessed are they that go thirsty and hungry/And endure tribulations in their hearts/For they shall inherit the Kingdom of God." (New Testament, 61). Kioi and his wife, Ndugire Helen, are typical African religious stooges: they are far from being pure (Christians) religious people as they are merely fronts used by the white man to achieve his economic purpose. The church wedding involves expensive prices.

Although they resisted before, Kiguunda and his wife Wangeci in order to please his boss and employer, Kioi, are forced to mortgage their only piece of land to a bank to get the means for their so-called lawful Christian marriage in the church; as their African wedding is regarded by Kioi as sinful, and therefore invalid.

A writer writes because there is a certain problem that prevails. As a writer in politics, Ngugi is concerned with the post-colonial imperialism and the shortcomings on Africans in general and on Kenyans in particular. The native

authorities were assimilated in the British administrators during the period of colonialism.

The crash between African culture and the new religion brought by the whites, which was exercised on Kenyan peasants by the native authorities after the white imperialists left Kenya, was disguised into an exploitative tool to materialistic, political and economic ideologies. This made Ngugi Wa Thiong'o to write against the clerical work in the modern church. He falls within the context of such a reaction against the western culture on Africa in the way of believing in God and praising Him. Their expectation of imperialism was to replace African religion by western and hypocritical one. The white imperialists had the basic motives of domination and exploitation in order to wealth themselves; and so did their followers, that is, the native Christian leaders towards their skin colour brothers, the poor Kenyan masses.

Most writers expose white administrators' ways of ruling during the colonial and postcolonial period. Yet they have hardly shown the links between Christianity and the postcolonial rulers. Furthermore, the poor natives were exploited by the religious African authorities as did the white imperialists. Christianity therefore, did not prepare Africans especially Kenyans for democratic hood. From now on, it is as if the good Christians are not yet born. The world is concerned with all sorts of human struggle for survival. The rich people like Kioi wa Kanorou, are becoming richer and richer whereas the poor ones, like Kiguunda, are becoming poorer and poorer. Capitalism and materialism have no human face.

Biography of the Author

Ngugi Wa Tiong'o was born in 1938 in Limuru, Kenya to Nduucu and Wanjika Wa Ngugi. Ngugi is the fifth child of the third of his father's four wives. He was one of the few students from Limuru to attend the elite Alliance High School. While at Alliance, he participated in a debate in which he contended that a western education is harmful to African students. The headmaster subsequently counselled Ngugi against becoming a political agitator.

Ngugi next attended Makerere University in Uganda and later the University of Leeds in England.

Ngugi is widely regarded as one of the most significant contemporary African writers. His first novel, *Weep Not Child* (1964) was the first English-language novel to be published by an East African and his account of Kenya's Mau Mau Emergency – an eight-years uprising by rebels against the British colonial government – in his novel *A Grain of Wheat* (1967); revised (1986) presented an African perspective on the revolt for the very first time. Additionally, Ngugi's Caitaani Mutharaba-ini (Devil on the Cross) (1980) is the first modern novel written in Gikuyu (or Kikuyu), a Kenyan language in which the author intends to continue writing his creative works.

In the field of Education, he has also been influential in East Africa and is recognized as a humanist who is deeply interested in the growth and well-being of his people and country. Ngugi was also influenced by Karl Marx's writings and Friedrich Engels developing an ardent opposition to colonialism, Christianity, and non-african elements in Kenya. During this period he also began to write plays and novels criticizing Kenyan society and politics. In 1962, his first full-length play, 'The Black Hermit' was performed at the Uganda National Theatre. In early 1960s he worked as a regular columnist for the Sunday Post, Daily Nation, and Sunday Nation. He wrote his novel *Weep Not Child* (1964) while he was a student at Makerere University.

In 1969 Ngugi – then an instructor at the University of Nairobi – and several colleagues mounted a successful campaign to transform the school's English Department in the Department of African Languages and Literature. After the publication of *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngugi Wa Tiong'o rejected his Christian name, James, and began writing under the name as early mentioned, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. He also began translating his play 'The Trial of Dedan Kimathi' (1976) into Gikuyu, under the title Mzalendo Kimathi. Ngugi published his last English language novel *Petals of Blood* in 1977.

The Kenya of Ngugi's birth and youth was a British settler colony (1895-1963). As an adolescent, he lived through the Mau Mau War of Independence (1952-1962), the central historical episode in the making of Modern Kenya and major theme in his early works. Because of his vocal opposition to the injustice perpetrated by the post-colonial Kenyan government Ngugi was arrested and jailed without charge in the Kamoto Maximum Security Prison from 1977 to 1978. There, he wrote a

Memoir, Detarned: *A Writer's Prison Diary* (1981) and viewed to write only in the Gikuyu language. He began to write his first novel in Gikuyu, *Devil on The Cross*, on sheets of toilet paper while in prison.

A group of Amnesty International named Ngugi a prisoner of conscience in 1977 and he was released from prison the following year, i.e 1978. Upon his release, Ngugi lost his position at the University of Nairobi. When his Theatre group was banned by Kenyan officials in 1982, Ngugi, fearing further reprisals, left Kenya and went into self-imposed exile. Thinking that the novel's main character was a real living person, Dictator Daniel Arap Moi issued an arrest warrant for his arrest but on learning that the character was fictional he had the novel "arrested"; instead.

In August 2004 Ngugi returned to Kenya for the first time since 1982. He had been in exile for the duration of the Moi dictatorship from 1982 to 2002; that is he was exiled for twenty-two years then. Within a week at his home, with his wife, Njuri, they were brutally attached by four hired gunmen and narrowly escaped with their lives. They returned to California shortly thereafter, but have continued to travel to Kenya in the hope of the prosecuting their attackers.

Ngugi Wa Mirii, on the other hand, was born in Roromo, Limuru in 1951 into a large peasant family. He received his high school education in Limuru. He then worked at the Kenya Posts and Telecommunications. Feeling the urge to better himself he started a professional Diploma in Adult Education at the Institute of studies, Nairobi University, in 1975. He joined the Institute of Development Studies at the same University a year later, working as a senior Research Assistant. He is married to Margaret Wirimu and they have three daughters and two boys. He is a staunch pan-Africanist and strongly believes in the African identity and self-expression.

He became an Adult Educator who specialized in Literacy and research using various creative drama techniques in his work. While still at school at the Institute of Adult Studies he became involved with peasants and workers in community Development at the Kamiriithu, Limuru. He was the chairperson of the education committee and later became the co-coordinating director of the centre. At the centre he teamed up with Ngugi Wa Tiong'o, his cousin, namesake and old friend, shared a passion for theatre and plight of their community. Both were committed to

social and political transformation that would benefit the marginalised community. He and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o were already involved in the theatre projects when the opportunity arose at the centre to train adult people in the community theatre. The Ngugis became responsible for adult literacy campaign at the Kamiriithu cultural centre.

As with Ngugi Wa Tiong'o, Ngugi Wa Mirii knew the songs, proverbs and stories of the Gikuyu people. Their passion for their culture and for theatre led them to work with each other in that field and in 1977 they co-authored the play *I Will Marry When I Want*. In November 1981, the Ngugis started to develop another piece of theatre, a musical called Maitinjugira (Mother sings for Me) which Ngugi Wa Thiong'o wrote, at the same centre. It was his continuous involvement with Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, the Kamiriithu Centre and the community theatre there, that made the government frown on Ngugi Wa Mirii. It caused him, like Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, to flee from his motherland, Kenya in 1982.

He found refuge in Zimbabwe with his family. He and Kimani Gecau, the director of *I Will Marry When I Want,* were both employed by the Zimbabwean government's Ministry of Education and Culture in 1982 to help them in the establishment of community-based theatre in Zimbabwe, similar to that of the Kamiriithu Theatre. They became involved with the Zimbabwe Organisation for Education with production (ZIMFEP). The organisations produced grassroots theathre projects as part of its programmes. Ngugi and Gecau worked with the Chindunduma secondary school for ex-combatants and orphans of the liberation war. The first play they did was an adaptation of the Trial of Dedan Kimathi in Ishona and English, to reflect Zimbabwe's own war experiences. The play toured nationally to demonstrate widely through Zimbabwe the concept of Community-based theatre (Gunner 1994:66 and Banham 1999:134). Ngugi also worked S.J. Chifunyise, a Director of Arts and Crafts in the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture, in Theatre-for-development workshops to help communities from theatre groups.

He sees his forced exile as a "rare experience of belonging to two worlds, because one could never separate themselves from their origins. Today he is at home in the Zimbabwean society where he is self-sacrificing in dedicating his life to the development of the theatre. He is involved in a cultural exchange programme

between Zimbabwe and Holland for youths. He joined the private organisation Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP) to enable him to live out his extraordinary passion for community theatre and the youth. As ZIMFEP promoter, with government support, the community-based theatre, he is currently involved in many drama groups. He played a central role in promoting the theatre model of Paulo Freire which he and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o adapted for their theatre work at Kamiriithu. In Zimbabwe the socialist government was eager to promote indigenous cultural practices after independence was gained in 1979. Wa Mirii's expertise and knowledge was a great benefit to his newly adopted country. In 1985 he was the co-producer of *I Will Marry When I Want* when it was first staged by the University of Zimbabwe's Faculty of Arts Drama. He taught the songs and dances from the Kenyan culture and thus broadened the cultural scope.

He coordinates theatre activities and programmes nationwide and many young people, such as refuge children, have benefited greatly from his work. As in Kamiriithu, Ngugi advocates the use of theatre practitioners from within the community rather than using "foreigners". In an article "Funding of Arts and Culture in Zimbabwe" he warned in April 1996 against "the dangers of imposing 'experts' as part of aid development packages, particularly experts who live far away from the activities that they are supposed to be overseeing" (Banhan 1999:98). He feels that Africa is a victim of international politics.

As a man with big visions and dreams, he has written, directed and produced more than 30 plays of which most were published by Kimaathi Publishing House. A news article in "The Sunday Mirror", Saturday 17 May 2003 stated, "Ngugi is currently a consultant in Development Communication, Adult Education, participatory Research, Civic and Human Rights Education production of Feature Films and documentary and a consulting editor and publisher" (84-85). As if that were not enough to keep him busy full-time, he also founded the Kenzim Cultural Centre at Warren Park in 2000; a centre which promotes arts and culture.

Ngugi Wa Mirii remains an outspoken arts activist and social critic. He was described as one "who used strong anti-imperialist rhetoric" (Banham 1999:84). His biggest dream is to setup an International Community Theatre College (ICTC), which will enable gifted artists from all over the globe to display their talents. He wants the performing Arts at the Centre of Africa's Cultural development. With his

strong zest for the theatre and the community at large, it is sure that he will be able to fulfil his dream one day soon.

The problem statement

The Kenyan poor peasants, especially Kiguunda and his wife, Wangeci, hardly realized that they were under oppression, facing the merciless exploitation by their own rich Kenyan brothers; that is, the Kiois who collaborate with big foreign businessmen (capitalists). The latter employed the poor Kenyans who produced so much wealth that it made employers get richer and richer while the workers became poorer and poorer because they were grossly underpaid. The society was marginalized by the avarice, the greed and consistent desire of the ruling institutions to take from the black poor masses in order to line their pockets.

Furthermore, the poor peasants suffered from the wrong expectations – the fate they developed in their minds – that their land should be restored back to them after the imperialists left Kenya. They thus were disappointed, disillusioned by those in charge who were complicit with the Kenyan poor peasants' enemies during the independence struggle. This, then, led to the compassionless society and the conflict arose between the commoners and the religious men.

Motivation

Religiously motivated, mankind often finds ideological arguments and justification that fit his exploitative behaviour towards his resemblance. The selfishness and motives are particularly regarded as opportunities favouring him to accumulate or gather wealth as quickly as possible. Another interest of mine to work on this topic is that most Christians are hypocrites. In the play, *I Will Marry When I Want* the church mission deviated from relaxing and harmonising human souls; and was disguised into the kind of graveyard. In addition to that, the church doctrine is questionable. In Kenyan society, according to those converts, only one who offers more can be healed, and be called God's child. Christians are expensively charged to pay for the sacraments; the lawful Christian wedding for instance in *I Will Marry When I Want*.

Aim of the Study

This work aims at examining how post-colonial imperialism in Kenya is manifested. Throughout self-aspirations and speculations of neo-colonialists, the

culture and religious acrimony produced by the conflicting traditional and imperialist faction in modern Kenya impacted the poor masses. It will also tackle different points in the play as portrayed by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii's *I Will Marry When I Want*, that justify or explain the hypocritical, exploitative, materialistic role played by the bourgeoisie class people in Kenya.

Hypothesis of the Study

This study is based on the hypothesis that the Kiguundas were disillusioned/disappointed or betrayed by the ruling institutions disguised into the neo-imperialists. In that society, the hypocrite behaviour of the bourgeoisie led to unfair, brutal and marginalised category of people victimized by unfair standards of morality.

Definition of Key Terms

To better understand this study, it is better to define some key terms.

In *The Encyclopedia Americana* "Religion" is defined as the pattern of belief and practice through which men communicate with faith or hope to gain experience of that which lies behind the world of their ordinary experience. Typically, religion focuses on ultimate or absolute, thought by the believers as God. Religion also manifests itself in number of major traditions of diverse societies. Thus, what is religious is something that is about or connected with religion in general or in particular religion.

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* "Religion" is the belief in the existence of a god or gods, and the activities that are connected with the worship of them. It also goes on defining religion as one of the systems of faith that are based on the belief in the existence of (a) particular god or gods. A particular interest of influence that is very important in one's everyday life.

Despite its undeniable advantages, in contemporary times, religion is viewed by many African playwrights as an ideological weapon in Africa. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o of Kenya and Zakes Mda of South Africa have used theater (theatre) to depict the savoury relationship between religion and contesting ideologies.

Most often definitions of religion stress the relationship between humankind and God while leaving out man's relationship with his neighbours. For the purpose of

this study, Nabofa's definition of religion, which includes specially man-to-man relationship as well as man's connection with his God, the Ground of his being or existence shall greatly be relied on; for the religious duty of man to his neighbour is very crucial.

Ngugi also deals with religious infringements in the neo-colonial East African country of Kenya. With ideological abuse of religion by the colonial and neo-colonial exploiters, Ngugi, like Engels, believes in the hypocritical objective or motive that was held behind the so-called religion.

Again, "exploitation" is another key item that needs to be defined. From the verb "to exploit" (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*) which means to treat a person or a situation as an opportunity to gain an advantage for yourself, to treat somebody unfairly by making them work and not giving them much in return. This definition is much more to fit the context of our topic under the study.

Another important key term is "materialism". By implication of our work, it is the belief that the money, profession and physical comforts are more important than spiritual values or the belief that only material things exist. The first definition is applicable on our work.

Literary Approach

The central approach in this discussion of our study is Marxism approach. It is the political and economic theory of Karl Marx (1818-83) that points out the revolutionary sentiment within a given society, here the Kenyan one. This term 'Marxism' is assumed and viewed by many Marxists differently, but they all converge around the relationship between the social institutions and the working class.

According to Karl Marx, a writer should not be held in place by the dominant ideology, which serves to reinforce the interest of the ruling class. Marxist criticism approaches a struggle with the social realities and ideologies.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels collaborated to produce a range of publications based on capitalism, class struggles and socialist movements. It is in the 19th century Europe that Marxism emerged referring to class struggle mainly in the

context of the struggle between capital and labor within capitalism rather than over its suppression.

Marxism appealed easily in many countries especially African country such as in Kenya, where there were struggles for popular liberation movement to overthrow dictatorial regimes. It is revolutionary sentiment due to its populist ideals. It was supported by many western writers such as Richard Wright, Jean Paul Sartre, Simone De Beauvoir and James Joyce. In Africa, it was particularly supported by writers like Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Okot P'Bitek in East Africa, Alex la Guma in South Africa, Wole Soyinka, Sembene Ousmane and Christopher Okigbo in West Africa and Jack Mapanje in Central Africa (said Mushengezi, 2003)

For instance, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o asserts that a writer should be a voice of change for those who are disadvantaged or oppressed, and many other writers amongst whom Ayi Kweyi Armah reflect that obligation. He also (Ngugi) calls upon the Kenyan masses to rise in a popular revolution and fight for their dispossessed land and their rights. Writers like Ngugi base on the history of their people as a starting point because, as far as Marxist's are concerned, their point of view is that history illuminates the present and forecasts the future. (Ibid:83).

A good writer, therefore, should awaken the people not to follow certain ideologies blindly and without questioning. But rather they should question what they do and why they do it. When the people have the opportunity to question the social practices, they open doors for changes, and this should be and is the role of the "Marxism theory". According to the latter, a literary work/author should be the mirror of the society. That is, the writer writes on what is actually in his/her own society. For instance, Ngugi champions the interests of the poor black masses of Kenya who were deprived of their land and consequently they work for capitalists, the Kiois. In the play *I Will Marry When I Want,* Gicaamba says:

> The power of our hand goes to feed three people
> Imperialists from Europe,
> Imperialists from America,
> Imperialists from Japan,
> And of course their local watchmen.
> The labor of our hand is the real wealth of the country. (37)

The Kenyan masses are to work hard without good salary for the work done; and all that at the mercy of the foreigners and their watchmen. In the play *I Will Marry When I Want*, he shows how the poor can rise to claim for their rights when even the legal justice organs have failed to stand for their rights. Kiguunda says:

> Don't you know how it pains?
> When I truly know that
> It is your son who lured her away from home?
> Now I will prove to you that
> I am a human being.
> This sword is my law and court.
> Poor people's law court. (101)

Here, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is clarifying the great role of justice towards social conflicts. The law should stand for both sides and react accordingly with no falling side. Some cases should even be settled out of court. On the contrary, the reaction of the oppressed can be dangerous. As far as Marxism is concerned, a good writer is the one who champions the interest of the voiceless, disadvantaged masses.

Review of Literature

Many writers have written on neo-colonialism, and about the following variables: injustice, culture, myth, land and religious issues, of course with some enormous critical attention.

Critics have consistently acknowledged Ngugi Wa Thiong'o as one of the most important voices in African letters. His fiction is noted for its overtly political agenda, its attempts to give a literary voice to the poor of Kenya, and its persistent critique of colonialism and oppressive regimes. Those who were to fight for their right and the justice have transformed themselves of their oppressors. Critics have

also praised Ngugi's role as an influential postcolonial African writer, particularly in his portrayal of corrupt post-liberation African governments – a topic rarely explored from within the continent because of the controversy engendered when Africans criticize their hand-won postcolonial governments.

Sam Raditlhalo in "Women and Nationalism in Ngugi's Novels", asserts that "Ngugi's female characters represent Kenya's hope for establishing a variable postcolonial existence through their fervent political and cultural nationalism". He goes on saying that women in Ngugi's novels are, in the main, nationalists whose presentation/re-presentation forms the basis of the essay. He explains the former that a political and social intrusion such as colonialism did not affect men only, but also affected the status and economy of women in pre-colonial societies (Presly 13-31).

In so far as the Crown assumed Jurisdiction over governance the legal system, taxation, choice of work, and the location of work it seriously undermined the domestic production of women in the Central Province of modern-day Kenya and elsewhere. Raditlhalo's interest lies in how Ngugi handles the issue of women in colonial and postcolonial Kenya with respect to their nationalistic favour in his novels, especially in *The River Between* (1965).

The next to comment on Ngugi's play is Karen P.L. Hardison. She asserts that in the play, Act I, Women are presented as having an ambiguous position. Either they are admired, or venerated, or they are rejected (jilted).

This is true because women seem to have no stable choice. They hardly can make decisions to which they can stand forever. In the play, *I Will Mary When I Want*, for instance, Gathoni's relationship with Muhuuni serves to illustrate a typical example of what is mentioned above in order to justify her ironic lines below:

Gathoni:
Sorry!
I shall marry when I want
Nobody will force me into it! (16)

Muhuuni signifies veneration for Gathoni by giving her presents (gifts) and showering her with attention. Yet, in the end, Muhuuni signifies Gathoni's marginalisation, after she is persuaded to travel with him to Mombassa and becomes pregnant; when is rejected by him while the wedding plans are denied as she is called a prostitute. Gathoni believes she can, on one hand, marry when she wants because all that she has thus experienced is veneration even though her mother hints at the marginalisation:

Wangeci:
She'll soon marry and be out of sight
There's no maiden who makes a home in her father's backyard, who wants to get grey hairs at her parents' home. (17)

Gathoni does not at first understand what Muhuuni later illustrates which is the women only marry "when they want" when not first marginalised by the victimization of men or society.

The significance of myth in Ngugi's literary "oeuvre" is underscored by the observation of Tirop Simatei, who argues that:

Although the Gikuyu myth of creation is central of Ngugi's textual strategies of destabilization, he does not use exclusively Gikuyu myths in his probing of the colonial

> hegemonic formation. In his decolonization novels, he often resorts to both indigenous and Judeo-Christian myths and legends, in order to evolve a grammar of contestation with which to construct not only a counter discourse to colonial ideologies of conquest and domination, but also a liberation aesthetics that justifies anti-colonial violence" (Simatei, 88-89)

The exploitative propensity of the elite class, as underlined by its Christian posturing, is tellingly criticised by Gicaamba, a member of the oppressed, handless peasant class of Kenya:

> Gicaamba:
> Why didn't Kioi come
> To tell you that he has increased your wages?
> Or give you a piece of his own lands?
> Yes, for the earthly treasures are not that important!
> Or is it a sin to increase a worker's wage?
> Religion ... Religion...!
> Religion is the alcohol of the soul!
> Religion is the poison of the mind!
> It is not God who has brought about poverty!
> All of us were born equally naked.
> Wa Gathoni, ...
>
> (I will Marry When I Want, 61)

In studying the Gikuyu tribal organization, it is necessary to take into consideration the land tenure as the most important factor in social, political, religious and

economic life of the tribe. In fact, as agriculturists, the Gikuyu people depend entirely on the land. It supplies them with the material needs of life, through which the spiritual and mental contentment is achieved. Communion with the ancestral spirits is perpetuated through contact with the soil in which the ancestors of the tribe is buried. "...it is the soil that feeds the child through lifetime; and again after death it is the soil that nurses the spirits of the dead for eternity" (32). Thus, the earth is the most sacred thing above all that dwell in or on it. Among the Gikuyu the soil is especially honoured and an everlasting oath is to swear by the earth.

Niyi Akingbe asserts that land is a sphere of contestation in Kenya. He adds that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii have exegetically utilized the interplay of history, songs and literary consciousness in their three-act play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, to dramatize the postcolonial narratives of Kenya, and to question the shameless of appropriation (by the Kenyan Christian elite) of the land owned by the masses. The words of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o "Ngaahika Ndeenda" (*I will Marry When I Want*) depict the "proletarisation" of the peasantry in neo-colonial society.

> ... the Kiguunda's family was deprived of the one-and half acres by a multinational consortium of industrialists and bankers aided by the native comprador landlords and businessmen. (44)

The questioning is effectively done to challenge the excessive of the unquenchable desire of the Kenyan elite to employ all manners by chicanery endorsed by Bible passages, to cunningly steal the land which belongs to the poor.

Land, in Kenya, has also portentously generated malignant rounds of crisis from the colonial period to the post independence era, with debilitating consequences. The "ordering" of the land and its inhabitants becomes a form of epistemic

violence to the extent that it involves immeasurable disruption and erasure of local systems of meaning that guide the ownership and use of land. The primary focus of the play is the importance of land in the Kenyan culture worldview, and this is pointedly raised by Eustach Palmer, when he asserts that "political freedom in Kenya became synonymous with repression of land, and thus struggle is central to Ngugi Wa Tiong'o's literary works (author's emphasis). In Kenya, land is not only held to be of much greater importance than money or cattle, it early has spiritual association" (Palmer, 1). The spiritual significance of the land is correspondingly illustrated by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o in his novel *Weep Not Child* (1964). Many critics have also been written to comment on the lack of harmonizing Christianity expressed throughout hypocritical religion.

Chinua Achebe, in his celebrated fiction, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), has centre-staged religion as a rallying point in disintegration of Umuofia Community. Many other writers made their comments on religious acrimony in Africa in general, and in Kenya in particular. Zakes Mda has used Theatre to depict the unsavoury relationship between religion and contesting ideologies. He insists on the fact that religion stresses the relationship between humankind and God while leaving out man's relationship with his neighbour. The religious duty of man to his neighbour is very crucial. A dramatist like Whole Soyinka concentrates his efforts on the abuse of religion by selfish individuals and gullible followers in post-colonial West Africa whereas Ngugi deals with religious infringements in the neo-colonial East African country of Kenya. With ideological abuse of religion by colonial exploiters, Ngugi, like Engels, believes that the word religion is misleading people. Ngugi has often noted with disgust how Christianity has aligned itself with the ruling class and given the lie to its own protestations of support for a humanistic vision of life. This is true is the sense that people, the oppressed ones, after

realizing the side of the leaders associated to the religious ideologies, will not always still stand aside. A possible revolutionary movement can be born; which surely will be dangerous against those in charge.

Killam further traces how the church, in the views of Ngugi "has always been an alliance with the ruling class and adjusted its precepts to suit the need of that class, thus, guaranteeing its own safety and security". Ngugi sees, in Kenya, the church as facing "hydra-headed" challenges in the face of neo-colonialism. He says: "But, ultimately the African church's greatest danger is in its area of social involvement. After independence, African middle-class was born: this class is busy, grabbing and amassing the land and business concerns at the expense if the peasants and working masses...".

Nancy Kasvosve says that the play by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii, is a satire on religion and a scathing political attack. The drama that ensues is ironically comical but serous; it sympathizes with the peasants labourers examining how those who fought for Kenya's liberation grow corrupt with the power and collude with the imperialists to keep their economic foothold in the country as well as how religion and Christian missionary conspire to complicate economic challenges. As a prolific political scholar, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o wrote the text for this neo-colonialist satire as a public performance, recruiting village peasants for an open-air theater showing. The play satirized a list of controversy. Ngugi's socialist point of view is rejected by his Kenyan leaders and he was exiled from Kenya for his work.

Ngugi's explication of the spiritual attachment to the land by Gikuyu, has a parallelism in the Jomo Kenyatta's view in "Facing Mount Kenya": He says that the Gikuyu defended their country collectively and when talking to a stranger they

would refer to the country, land, and everything else as "ours", bororiwiito or boriri wa Gikuyu to show the unity among the people. But the fact remained that every inch of the Gikuyu territory had its owner, with the boundary properly fixed and everyone respecting his neighbour's (25).

Brian Kaylor, in *Sacramental Politics,* asserts that Religious Worship as a political action explores both how religious worship is used – and misused – in politics and the inherent political nature of elements of religious worship. Brian Kaylor says:

> Conservative evangelicals were understandably concerned in 2013 when the IRS held up tax-exempt applications for certain groups, asking questions specially related to prayer meetings. The question was not about the content of prayers; however, he says that prayer sometimes is an act of worship and politics at the same time. (73)

To illustrate how a single act can be both secular and sacred, Kaylor draws on the catholic doctrine of "transubstantiation", the belief that in the Eucharist elements that continue to appear as bread and wine are miraculously transformed into the "real presence" of Christ.

This work extends to the facts that it depicts the protagonists who suffered a lot from the neo-imperialists' behaviour (the greed of religious leaders) and they were unaware of it. To accomplish their mission of enriching themselves, the religious native authorities constrained the poor masses, here, represented by the Kiguundas to join the church and sanctify their marriage. This kind of religion, says Smyth Frederic Hastings, concerns itself with the affairs of today's life. The Kiguundas could not afford the so-called "Lawful Christian marriage". The loan for that was with great importance will draw away all their lives.

In the book of Deuteronomy, for instance, they condemn under high religious sanction, the exaction of interest on loans of either money or goods; its forbids the grabbing of a neighbour's land by shifting the markings of a drawn boundary; it confirms an older law freeing slaves after a fixed period of service; it makes elaborate provision for periodical redistribution of lands in such wise as to prevent to grow of permanent landed aristocracy and the correlative formation of dispossessed tenancy or sharecropper class. Unfortunately, however, mankind struggle for survival is facing a certain force which does not care about human struggle and that considers him as a toy.

The Structure of the Study

This work will depict the hypocritical behaviour of the Kenyan church authorities, those in charge, who misuse religion and make it as a way of earning life. Finally it will aim at awakening Africans and eye-open their minds about the real role of religion. As a tool in the hands of neo-imperialists in the Kenyan society, religion serves the real instrument of a societal disintegration on one hand and as a way of the masses' liberation. The work then comprises five sections. The General Introduction which includes the background to the study, Biography of the Author, the Problem Statement, Aim of the Study, Hypothesis, Motivation, Definition of Key Terms, Literary Approach, and Literature Review.

In chapter One titled "Religious Hypocrisy as a Tool for Social Control", we will examine how is expressed the hypocritical behaviour of the native leaders in; and how the latter replaced the Western imperialists by dispossessing them from all they had and controlling their way of life.

Chapter Two "Materialism Behind Religion" shall clearly express how, through the governance of the native leaders, the white imperialists were still remaining on

the Kenyan soil. Although the White men left Kenya after its independence, their footprints are still impacting on Africans especially on the poor masses. Religion did not serve its real objective; rather, it served the exploitative and materialistic purposes.

In Chapter Three titled "The Author's Vision?", we will obviously show that the writers do not write emotionally. Here, in the play under study, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii have the message to deliver to his audience, especially to the Africans and particularly the Kenyan poor masses. They have the lesson to teach them and the moral to reveal to them, which can be a result of an inevitable and dangerous revolutionary movement.

Drawing our work up-to-the conclusion, it is worth mentioning that some criticism will be of much importance for the study. Christianity is more concerned with such a warning that its basic doctrine which was love and equality between men deviated from its mission and developed hatred. We also try to warn the justice holders and religious men, who use "Religion" as a weapon and a way of life, that a "weapon is an enemy even to its owner". G.D. Killam asserts, in *An Introduction to the Writings of Ngugi*, that "The Christian church has aligned itself with the ruling class and given the lie to its own protestations of support for a humanistic vision of life" (8). Therefore, the exploited and oppressed black masses end up liberating themselves in a way or another. Thus, the conclusion of our work not only sums up the major arguments, the main ideas or points of it, but also broadens the ground for further researchers.

CHAPTER ONE

RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL CONTROL

This chapter attempts to analyse how hypocritically religion is used by the religious leaders, that is, the native imperialists in Kenyan society for a well-controlled social exploitation of the poor masses. It expresses the total replacement of those in charge, who metamorphosed themselves into the white imperialists. It also aims at showing that the main goal of Christianity is not only that of spiritual "brotherhood" but that it serves social and economic purposes.

The people of the rich class kept over controlling and dominating the low class people, the poor masses. The great desire to get richer and richer prevailed in the religious leaders' everyday acts. They relied on the Bible scriptures; but with a diametrically opposed mind set. Their good preaching and their daily actions were quite extremely contradictory.

Like the White imperialists who came with the missionaries in Africa, holding Bible in their left hand and a gun in their right one, the native religious Kenyan leaders served the typical followers of the formers; and all this in order to see the development of their economy. They violated Jesus' command to "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:17).

The assertion above is true in the sense that the Kenyan rich people have clearly shown their hypocritical religious ambitions to wealth themselves throughout political exploitation as reflected in the play by Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii. It is as if being a religion adherent (or a church member) and become rich is a natural thing.

In fact, the newly converted poor peasants believe that there exists a supreme being which controls everything either in heaven or on earth. For them the Bible scriptures are the only one way to heavenly life. The World, however, is not the one that is spiritually viewed, but rather, the one that is earthly viewed.

N. Akingbe asserts that metatheatre (performance on stage) is used by Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii to satirize the duplications sloganeering of Christian salvation, in the play, by the Kenyan Christian elite, in its unique attempt to pauperise and dehumanize the peasants. He goes on asserting that Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii have stepped a metatheatre into the interface of politics and religion in *I Will Marry When I Want*, in order to foreground the hypocrisy of Christianity as underscored by the exploitation of the downtrodden masses, by the land grabbing Christian elite of the Kenyan society.

Metatheatre often refers to the capability of a stage text and performance to extensively establish a gamut on commentaries needed to repudiate a pervading social and political quagmire, tellingly obtainable in societies under siege. African dramatists have exploited the inherent distinctive tool of metatheatre to repudiate and criticize social and political conditions portrayed in plays like *Madmen and Specialists*, the *Circus of Freedom Square*, *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*, *Once Upon Four Robbers*, *The Island*, etc.

Ngugi's dramas are shaped by the presence of Christianity. He is particularly incensed with the hypocrisy of religious leaders and with the ineffectuality and sheer apathy of the intellectuals. Thus, knowing who these native rich people were associated with makes it easy to know who they are and how they act accordingly.

Brian Kaylor in *Sacramental Politics*, stresses the assertion below by saying that "Religious Worship is used – and misused – in politics and the inherent political

nature of elements of religious worship". Thus, we have to rely on what we first mean by 'Religion" (63).

It is true that, according to Smyth Frederic Hastings in "Religion and Socialism", in the minds of many who count themselves 'Religion People', only that which is included in the area of "spiritual" relationship with God, concerns man's eternal life, as different from his temporal destiny; and which is, therefore, indifferent to human judgements (or tastes) in the political and economic ordering of his present life on earth. This can be properly allotted to the domain of religion.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o in *I Will Marry When I Want* highlights the social constraints of the Kiguundas to join the church; which invitation he sees with a scornful eye. The church doctrine is questionable. Ngugi's protagonist, Kiguunda, expresses the hypocritical issue of religion and church members who apply this religion as profitable business.

The different kinds of religions (Christianism, Orthodox, Buddhism, etc) wherever they come from, have failed to reconcile human soul. As traditionalist holder, Kiguunda hates these new religions brought in his society by the Whites hiding behind them (religions) an issue of exploitation. Therefore Kiguunda is done with these religions when he says:

> Religions in this village will drive us all crazy
> Night and day!
> You are invited to a haraambe fund-raising for the church.
> Which church?
> Of the White padre and virgin Mary.
> You are invited to a haraambe for the churh.
> Which church?

Of the P.C.E.A. the Scottish one.
Haraambe for the church.
Which church?
Of the Anglicans.
Of the Greek or Orthodox.
Of the Kikuyu independent
Of Salvation Army.
Of the Sect of Deep Waters. ... (9)

The quotation above shows that the religion of the Kikuyu community was perceived differently by the different classes. The way of believing and praising their God may vary but they will remain with similar or same motive. The church authorities were always mocking the masses with their malice to be preaching God's 'word' because there is a ditch between the two classes. But above all, it is the desire to brainwash the poor peasants' minds in order to still overpower on them spiritually and economically.

The strategy that is used by the neo-imperialists (religious elite) is the same as the one that was being used by the white imperialists before they left Kenya. The former collaborated so much with the latter that they became their "good students" in terms of administration.

The Kiguundas came to realize that the religion they are exposed to was not local and consequently not good.

[...] What do they call followers?
The ones that came from America very recently,
Those ones: their haraambe is not local
They say you take them a tenth

Of all you earn or harvest
Even if it's a tenth of the maize or beans
You have grown in your shamba...(farm) [10]

On the above statements, one would think or guess what pushes the Kiois to come to the Kiguunda's house. The answer is very simple: to convince them if not persuade or to some extent to oblige them to go to church and sanctify their traditional marriage which is, in the eyes of Kioi, not valid to be the lawful Christian marriage. Nevertheless, the latter requires a lot of means. Before, Wangeci thought that the Kiois may come to their home, the poor home, for debts. But Kiguunda assumes that he owes them nothing; and that he's not poor at all:

You should know
That a man without debts is not poor at all.
Aren't we the ones who make them rich?
Were it if the blood and sweat of all the other workers,
Where would the likes of Kioi and his wife now be?
Tell me!
Where would they be today? (10)

During the White imperialists' period in Kenya, some Kenyans were considered to be assimilated to the whites with whom they collaborated so much in order to control their skin-colour brothers for the whites' interest. As it is said by the anthropologist Levi-Strauss, there are no people without a culture. Any society has its own way of life. However, the whites' strategies were first to uproot Africans from their culture and make them adhere their new religion. The alliance between the new converts and the white imperialists was something harmful on the Kenyans.

Alison Des Forges in *Eastern African History* shows the collaboration between the German colonial administrators and the missionaries. Between they had the same motive, to "civilize savages"; but behind it there was the great desire to engage in the work of civilization. She says:

> Unable themselves to engage in the work of "civilization", the German officials were in the more willing to support the activities of missionaries. As early as 1900, the Germans required the Mwami [The King] to provide both land and protection for the arrived white Fathers, members of the Roman Catholic Church,... (178)

In the same perspective we realize that though the white imperialists left Kenya, the native religious Kenyans showed themselves as good followers by exercising the same way of the ruling as the one of the whites. Here, N. Akingbe says that, to varying extents, *I Will Marry When I Want* shows that the adversarial social relationship between the peasants and Christian elite is informed by the conflicting motivations of the two groups, distorted by differing social perspectives and shaped by the dynamics of the Gikuyu culture, as well as by the Marxism biases and objects of the playwrights which are eloquently inscribed within a hegemonic contention for superiority. The rapacious gluttony for land is indubitably faith driven which is clearly demonstrated by the Kenyan Christian elite's sloganeering campaign of salvation.

The attitude of complicity is not observed in the territory colonized by Germans, rather, it is over-generalized in the whole Africa. In collaboration with the new converts, the white imperialists exploited and dispossessed Kenyans of their land; where they (whites) needed to settle and cultivate and build factories.

The Cameroonian writers such as Mongo Beti and Ferdinand Oyono in their respective novels *Poor Christ of Bomba* and *Houseboy* demonstrate what is mentioned above. The missionary Father Drumont, in fact, makes tours with his workers, a young boy Denis and Zacharia, the missionary cook. At the very beginning part of the book, the young boy Denis tells us about the meeting of the Father Drumont and the young administrator, Vidal. He lets us know:

> When the young boy saw the Father he jumped off the bike and came up to greet him, doffing his toupee. That was a lesson to these Talas, to see a white man, an administrator, greeting a priest without such a respect almost with veneration. If a Priest were of no account would he have done so? (31-32)

Drawing a parallelism of what is early said above with this work under study, the Kiguundas received the guest, the Kiois, with great consideration despite their miserable living conditions. They respected them as if they were the "New White Africans". In order to strengthen the respect of Black Africans towards the Whites, Mongo Beti explains it through the incident that would happen to the Father when he destroyed the village people's xylophones. And an old man, the wise one, addressing himself to the chief of the village, says: "Listen my son, listen to me. Have you forgotten you're dealing with a white man? What are you thinking of? Do you suppose he'd dare to defy us like this unless he was sure of support of all his people?" (55).

In fact, this kind of "education" that the white people inculcated in the African minds had an exploitative dominant intention to still going on socially and economically controlling them fearlessly. Although N.M. Mandela says that one

would prefer to live in poverty being free to being rich in slavery, Wa Thiong'o' Wa Mirii's protagonist is very pessimistic. Kiguunda, deploring all the years after independence, sees nothing good from the new authorities. He says:

> [...] Look at you.
> See what the years of freedom in poverty
> Have you done to you!
> Poverty has hauled down your former splendour.
> Poverty has dug trenches on your face,
> Your heels are now so many cracks,
> Your breasts have fallen,
> You have nowhere to hold.
> Now you look like an old basket
> That has lost all shape. (29)

While the Kiguundas were waiting for Kioi and his wife's coming to visit them, Gicaamba and his wife Njooki came surprising the Kiguundas who thought it were the Kiois. The family of Gicaamba was somehow considered mature enough in mind and the body to be able to presuppose what is the Kioi's visit about the poor man's home. The Gicaambas wisely advised the Kiguundas to ask Gathoni, their daughter, to cut off such a hypocritical relationship of the religious rich men. The Gicaamba family can foresee that there is nothing behind it rather than sexual exploitation of Gathoni by Kioi's son, John Muhuuni; which leads to disgrace. Njooki goes on cautioning Wangeci, telling her that the sine-quoi-non condition to get married within rich religious families is either to be from a rich family or you have to become Jesus-is-my-saviour converts. (32)

The native religious Kenyans have experienced new things from the White imperialists; and consequently their relatives suffered a lot from that experiment.

It is as if, upon this saying, the wise man is telling us no lie: "When mother cow is chewing, its young one is watching its lips". So, since Kioi has been living together with the white imperialists, watching their actions on Africans, and obeying their commands, he became assimilated to the Whites' culture and manner of ruling; and from then on, he is acting on his skin-brother relatives accordingly.

To underpin the above statements, Edouard Habiyakare exemplifies it by saying that, when Friday sees his boss eating everything (salt) he also starts to eat, that is, he tries to imitate his boss (Crusoe) in whatever he does as his resemblance. This is illustrated as follows:

> He makes a sign to that the salt was not good to eat, and putting a little into his own mouth, he seemed to nauseate it and would spit and sputter at it, washing his mouth with fresh water after it...I pretended to spit and sputter for want of salt...he would never care for salt with his meat or his broth. (273)

One may say, from the above, that in Africa, assimilation has been total. Friday accepted to take Crusoe's habits; and he became his "resemblance" in behaviour. Therefore, new things brought in Africa by Europeans are welcomed by the natives.

Africans are said to have no religion before the settlement of the white imperialists. Chinua Achebe criticizes this argument, by the white people, saying that Africans have their way of praying to God and asking for whatever they need; and be favourably answered. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o on the other hand emphasizes on the

fact that even African marriage was blessed. He says that a new couple cannot give birth to children when it is not blessed. Kioi, an outcast Kenyan native, is consistently asking or forcing Kiguunda to join the church to get marriage with his wife religiously. According to Kiguunda, their traditional marriage is already blessed for they have Gathoni as a benediction of their blessed marriage.

This was just to despise or disdain Africans and their religious, thinking of bringing their own religion, the one that was intoxicated, poisoned in the eyes of African such as Gicaamba.

Kiguunda is now convinced about the poisoned post-colonial religion applied by the Kenyan religious leaders of grabbers, exploiters and the oppressors; who, according to Gicaamba, know how to take from the poor masses.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii portray the awareness of Kiguunda, through Gicaamba, of all the post-imperialist leaders' actions and behaviour towards the poor people; and thereafter, he is fed up with it. Gicaamba reveals that all that happens to the poor Kenyans is for the benefit of Kioi wa Kanoru, the White-African-Asian oppressor.

> Gicaamba:
> This has become too much for us.
> The Kiois and Ikuus,
> For how long will they continue oppressing us?
> The European Kioi, the Asian Kioi,
> The African Kioi,
> What's difference?
> They are clansmen.
> They know how to take from the poor... (112)

In summing up this chapter one may say that there is "mechanization" of religion as a helper in hands of post-imperialist natives in Kenyan societies who exploited their relatives using religion. It is observed that religion has been, from then on, a tool for post-imperialists' enrichment. Many cases within which religions are taken and being used as an exploitative tool have been discussed about in the chapter with pertinent details and references to the writings on religion, imperialism and materialism.

Kioi Wa Kanoru, a representative of the still remaining white-imperialists' footprints in Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii's play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, changes the ruling system into his own enterprise of religiosity leading him to becoming very rich. Behind this religion, he forced Kiguunda to join the church; but his personal interests were the materialistic and economic ones. Therefore, religion was used by post-imperialist Kenyan religious leaders to exploit the poor peasants; and this led to the extreme poverty.

CHAPTER THREE

THE AUTHORS' VISION

In this work, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii are concerned with how the Kenyan institutions are treating people after independence and consequently served the bridge of a total liberation. Some of the Kenyans were thinking of getting their land which was occupied by the white imperialists, given back to them, others thought of sharing the national riches equitably with their relatives. However, those poor masses found themselves "out of the frying pan into the fire". Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii served the pathway to connect their past lives and the present, so as to help them prepare their good fortunate lives. It is on the basis of the key items such as religion, betrayal, oppression, imperialism, poverty, capitalism and exploitation that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii express their standing position as they are much interested in African tradition and in their people's way of life as well. For Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii, all that is needed is the union of the working class in order to achieve their goal.

Some scholars such as G.D. Killam says that "The irony or religious hypocrisy is shown in many of Ngugi's characters such as Samuel Ndugire, Ahab Kioi Wa Kanoru, and their wives. These characters' self-righteous attitude, dishonesty and arrogance portray Christianity as a negative religion. It has brought a division between people – mostly because accepting without living the principles that have turned them into using it as a weapon against people (77).

The aftermath of this new brought religion is that it devises Kenyans in particular and leads them to give up their traditional religions. Nevertheless, Ngugi has put up characters like Gicaamba whose reflexion is judged to be mature enough to plea for a return to human values such as tolerance, co-operation, compassion, and

understanding: "Whatever the weight of our problems. Let's not fight amongst ourselves. Let's not turn violence with us against us" (Act 3, Scene 3, p.110).

Christianity is also one of the tools used to achieve political purposes such as the great will of becoming richer and richer. Religion attracted some Kenyans; and it changed their everyday life style. The white imperialists told them that they came to Africa to save their souls with their so-called 'right religion'. Some of these Kenyans like Kioi et al, were drunk wit this religion. Thus, shortly after the white imperialism the poor Kenyan masses, instead of relaxing themselves, lived in a situation where they underwent only troubles in their societies. They continued to lose their land heritage with no certainty of life-hood to be elongated.

The unity and relationship amongst the new converts with the ruling religious leaders pushes the poor working class in Kenya to suffer from a wrong fate. One should not be surprised to see feeble people running after Christianity for it is supposed to relax, harmonize and to a high extent, to protect them. However, Kioi and his fellows have not only failed to develop the country fairly and equitably, but they also have systematically used their socio-political positions in the church, Education and commerce, in order to take advantage of those they sworn to protect.

Some Africans have accepted Christianity with naivety. Fearing the different atrocities they would face, they easily adopted this new religion hoping to get protection. For instance Mongo Beti, in his novel *Poor Christ of Bomba*, explains to us the white religious preaching of oneness and protection of all believers; the young administrator says to Father Drumont:

> The people on the road live in constant terror... I must use that expression, even though it usually exasperates you...they

> live in perpetual struggle of requisition, forced labour, flogging, and soldiers. (35)

In this perspective, the Kenyan people like Kioi and his fellowmen massively participate in the new religion to search for protection; because they were under the white imperialists' oppression. They have suffered from it before they became themselves oppressors. They are instead planning now how they can exploit their relative skin-colour brothers; the poor working class.

These religious leaders create the system which will help them to exploit the peasants. On one hand Kioi wants the church full of Christians, of course to get money from those who can send out the tenth; on the other hand, he wants, from these Christians, to have many workers who can provide him the labour that he needs in his lands and factories. And this will be profitable to both classes, according to Kioi's hypocritical religious words.

At the very beginning, Kiguunda does not understand what the religion that Kioi is preaching stands for. In fact, he does not understand why Ikuua has written to him telling him to sell to him the land; and what for? Nevertheless, some Africans, like Gicaamba, have earlier understood the role of religion that they faced and they are trying to challenge it; and therefore, Gicaamba calls on his relatives to unite and stand against this hypocritical Christianity:

> [...] leave these people alone.
> They are just playing about with you,
> In the same way a cat plays about with a mouse,
> Knowing that the mouse will end up in the cat's belly! (55)

Christianity was not, thus, necessary to Africans for it served the white imperialists' tool for grabbing poor class land and oppressing them, on one hand;

and it did not bring anything new in such a well-organized Kenyan society before the advent of the imperialists; rather is served a tool for the ruling class, here taken as parasitical elite class who wishes to benefit from the misfortune of others.

The scholar James Stephen Robson states that "Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, throughout his play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, stands for the eye, the right stander of the Kenyan voiceless populations. His fictional world is to live a lesson for the people of Kenya...nobody can escape fate or the past; everyone must face the past since it is merged into the present, take his responsibility and try to change the present situation for a better future" (internet).

It is true that Africa has been and is still being milked by European people via those natives who easily became convinced with the whites' religions. These native religious people who adhere to the new system of faith worked for the whites; and they replaced them after their departure. Religion was simply a tool to be used by both the white imperialists and thereafter, by the newly converted ruling class; to better exploit their relatives.

To reinforce the idea above, R.N. Egudu in, *Modern African Poetry and the African Predicament*, shows how religious matters are taught to the natives by the native religious leaders. He says:

> It is believed by many that Christianity has not been effective in African societies because the early missionaries did not base their religion on the contact with the Europeans. They rather related realization of this 'sin' of omission has recently led to frantic, sometimes haphazard, efforts at using indigenous African musical instruments during the Christian

> service. But the substance the service remains unchanged. (16)

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o' and Wa Mirii's play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, present Kioi being glad because Kiguunda and his wife, Wangeci, agreed with his point; that they can join the church. But Kiguunda's own innate of ancestral religion will not let him change any further. The fact is that Kioi is not a genuine Christian. His liberal protection and brotherhood towards his relative poor peasants are questionable and suspicious. He uses Christianity as a tool or a way of achieving his socio-political and economic goals.

Religious beliefs should differ depending upon communities or societies, and also upon individuals. This is to make us understand that even African natives, the Kenyan natives in particular, have a well-organized system of believing in and/or praising God/gods. Daniel Defoe, in his novel *Robinson Crusoe*, comes to such a conclusion when Crusoe is teaching Friday about his religion. Crusoe remarks:

> By this I observed that there is priestcraft even among the most blinded, ignorant pagans in the world; and the policy of making a secret religion in order to preserve the veneration of the people to the clergy is not only to be found in the Roman, but perhaps among the most brutish and barbarous savages. (179)

In order to comprehend better religion and its role within human being relationship, firstly between man and his creator; that is man and God relationship, and secondary man-and-man relationship, Edouard Habiyakare in his work, "The Question of Materialism and Religion in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, states that "Being people of God, human beings must know that they are made in the

image of God and that God is a community of persons in mutual loving relationship." (74)

From the statements above, we can confirm that all different existing religions are equal though viewed or preached with different purposes. Different preachers having opposite goals. Since they all believe in the same Supreme Being's existence, we can say that no religion is superior to another; no matter how its adherents abuse it. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* illustrates it through the African, Akunna who was conversing with the white missionary, Mr. Brown, in the matter of the Supreme Being. He says:

> You say there is one Supreme God who made heaven and earth, [...] we also believe in Him and call Him Chukuru. He made all the World and other gods. (126)

Generally speaking we may come to this remark that Africans are more religious than the Western Christians; considering Kioi, a white representative in religious biases. In Ngugi's play, *I Will Marry When I Want,* Kiguunda is not a religious abuser like Kioi Wa Kanoru on the other hand.

According to James Stephen Robson, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is a revolutionary writer. He himself shifts from Christianism to the tradition by changing, giving up his Christian name 'James" which he considers as the name of one Christ's apostles, and thus a symbol of Christianity which he renounced since 1970 assuming his traditional Gikuyu name, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o.

Christianity preached by Kioi Wa Kanoru does not serve the Kenyan poor working class as the first to benefit from it. The ruling class represented by Ahab Kioi wants to marginalize and perpetuate the proletarization of the other class members. This is the same remark by Father Drumont and Monsieur Vidal who came to

understand that the theories of Christian religion are not universal. They are not far from Chinua Achebe's view that every people of a given country or community has its own way of living and thus, its own way of believing. On this assertion, Monsieur Vidal stresses:

> Might it be that we merely adapted Christianity to suit our own stomachs, Father? Why not, eh? In Christ's conception it was to be universal religion, wasn't it? And Christ was not fool. He must have known that everyone in the world doesn't have the same morality. [...] Why not present Christianity that is suited to the black? (157)

In this perspective, Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii's intention is not only to awaken Kenyans against hypocritical preaching of Christianity, materialistic exploitation that is legalized but they also would like them to search for their own liberation. Ngugi foresaw that any society or community which wants to stand for its rights should first be united. Liberation is not a fight for individuals but of a community or society. James S. Robson stresses that "The obstacles to a betrayed Kenya are not permanent and can be overcome by cultural and political renewal initiated by the community itself" (internet).

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's interpretation of Christianity is as to bring anguish to people instead of the inner peace. He paints the Europeans as greedy and heartless; and the Africans as handless. In most of his writings, Wa Thiong'o stresses that the colonial and post-colonial oppressors caused the destruction of the individual and the community. David Herbert Lawrence insisted on the individual's dual and conflicting needs to be separate and to be in communion. He adds that wherever this balance is not achieved the result is an utter and destructive division.

The Christianity in this world goes beyond exploitation. The case of Cain and Abel in the Book of Genesis 4:8 shows us how this world is more materialistic than religious. Cain dared to kill his brother Abel for this materialistic interest; to inherit his brother's heritage. He does not care about sharing it with his brother as a beneficial heir. This Christianity also claims to present the children who would obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-2). Nevertheless, we realize that Crusoe who is from a Christian family does not obey his parents for he left to the sea for his own materialistic reasons; of course without his parents' permission.

Like Gathoni in, *I Will Marry When I Want*, we see that she disobeyed her father, Kiguunda, and left with John Muhuuni, Kioi's son, to Mombasa without her parents' permission. While in the Bible, they say that children must obey their parents. Exodus 20:12: "You must honor and respect your father and mother. Do this so that you will have a full life in the land that the Lord your God gives you".

We realize that there is order breaking by Gathoni when her father forbids her to travel with Kioi's son, John Muhuuni. Ignoring all the shortcomings that could happen to her, she went out without her parents' agreement. Kiguunda says: "[...] If you go to Mombasa, then find another home (52)!"

From the above quotation, modernity and tradition are not any way in common agreement. Gathoni is already absorbed with modernity. She looks as if she is totally assimilated to the Muhuuni's way of living. She says to her mother:

> These tatters!
> Are these what you call bedding?
> And this floor,
> Is this what you call a bed? (15)

In Kenyan societies and everywhere else all over the world, women are considered as 'objects' under higher discrimination, oppression, and exploitation than any other section of the entire working class. In such Kenyan societies, sexual discrimination and exploitation are the most dominant factors. Here, Ngugi is very sensitive to their plight and sees them as a feminine tradition of struggle and resistance. Thus, Gicaamba admits women's trauma when he says:

> Gathoni is not to blame
> We parents have not much effort
> In the education of our girls.
> Even before colonialism;
> We oppressed women. (104-5)

The concern with women is not something new for Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii. He pointed out that women too fought for independence. In African tradition women's potentials are constantly at the mercy of men. Gathoni is to work without any hope of education but her brothers can be sent to school. Man exploits the woman and this with what he thinks are reasonable or rational justifications. Gicaamba adds:

> Women and property are not friends
> Two women are two pots of poison,
> Women and the heavens are unpredictable,
> Women cannot keep secrets,
> A woman's word is believed only after the event.
> (104-5)

S. Van der Smit sustains the quotation above by saying that Gicaamba realises that the derogative statements above drawn from the song are wrong. She goes on

The corrupt hypocritical religious world always manifests its effects on the workers. The religious leaders in the Kiguunda's society are considered as the real bedbugs and the workers as the monkey. The result of the workers' efforts is only a meaningless wage which cannot help them make ends-meet. They really work hard-working, the harvest. These religious leaders get richer and richer from what have been produced by the workers, the masses. These Christian elites owned every material things, even companies. They are considered, by the Gikuyu people, as the real scorpions.

> Gikuyu said:
> They know only three things:
> To oppress workers,
> To take away their rights,
> And to such their blood. (33)

From the quotations above we see that from then on we still have some people whose way of life depends on the others. The new religious authorities' mission was exploitation.

A true Christian, according to Kioi, accepts the situation in which he/she is whether rich or poor. Ndugire sustains Kioi's point of view that he has spoken nothing but the truth. Kioi argues ironically and hypocritically that a good Christian does not think of earthly things: "He just believes in hard work, praising their Lord all the time". This one, Kioi stresses, "is a true brother-in-Christ" (44).

The hypocrisy and religiosity of the Christian elite, according to Akningbe, reaches its crescendo in the play when Ahab Kioi was Kanou deftly equivocates a sermon which treacherously ranges from overt bulling to subtle emotional blackmail against Kiguunda Wa Gathoni to become a Christian:

We have brought you the tidings
So that when our Lord comes back
To separates goats from cows
You'll not claim
That you had not been warned... (49)

The workers are told God is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, the owner of all earthly and heavenly things. They tell them that even what they share comes from God. They are advised to be contented with their lot, whatever social or economic status they have. (44-45)

Mankind is a sinner since his birthday. We people do sin because we are able to. Even a new born baby is born with its inherent, original sin according to the Bible scriptures. We do not sin because we want to, but because of the capability of it. The Kiguundas are convinced that they have been dwelling in sin all their lives, that now "they need to become out of the muddy thought of sins". (48)

Through baptism and repentance they rescue themselves from the original sin by Adam and Eve. Many puritans, at that time, believed that the universe is good-centered and that man, inherently sinful and corrupt, is rescued from the damnation only by arbitrary divine grace is duty-bound to God's will, which he can understand better by studying the bible and the universe which God has created and controls.

Sosthene Nzambimana, in "Religious Hypocrisy in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*", goes on asserting that "Truly speaking, there is no perfect church since people are not perfect as well. Being part of a church is not only about you and what you can get out of it. It is also about others; and what you can do for them as you serve them in and through the church". (18)

Nathaniel Hawthorne on the other hand talks more about how religious beliefs and political ones are not quite different. Nevertheless, the New England society is not thoroughly based on religion any more. Rather, it is based much more on the colonial laws; and this is unbelievable for a society claiming to be God-centered. Hawthorne says:

> The founder of the new colony, whatever utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil a cemetery, and another position as the site of prison. (55)

In this same regard, one can assume that if the neo-imperialist Kenyan church members were completely religious, not hypocritical, the priority would not be that of building insecticide factory. It would rather be that of restoring the dispossessed land to the poor masses.

Certainly, the way the Kiguundas are forced to join the church and repent is harsh and painful. This is explained by the so-called religious guests, the Kiois, started by the sudden unexpected shout of him (47). Kiguunda is angry with Kioi when he is persuading him to leave out sins. He dared call the Kiois "devils"; and he kicked them out of his house.

Christianity preached by Kioi his fellows as guests in the Kiguunda's house, was without some criticisms. They called themselves brothers-and-sisters-in-christ; but surprisingly to any good Christian, they refused to share with Kiguunda and his wife, Wangeci, the food that she prepared for their visitors. Jezebel, Kioi's wife, looked at the meal as if it was prepared with some fault. [Jesebel: looks at the food as if she is finding fault with cooking]:

You know with me, when lunch time is over,
However hungry I might have been,
I am not able to swallow anything!
But I could do with a cup of tea. (44)

Briefly speaking, man has suffered a lot from man's greedy ambition of materialistic desire to exploit and dominate him. A sign that the proletariat class will never equal the bourgeoisie class people. Religion and exploitation are the intertwined concepts in the hand of post-imperialists in Kenya. The latter wanted the Black Kenyans to be drunk with religion in order to easily brainwash and cripple their minds with it (46-57). The exploited are now aware that they are working from a new social order. The constant shift from colonial subjugation and land theft by the elite class to the hypocrisy of the Christian faith indorses the despicable dispossession of the peasants. There is no need saying it now becomes crystal clear that the two Ngugis' motive or main objective is to eye-open the downtrodden peasants to rise up, and overthrow the reactionary social and exploitative agents in the Kenyan neo-imperial society. Africans are victims of religious hypocrisy that held behind it an exploitative agenda in African societies in general and in Kenya in particular.

CHAPTER TWO

MATERIALISM BEHIND RELIGION

This chapter aims at analysing religion as a tool of a paramount importance in the hands of neo-imperialists to exploit the poor peasants and amass all material resources. In the Kenyan society, bourgeoisie and proletariat were in good relationship with their gods and among themselves. Christianity played a tool of manipulating, dehumanizing and brainwashing low class people.

In this regard, it is clear that in the play *I will Marry When I Want* there is no good religion; rather there is a speculation by the leaders to continue exploiting the masses. The economic domination by the bourgeoisie has always been an objective of the rich people over the proletariat class. It goes without saying that this can lead to the social influence of the dominant group over the dominated one. The latter will always seek to put the foot on the other step but the will of the power cannot allow to achieve it. Amongst the motives which impel the power to seek expansion is the necessity of them to still keep their rank.

In the play *I Will Marry When I Want*, Kioi wants everything become his own. He does not care whether the others are struggling for their survival or not. Through the so-called religion, he faints to be recruiting the Kiguundas to join the church but the motive behind was to take away of them the title-deed that hung in their house. After losing it, Kiguunda suffered a lot for he immediately lost his job which was not even commensurating with the wage he got.

Christianity is a religion whose doctrine is based on compassion, charity and mercy for the fellow man. But when Kioi is called to assist the Kiguundas so as for them to have the church wedding, it is revealed that he has no less intention to help

unless they accept to give him the title-deep as a collateral. He is only interested in getting a place where to build a new factory.

Materialism, therefore, has no human face. The materialistic world does not care of mankind's struggle for one's daily life. Man is considered as a toy; a meaningless human being in the meaningless world. In Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii's play, the rich man, Kioi, cares not of how the Kiguundas can worship God in terms of praying to Him; but he is much more concerned with his own interest once they are newly converted. All the religions are the same, no matter where they are brought from (56). People are not as pure as they should be because their deeds are not highlighting their side as Jesus followers.

Although Kiguunda and his wife agreed to conform themselves to Kioi's suggestion: to sanctify their marriage in the church, Kioi refused to give them the help by the lending them money so as for them to afford such a Christian, but expensive marriage; because they are not able to meet the cost of the wedding ceremony. He says:

> That's an easy matter.
> I like you.
> The other day I visited you in your home.
> But remember what God told Adam and Eve:
> There are no free things!
> Hakuna ca bure!
> No more manna from heaven.
> If anyone wants free things
> He should go to Tanzania
> Or to China. (86-87)

From the above, Kioi compares himself to God and the Kiguundas to Adam and Eve. Now he is clear that he cannot lend him (Kiguunda) the money he is asking for unless he accepts to work hard for it. Kioi keeps on explaining to Kiguunda that mankind has to work hard without pretending any salary:

> Just imagine!
> All the people...
> If all the people are to become equal like these
> teeth, who would do the work?
> Anyway we in Kenya are very lucky,
> Because we are a Christian nation.
> We worship at the feet of the Lord,
> The same Lord who commanded us all
> To forever sweat over whatever we eat or drink.
> Mr. Kiguunda your words are good
> And I am willing to help you. (88)

Nevertheless, by saying "thank you" to Kioi, it seems that Kiguunda is still not aware of what he means by the statements above. He should understand throughout Kioi's words, that mankind has to suffer, to work hard in order to survive. To show himself more materialistic than religious, Kioi proposes to Kiguunda the two possibilities under which he can only come Kiguunda in hand that is, to help him:

> There are two alternatives:
> You have got one and half acres of land.
> There is an American-German-and Japanese-owned
> company which wants to build an insecticide factory
> I think Mr. Ikuua has already written to you about it

> If you sell that piece of land,
> You will get a lot of money,
> You can buy land in the Rift Valley
> Or in Maasailand
> And the rest you can bank. (88)

If this does not work, as Kiguunda says that he will never sell his only one piece of land inherited from his ancestral parents, he is free now of the next choice as Kioi says that he is not finished yet. He always exacts him some conditions in order to get the loan:

> I have not finished. I told you there are two alternatives: you have rejected the first. The other alternative is to borrow money from a bank with your one and half acres as security. (88-89)

Between these two possibilities, Kiguunda is free to choose one that seems less aggressive. Kioi proposes him to borrow from a bank than borrowing from individuals. Here, Kioi is considered to be a very kind-hearted person integrity so that Kiguunda can get a bank loan. Kiguunda accepts to give his title-deed as a collateral in order to get money for a "blessed" but poisoned marriage.

In this way, Father Drumont is not far from Kioi's ambition. Drumont relied so much on Christianity to strengthen his power of controlling the indigenous people and so did Kioi Wa Kanorou in Kenya within the post-imperialism rule. He is someone who only matters about his own interests. Whether anyone is in difficult life conditions or not it does concern him.

Claver Nzobonimpa stresses that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o presented Gicaamba as a character who has seen the danger of religion behind its Christianizing mission. He says:

> Religion was not brought to Africa because the Europeans felt that Africans need it, but to serve as a tool of deceit. This blindness was put on Africans to rob them of their richness. The European exploiters, grabbers and oppressors use Christianity to make a clear way to colonization; exploiting the indigenous people. The latter were fooled by this religion, and did not that their wealth was disappearing. (28)

In the play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii, Gicaamba,as an enough mature character in mind and body, notes that Religion is seen with another face than that it bears in the church by Kenyan Christian elite:

> Religion is not the same thing as God
> When the British imperialist
> Came here in 1895,
> All the missionaries of all the churches
> Held the Bible in the left hand,
> And the gun in the right hand.
> The White men wanted us
> To be drunk with religion while he,
> In the meantime,
> Was mapping and grabbing on land
> And starting factories and business on our sweat. (56-57)

Even in post-imperial Kenya society this system is elaborated by those who replaced the white imperialists. The search for places where to erect insecticide factory is Kioi and Ikuua's main preoccupation.

Like the house of Sixa in *Poor Christ of Bomba*, the house of Kioi in, *I Will Marry When I want*, is the worst form of exploitation that is elaborated to exploit the poor masses in Kenya. In *Poor Christ of Bomba*, on the other hand, what matters a lot for Father Drumont is the work that the Sixa girls provide him. Father Drumont built a church and a house of twenty rooms and the Sixa girls were the ones who provided him materials to build all of the two. Denis, Father Drumont's worker says:

> All bricks and tiles were made by the Sixa girls. Every week, he called up some of the village Christians to help. But, despite that there still wasn't enough manpower, he puts a girl from Sixa to work wherever a man is missing, and proved to our people that girls can do jobs that no one had ever dreamt of like sewing wood into planks. (57)

When Drumon realizes that the other Christians do not respond to his calling up to work as a solution to the problem, he created a Sixa house where the girls spend some days before getting married. At the beginning, he fixed three months, but at last instead he added one month to have four months.

Wilfred Cartey makes comments about the Sixa girls. He says:

> The Sixa was one of the form of exploitation. The Sixa girls were starved and forced to do hard labour. They always wake up early in the morning and receive other orders from

> Father Drumont. They are under the control of six monitors who were in charge of the field. (57)

Furthermore, such a kind of speculation and materialism are depicted in Ferdinand Oyono's *Houseboy* through his character Toundi Joseph. The young boy works hard in the mission of Dangan. He has to wake up early in the morning and he is to serve up to three per day. Having pity of the other five women brought by Father Vandermayer Toundi, who has already known the work that is waiting for them, says: "Five more boarders for the Sixa! If they knew the work there is waiting for them here, they would have stayed behind with their husbands" (15).

In this materialistic exploitation of the world, those five women will really suffer from hard works in the mission at the mercy of the whites. They pretended to have left their husbands to follow the laws of Christianity whereas they are brought to be the source of labour and enrichment of the missionaries.

As the White priest mentioned above used to do in Mongo Beti's *Poor Christ of Bomba* and Ferdinad Oyono's *Houseboy*, this is also expressed in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, through the characters of Kiguunda and his wife Wangeci, in the Kenyan society. Kioi serves as a good example of the White imperialists in Kenya. He knows how to attract people, especially the poor peasants, in order to join the church; one of the many ways of enrichment. In Kenyan society, the people who became newly converted during the white imperialism constitute a menace to their native relatives; and they are successful in doing so.

By referring to Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, we come to realize that people who joined the rank of the stranger (the white) became more dangerous than the rest of the population. Obierika says: "It is already too late...our own men and our

sons have joined the ranks of the stranger. They have joined his religion and they helped him to uphold his government" (159).

We now can assume that religion constitute a danger for all Africans. Many consequences appeared; among them, the destruction and exploitation of African societies. This kind of destruction was both physical and psychological, as observed it in Mongo Beti and Ferdinand Oyono's respective novels: *Poor Christ of Bomba* and *Houseboy*. The girls of Sixa were urged to work hard which was beyond their physical stamina.

Physically affected, they suffered from harassment, sexual violation; to the extent of being sold to the other men from outside of the house in which they were living. Thus, the consequence led to the mental destruction. We notice that the whole community of the Blacks live in danger. They live in what is called "Black men's Grave". And such a living milieu does not fit human living conditions for the people, especially religious people, who are said to be brothers-in-Christ.

Focussing on our work under study, Christianity preached by Kenyan elite (Kioi et al) goes beyond exploitation to physical and mental destruction. When Gathoni, the Kiguunda's daughter, becomes pregnant, John Muhuuni, the Kioi's son, rejected her, and she became a barmaid whore (prostitute). This consequently affects the Kiguundas psychologically and physically. Being warned about it, Kioi considers it as an act of humiliation. He says that his son was raised up in Christian ways; that he is too such a kind of a boy not to dare sleep with a prostitute. Frustrated, Kiguunda would use his sword as his own court; and the poor people's law court.

> Kiguunda: [pulling out the sound]
> So, I am not a human being?
> So, I have no feelings?

Is that why you dare call my daughter a whore
In my very presence?
Don't you know how it pains
When I truly know that
It is your son who lured her away from home?
Now I'll prove to you that
I am a human being!
This sword is my law and my court.
Poor people's law court. (101)

Surely, Kiguunda is determined to revenge his daughter. He recalls all the bad deeds of the religious people who are supposed to lead the poor, why not all the population equally, but who abuse Christianity to challenge the poor masses' lives.

Kiguunda: [with pride]
Church, your churches?
Let me tell you a thing or two Ahab Kioi
Even if you were now to give me all the wealth
Which you and your clansmen have stolen from the poor,
Yes, the wealth you and your Asian and European clansmen
And all the rich from Kenya share among yourselves,
I would not take it.
Just now,
No amount of gold or ivory or gemstones
Would make me let Gathoni marry your son.
But as for signing something,
You will!
Earthly debts must be paid here on earth.

It is said the fart of the rich never smells
But yours Kioi stinks all over the earth. (102)

The confrontation between the sword and the gun turns to Kiguunda's physical destruction. While struggling to fight for his sword back, Jezebel, Kioi's wife shouts at Kiguunda and the bullet touches him. He is injured.

We realize that through religion, the Africans like Kiguunda in Kenya and many others around the world especially in Africa, as briefly talked about in Mongo Beti and Ferdinand Oyono's respective novels as early mentioned; suffered physically and psychologically. Kiguunda's psychological destruction, for instance, leads him to alcoholic addiction thinking that it is the right way to comfort himself. The materialistic ambitions of the world have brought many frustrations.

Deeply thinking of religion in our work we can assume that there is an idea behind it which is of a paramount importance in the lives of "religious people" especially in the lives of the Kenyan elite; that is, these Christian elite carry in their minds a materialistic interest which pushes them to misbehave towards the poor masses leading them to the extreme poverty.

In Ngugi's play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, one may think that Kioi, like Crusoe, seems to believe in Christianity concept of salvation through good work, but there is a little details to support this since he devotes his effort in order to earn more than to be saved. He engages his own force to fight against Kiguunda's attack in his house; while knowing that the can be saved by God as they are said to be Jesus-is-my-saviour. What is more prominent for him is the material things: to possess a lot of money, enough lands and a huge number of workers.

To reinforce Kioi's materialistic ambition Niyi Akingbe in one of the constitutional chapters of his work: *Sloganeering Christianity in Song*, which chapter is titled: Metatheatricalizing Communal Exploitation, explains how Kioi devotes his physical efforts to collect, gather all materials necessary for his own development, not even the development of the church. He says:

> Fearing that Kiguunda would not give back the Kioi's loan asked for the authenticity of his new-found Christian fate, Kioi only accepted to vouch him to get the loan from the bank using Kiguunda only one and a half acres as collateral. (88-89)

Here, one would think that if Kioi is ensured of being given back his loan, he would easily give to Kiguunda. However, no one ignores that all the bankers are the same. They always think of the extra earnings. There is the greed by Kioi to, if possibility can be, dispossess Kiguunda from his title-deed. He knew that Kiguunda from his monthly wage, cannot afford to regularly pay the loan, and that his land will end up belonging to him (Kioi). The misunderstanding arose between the two families because of the pregnancy of Gathoni by John Muhuuni; and development led to a serious alteration between them, which consequently led to Kiguunda's being kicked out, dismissed from his job and his land bought at an auction.

In the eye of Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii, however, materialism requires spiritual uniformities and insists on conformity. It destroys people's minds who are tradition keepers on one hand and/might be taught to stand in the way of achieving its goal. As most native religious thoroughly cleaned out with the cultural and institutional life of African countries, especially in Kenya, process of compulsory church

adherence followed. This is what made the Kiguundas suffer a lot in the merciless eye of Kioi, the Whites representative in Kenya.

Throughout the church preaching, Kioi enriched himself by emphasizing on Christianity and charity. This is what Crusoe has done, in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, on Friday when he rescues him from the hands of the cannibals. Like Friday's action, Kiguunda one in Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii's play, is an expression of a complete submission. He states:

> All length he came close to me, and then kneeled down again, kissed the ground, and laid his ear upon the ground and taking me by the foot upon his head. This, it seems, was in token of swearing to be my slave forever. I took him up and made much of him, and encouraged him all I could (261).

Nevertheless, Ngugi'Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii's writings differ from what is mentioned above for it is clear that Kiguunda, though he at first submits himself to Kioi's purpose, i.e that of joining the church and have a lawful Christian marriage, he along the line revolts against his boss because of the unbearable humiliation of the Kioi's son towards Kiguunda's daughter, Gathoni. As Crusoe, in Daniel Defoe's novel, was to protect Friday, what he did not do because of the greed love of money. Crusoe sees Friday as a servant he has been dreaming about for a long time ago.

This looks similar to what Kioi did to Kiguunda by brainwashing him so as to get him first spiritually and therefore trap him easily in order to sack all he possessed as natural resources. Crusoe, on the other hand, considers himself as omnipotent and creator of man. He says:

> I told him that the great maker of all things lived up there, pointing up towards heaven; that he governors the world by the same power and providence by which he had made it; that he was omnipotent, could do everything from us; and thus, by degrees, I opened his eyes. (278)

As the mission of the white imperialists in Kenya was hidden in the Bible writings, scriptures, their followers, i.e, the Kenyan religious elite perpetuated that mission through hypocritical Christianity. These "White-African leaders" concentrated on what they would earn not on what the church could; and also not on how the poor people do believe in God. Religion is not the same thing as God. These Kenyan religious elite were preaching the ways of Christianity to the natives, the poor Kenyan peasants, but their materialistic intention still was their first political and economic tool of enrichment. Kiguunda was the "bridge", the stereotype in Kenyan society.

Robinson Crusoe does the same thing in christening Friday as it is proved a long line within the text:

> [...] He listened with great attention and received with pleasure the notion of Jesus Christ being sent to redeem us of the manner of making our prayers to God, and his being able to hear us, into heaven. (278)

Many post-imperial leaders in Africa in general, and in Kenya in particular set off their richness through the use of force and malice in order to protect their materialistic interests. They used religion as means to gather raw materials, land, money, harvest, etc. and all these things happened as a result of religion and its impact. One may say that the concept of assimilation has been legalized in Africa.

saying that Ngugi feels that sexual conflict between men and women is part of the destructive rivalry on which modern Kenyan capitalism thrives, and through which injustices and inequalities are perpetuated. In an African society an individual's life is relatively public and it is not easy to keep a secret. A young unmarried girl experiences motherhood as a curse when the man who is responsible will not recognize it, and she is jilted or abandoned in the road because of the pregnancy and accused of prostitution. Most of the African cases such a woman is chased away of her home family. Thus, she becomes an outcast among her family. Gathoni, in *I Will Marry When I Want*, is such an example when sexually exploited by John Muhuuni while in Mombasa; and he abandoned her after he has impregnated her.

Gathoni is also socially exploited in such a way that Kioi's son, John Muhuuni, comes to her and hoots in a very rude way as to mean that she should be available at any time; he does not even enter in her parents' house in order to greet them. This should be a way of showing Gathoni that he at least should pay respect to her and to her parents, also.

S. Van der Smit on the other hand says that Ngugi uses Gathoni's character to address the problems of rapid social change and the particular difficulties women have to face in contemporary Kenyan society. The title of the play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, reflects the rebellious nature of Gathoni when shedding the traditional wisdom of her parents. She becomes the symbol of modern womanhood as she will make decision herself of what to do and when to do it. She says: "Sorry! I shall marry when I want. Nobody will force me into it (16)!"

In this regard, one should consider Gathoni as a woman's rights stander as she claims to be an independent woman. Whatever her mother asks her to do, she

related it to her not being sent to school. Her mother reveals to her some realities as related to their tradition that only boys can be educated; and girls are to deal with home activities and or search for husband to marry. However, Gathoni considers all this as an abomination to her personality, a kind of aggression. She says:

> Mother, why are you insulting me?
> Is that why you refused to send me to school?
> So that I may remain your slave,
> And for ever toil for you?
> Picking tea and coffee only for you to pocket the wages?
> And all that so that you can get money
> To pay fees for your son!
> Do you want me to remain buried under these ashes?
> And on top of all that injury
> You have to abuse me night and day?
> Do you think I cannot get a husband?
> I'll be happy the day I leave this home! (16)

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii present female character which is weak and naïve. Wangeci thought that Kioi's visit to their home and his will to see them in the church would be about John Muhuuni, Kioi's son, and Gathoni's romantic relationship. She says:

> [....] So what else would make them want
> To see us two in a church wedding?
> Think...
> Gathoni! Gathoni and John Muhuuni!
> Didn't you also think that they were coming

To tell us that
Our daughter should not keep the company of their son?
Did they mention anything of the sort? (53-4)

On the other hand, Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii present Kiguunda and his wife Wangeci with an illusion that their blessed marriage would open the door for a wedding between Gathoni and John Muhuuni. Amongst the poor working class enemy in Kenyan society is also the imperialism. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii condemn the unequal wealth distribution. It was shared between few people independence and now after it, it still does:

If all the wealth we create with our hands
Remained in the country
What would we not have in our village.
Good public schools.
Good houses for the workers,
Good houses for the peasants,
And several other industries
In which the unemployed could be absorbed. (36)

Nowadays the institutionalized countries are still impacting on African countries in the matters of their social, political and economic development. Great countries' misunderstanding on an issue in a given country explains their speculations by supporting one side or another. In Kenya particularly, the sharing of the nation's wealth concerns a minority who milks the nation dry with the complicity of the powerful foreign industrialized countries. They enjoy the luxurious life; not caring of what the vast majority of people who are starving, dwelling in unbearable life condition of extreme poverty. This luxury life is characterized by powerful status,

good houses and cars, and it makes them to despise or underestimate others thinking that they are superior to them.

According to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii, the imperialism benefits the capitalists at the expense for the masses as they have no share in the profits of the labour. His plays address the need of the people to liberate themselves from this oppressive imperialism. In the play, *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o energetically attacks the carelessness and enjoyment of imperialists while the native people suffer from hunger to death; and reveals to them their great contribution so as to liberate themselves instead of keeping on sorrowing:

> Our own food eaten and leftovers thrown to us in our land, where we should have the whole share. We buy wood from our soil for the profit of our own oppressor. Kimathi's teaching is unite, drive out the enemy and control your riches, enjoy the fruit of your sweat. (18)

In the march of events in the Kenyan society, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o aims at exposing the exploitation of ordinary people who are pitilessly exploited and oppressed by the others; especially the ruling native religious class. This theme prevailed and is prevalent in all this play since the years 1967. At that time, Ngugi felt strongly that "black should exploit and oppress black is not what Uhuru was won for". Proverbs are meaningful and wisely used in order to describe the new ruling elite's oppression and exploitation of the peasant and or the workers. This entrepreneurial class is obsessed with self-enrichment, private property and accumulation, and cannot see the needs of the poor class, but begrudges them everything, as Kioi illustrates:

> These workers cannot let you accumulate!

Every day: I want an increment.
Workers are like the ogres said to have two insatiable mouths.
When they are not demanding a rise in wages
They are asking you for an advance.
My mother is in hospital!
My child has been expelled from school,
Because I have not paid his school fees! (78)

The post-colonial Kenyan society is the worst moment for the pitiable conditions of the poor class which, as numerous explanations and justification are given, range from blaming it on Christian religion's morality that they brought it upon themselves by not being good Christians; or on their lack of education that keeps them illiterate, while it is these capitalists that collaborate with foreigners. It is they, the ruling party, who have no feeling for the suffering masses and their needs. The greedy, elite is in coalition, in league with similarly greedy business to reap what they did not saw: resources, labour and land. These neo-colonial oppressors have taken, amassed all the fruits of independence for themselves.

There is no denying the fact that Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and/or many other playwrights such Zakes Mda, Brecht, Gorkey Chekov, and many others, though the ages, saw the plight of their oppressed people and realized that the current social structure oppressed the masses and it is mostly the poor, weak peasants and workers who are exploited because they are the labouring class:

The power of our hands goes to feed three people
Imperialists from Europe,
Imperialists from Africa,

Imperialists from Japan. (37)

In this play, the two Ngugis mirror the despair and disillusionment of the oppressed in Njooki's song:

When we fought for freedom
I'd thought that we the poor would milk grade cows.
In the past I used to eat wild spinach,
Today I am eating the same. (39)

To overcome the difficulty, the political statement of the play is addressed to the new politicians in Kenya and elsewhere. Not only Ngugi's voice can be heard on this issue, but even that of other important playwrights and writers such as Whole Soyinka, Zakes Mda and Ama Ata Aidoo, too. There is a clever use of some characters, by Ngugis, in different roles to directly deliver the message. For instance, the landowner, Kioi wa Kanoru who, in the court, becomes the judge and in the church scene he becomes the bishop. The land expropriation, the Christian church and the administration are only different expressions of one and the same oppression.

In linking capitalism to imperialism, why not to materialism, Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii portray the Kiguundas as symbols of the exploitation of peasant people by the foreign capitalists together with the Kenyan entrepreneurial elite class represented by Ahab Kioi Wa Kanoru and his family. The real and actual meaning of capitalism is the greed of one group of people whose social status dominates others; and this in order to exploit another group of people who will never equal to the former unless a violent fight is engaged.

This is not just a factual statement; although capitalism, materialism, corruption and politics are the aftermath of imperialism that gave way to neo-colonialism

(neo- imperialism), there is possibility that the system of tribalism, where everything is shared to be re-established. The two Ngugis thus, want capitalism to be replaced by an African socialistic system.

It needs to be stressed here that the naïve masses, who are upset, hurt by the corrupt and nepotism of the contemporary Kenyan bourgeoisie, cannot decode the rapacious actions of corrupt politicians unless intellectuals, like Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, unveil it to all spheres of life – the civil service, the economy, and the social life as well. Therefore, the dishonesty and hypocrisy of the new economic elite class of Kenya are expressed as crime through nepotism and materialism. And the result of oppression, exploitation, imperialism and capitalism is, according to Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii, the prolonged and extreme poverty. "The so-called underdeveloped world feeds and clothes and shelters the imperialist world, financing its luxury and arts and sciences and technology, but this underdeveloped world remains impoverished and an object of charity, like the hunting dog that ends up feeding on bones after has finished all the meat". (*Black Literary Criticism*, 1503)

Intertwined with the capitalism of Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii is the issue of materialism by James Stephen Robson, that Ngugi's increasing satirical bite, evident through *I Will Marry When I Want* has added a new imaginative level of criticism to the attack on a materialistic and capricious national bourgeoisie. Ngugi criticizes the neo-colonialist state and its ruling class which is not based on hatred, but rather on a reasoned critique of a nation betrayed by a parasitical elite class.

Within Ngugi's works among which the play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, he has consistently explored the political division created in the Kenyan nation, the problems of class conflict in the post-colonial state of the 1970's. The most serious

problem on Ngugi's literary landscape has been the issue of betrayal. "This, however, should not be taken as a permanent obstacle", said J.S. Robson.

Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii are not only involving the betrayal of the ruling class people that is always an historical possibility, even an eventuality of the avidity of them, but also the socio-political division of the neo-colonial betrayal. The national bourgeoisie have also betrayed their opportunities to govern Kenya out of Wastland of colonial exploitation. The typical case example is that Kioi wa Kanoru and his fellowmen who, after Kenya has got its independence, they betrayed their relatives from their exploitations.

There is also a remark that Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii have drawn Samuel Ndugire as a foil who eventually challenges Kiguunda's mind with hypocritical religious ideologies. He says:

> My name is Samuel Ndugire
> I am a man who has received the tender mercy of the Lord,
> Since the year 1963.
> Before then I used to be a very bad homeguard.
> I used to kill people;
> And to do many other terrible deeds
> As was the habit among the homeguards of those days.
> In our village they had baptized me Kimeendeeri
> Because of the way I used to crush people's heads.
> But the Lord called unto me in 1963,
> It was the midnight of December twelve,
> And he told me:
> Ndugire...the only good freedom is that of the soul.

Leave your fishing net behind
Follow me now,
And I shall make you a fisher of men. (45-46)

The avidity and gluttony of religious Kenyan ruling class push them not only to fail in their mission as patriots but also they betrayed the workers and peasants. While the latter were expecting to equitably share the natural resources and crops and riches of Kenya; hoping that their land attributed to the imperialist settlers to be given back to them. Kiguunda, a representative of these poor masses suffered even after independence. The British imperialists were displaced by an aristocracy of native Kenyans. This ruling class's policy benefitted the elite and capitalists at the expense of the masses who have no share in the wealth of the land.

As early mentioned, Ndugire betrayed his clansmen by killing them, taking them into prison with the unreasonable justification: to work for the white men during the colonial era. Concerning Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's commentary N. Kaylor, he (Kaylor) says that "The danger is when religious worship is married with politics. Clergy and churchgoers should carefully think about religion and politics; and a particular attention must be given to dangers of mixing religious worship with partisan politics and to the political message already embedded in religious songs, scriptures and liturgies" (...). The Kenyan peasants, like Kiguunda suffer a lot because of the intermixing of religious and political ideologies and motives.

Throughout the problems and conflicts he experienced within his own family, and as one who suffered from political consequences of colonization, Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii now want their people especially the poor working class who are continuing to undergo socio-political problems constrained to them by the new ruling class, to search for ways of escaping from this life struggle. He says:

> As I write I remember the nights of fighting in my father's home, my mother's struggle with the soil so that we might eat, have decent clothes and get some schooling, my elder brother Wallace Mwangi, running to the cover and security of the forest under a hail of bullets from colonial policemen; [...] uncles and other villagers murdered because they had taken the oath; the beautiful courage of ordinary men and women in Kenya who stood up to the might of British imperialism and indiscrimination terrorism. I remember too some relatives and fellow villagers who carried the gun for the white man and often became his messengers of blood. I remember the fears, the betrayals, Rachael's tears the moments of despair and love and kinship in struggle and I try to find meaning of it all through my pen. (76)

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii too show how their poor people are betrayed by the new bourgeoisie – their own kind to whom everything is a commodity:

> They clansmen
> They know only how to take from the poor.
> They turned into sucking, grabbing and taking away.
> That group is now ready to sell the whole country to foreigner
> Eaters of that which has been produced by others.
> (112-3)

Regarding all that happened in pre-colonial, colonial, and even in post-colonial Kenyan societies, Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii suggest that there is a need for another war of liberation which will put the land and its wealth in the hands of the owners:

> We change to new songs
> For the revolution is near.
> We are tired of exploitation
> We are tired of charity and abuses
> There one two sides in the struggle,
> The side of exploiters and that of exploited
> On which side will you be when
> The trumpet
> Of the workers is finally blown? (114-115)

Now it is clear that the poor masses are getting consciousness. They express it through the quotation above that they are feeling done with the new ruling class betrayal and that a dangerous violent revolution is possible with no delaying. Also "pre-smelt" is the idea of heroism within the revolutionary actions. The play also embodies characters like Kiguunda and Gicaamba who have participated in the uprising rebellion movement, Mau-Mau, (Mzungu aende Uraya, Mweusi apate Uhuru). These characters taken as heroes in the fight can have an acute political conscious and send a strong, uncensored political message to the audience. Through historical reconstruction the themes surrounding these heroes are revealed and analysed again to bring better understanding. Thus, the play proffers positive heroes who embody the character of their struggle and resistance.

From all that is discussed on within out of our work, it might look Marxists of Fanonian ideology that the essence is one of the basic requirements of social organization in Gikuyu community. The selfish or self-regarding man has no name or reputation in the Gikuyu community. An individualist is looked upon with suspicion and is given a nickname of 'mwebongia', one who works only for himself and is likely to end up as a wizard.

To sustain the statements above, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirri's cultural work was radical Marxist in going into the roots of the problems in Kenya, which were greedy, corrupt men who exploited their workers, i.e. by giving them inadequate wage. The class struggle was between the bourgeoisie and proletariat. Both Marx and Engels believe in their doctrine that the class struggle between those two groups would inevitably lead to the overthrow of capitalism, thus, promoting the cause of the racial progress. The class struggle, again, was depicted in various ways in *I Will Marry When I Want*. The hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie was exposed in the blatantly polarized characterization: Kioi's son, John Muhuuni, is a product of neo-colonial society and Gathoni, Kiguunda's daughter, is not acceptable as his life is not his "class"; that is, not his equal. Njooki says:

> Let me caution you for even a wise man can be taught wisdom.
> Ask Gathoni to cut off that relationship.
> Rich families marry from rich families,
> The poor from the poor!
> Don't you see that the children of the big men,
> And of these others who brag that they are mature men.
> All go to bid house! (32)

In this respect, therefore not only there is a contrast in their ways of clothing, their eating habits, their way of speaking, but most obvious in the way of doing things. Kiguunda, the poor peasant farmer and worker, and Kioi, the rich businessman, who collaborates so much with the capitalists and imperialist foreigners, represent the different classes through themselves and their respective families and communities.

As far as Marxists' plays are concerned, a protest against the human suffering or class domination never, as the struggle for freedom, ends in social reform. The Marxists, Ngugi included, shouted the battle cry "Workers of the World, Unite!" In this battle against the oppressing exploiters they claimed the use of a political weapon: 'Theatre'. The Marxists exposed the weaknesses of the upper classes that formed the ruling society for the masses to see the conditions of their society.

Augusto Baal's comment comes close to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's method which he uses in sensitizing the masses for a revolution against the continuing oppression of the working peasant class by the others (= ruling class); mostly a small minority with political power. According to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Baal, theatre provides the way to build consciousness, mobilize people for action, engage in the struggle and reflect on the struggle. Where the oppressor wants the oppressed to be subservient and submissive; their goal was to change that to equality. They (both Ngugi and Baal) believe strongly in the revolutionary and liberation role that the theatre could play in the political field of the stage.

The theatre of revolutionary change has a definite function it must mirror the disgraces and deterioration of the new nation state. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o et al like-minded practitioners. The way the people think to free themselves:

Let's drive away the darkness

From all our land. (114)

Through their revolutionary inspired works, Marxists want to sensitize communities of the increasing poverty, growing illiteracy and discrimination against them and their culture. Marxism calls for a revolt of the masses and the elimination of the black bourgeoisie and capitalism to be replaced by African socialism. Ngugi reiterates that message so strongly in the play of his, *I Will Marry When I Want* which the Kenyan regime, i.e, the Daniel arap Moi's government banned the performances; and for which Ngugi was imprisoned without any trial.

Augusto Baal propagates the theatre as a weapon; and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o aims at using that weapon effectively to achieve the awareness among the oppressed masses, to educate them and to bring social change for those who continue to be exploited by the other class members. Through his play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, he seeks to liberate his people in their respective communities; thus providing fuel for a social revolution in order to bring change.

On the other hand, Ngugi's play offers a reflexion of the ongoing struggle for revolutionary change in accordance with Marxist principles. He hinted in his work of struggle needed to achieve a democratic society in Kenya and the left of Africa. Marx offers a systematic framework for mobilization against capitalism. Ngugi uses this same method to conscientize the Kenyan poor masses of oppression, neo-colonialism and exploitation.

Like many other Marxists, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirri concentrate on materialistic analysis of African society and actively sought to bring about social change. He tries to press home in his ideas and ideology on the social conformity in exploring the difficulties involved in social change in neo-colonial Kenya throughout his writings and theatre. As capitalism industrialized more of his

country day after day, Ngugi looks at the world through the eyes of the oppressed masses in Kenya and tries to get them all to unite; for he is very concerned with the fact that the haves, in this Kenyan neo-colonial society, are feeding on the have-nots. Under reactionary influenced Ngugi; and he analyses the situation in Marxist terms and comes to the conclusion that "one class (the bourgeoisie), in the pursuing of its own selfish interests, was exploiting another (the peasants and workers). He, therefore, feels strongly that a new revolutionary order is needed in order to culturally, economically and politically free themselves.

In his book *Black Skin, White Mask*, Frantz Fanon formulated his revolutionary ideas on the psychology of the colonised and the coloniser by identifying oppression as a political tool. Fanon believed that it was not, as many other Marxists expressed it early, the individuals who had to change, but the society. He adds that the only way for that change to occur was through revolution. It is for this very reason that Ngugi becomes one of the earliest advocates of an African literary practice emerging from Frantz Fanon's call for the participation of artists in political revolution against the neo-colonial 'native bourgeoisie' that would continue to control independent African states.

Chidi Amuta says in his article "Fanon, Cabral and Ngugi on National Liberation", that Fanon's position on culture is predicted on his essentially materialistic recognition of the exploitative economic motive of the colonialism as the decisive determinant of all aspects of the life of the colonized – a position that Ngugi hails in his work. He goes on saying that to fight for the National Culture means in the first place to fight for the liberation of the Nation... There is no other fight for culture which can develop apart from the popular struggle.

Frantz Fanon sums up Ngugi's feelings and aims by highlighting, in his article "National Culture", that "A national culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence [....]; while at the beginning the native intellectual used to produce his work to be read exclusively by the oppressor, ...now the native writer progressively takes on the habit of addressing his own people. It is only from that moment that we can speak of national literature" (153-155). Thus, Ngugi, in his writings, is inspired by Fanon, Cabral et al to achieve such a body national literature.

The new elite class made of corrupt politicians and businessmen is, according to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, to be violently destroyed. As the capitalism is the cause of poverty, Ngugi propagates that it must be replaced by African socialism. Only the ruling class benefited from the fruits of independence; the wealth distribution was unequal, too:

> The fact is
> That the wealth of our land
> Has been grabbed by a tiny group
> Of the Kioi's and the Ndugires
> In partnership with foreigners! (62)

The effective method chosen by Ngugi in this play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, is theatre; and this in order to raise the political consciousness of the poor working class to liberate themselves, by revolution if need be. The passive victims (audience) must become active bodily, committed participants (spectators) in the freedom fight process. Thus, in the broadcast sense, his theatre could be seen as a

propaganda which gave a feeling of national unity; and gained the support of the poor working class (the masses).

At first, the worker community alienated from ancestral land, become a source of wealth for the colonizers and then after their African heirs:

> Without workers,
> There is no property, there is no wealth,
> The labour of our hands is the real wealth of the country.
> The blood of the worker...
> Is the true creator of the wealth of nations. (37-38)

The Kenyan poor masses are forced to work hard and harvest their crops, their own estranged land without benefiting from it. Kiguunda calls himself a slave and feels that the new elite class neglects the interest of their workers who make sacrifices, i.e. he milks cows very early while Kioi, his boss, still sleeps. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o reveals that this exploitation is done through the conceived methods of state, church and police. Unfair dismissals, low payments, and harsh working conditions leave the workers with rebellion as their only sources. The Kenyan corrupt landowners in league with the foreigners have brought the total misery the working class, the masses:

> Labour is the creator of wealth
> African employers are not different
> From Indian employers
> Or from the Boer white landlords.
> They don't know the saying
> That the land of a worker should not be weakened.
> They don't know the phrase, "increased wages"! (20)

Regardless the poor working class effort, the neo-colonial power continues to exploit and benefit from the hard working class production. The latter did not reap their expected rewards though they got their independence: they still have nothing although uhuru, that is, independence, has come. Kiguunda was once a free, proud man, but then, he became a humiliated slave in the scornful eye of Kioi:

> How many years have gone
> Since we got independence?
> Ten and over, ...
> Quite a good number of years!
> And now look at me!
> One and a half acres of a land in dry plains.
> Our family land was given to homeguards...
> See what the years of freedom in poverty
> Today I am just a labourer.... (28-29)

In paralleling the quotation above, Zakes Mda's play *Sing For The Fatherland* relates to this topic when Sergent and Jamibari express their disappointment with affairs after independence. The same issue is currently being raised by ex-fighters in Namibia (2006). Njooki sings with bitterness what they feel:

> When we fought for freedom
> I'd thought that we the poor would milk grade cows
> In the past I used to eat wild spinach,
> Today I am eating the same. (39)

The singer, Njooki, being much concerned with colonial and postcolonial governance, is now regretting these life conditions as if they are still living the time before independence. It seems that Njooki is aware that there is no other cure that a

strong organization of workers and peasants in order to liberate themselves by any means.

Marx urged the workers of the world to unite as they could lose their chains. Ngugi inc *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* also reiterates his loathing for the oppressors and he too calls upon his people to unite so that: they can overcome the overpower on them by the oppressors:

> We must kill the lie
> That Black people never invented anything
> Lay for ever to rest that inferiority
> Complex
> Implanted in our minds by centuries
> Of oppression
> Rise, rise workers and peasants...(68)

Through Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii's stated play above, we can assume that the poor people are forced to work hard with inhuman living conditions and they are continuing to be exploited because of the under wage payment for such a hard work:

> Wage can never equal the work
> Wages can never really compensate for your labour... (33)

The Garment Worker of South Africa's Newspaper suggests the same unity by the workers so as to achieve freedom and their rights. This was supported by a considerable number of thinkers who sustain that whatever kind of liberation: political, cultural or economic exploitation is achieved by being united:

> The only way we get out nights

is when we all unite,
When all the workers stand
then we can win our fight.
The Garment Worker,17 (1941): 21-24

The quotation above is seen and heard with the same ear by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii when they let Gicaamba virtually say the same as follows:

Development will come from our unit.
Unity is our strength and wealth.
A Day will surely come when
If a bean falls to the ground
It'll be split equally among us, -. (115)

As the question of land is a very problematic issue in the deep understanding of the pristine Gikuyu culture of Kenya and the Kenyan people's everybody lives, it is also the source of people's frustration which lead to insurrections. The good result for the total liberation is first to unite. The struggle for freedom is not only the matter of political issues; but it is also the religious pretences. Kiguunda at this level realizes that Christianity in Kioi's church is very different from God's will. He therefore, rejects being forced to get married in the church. He now regrets to have even accepted Kioi's advice to join the church; and the so-called 'lawful Christian marriage'. Kiguunda's drunken voice can be heard, singing:

I shall marry when I want
While all padres are still alive
And I shall get married when I want
While all nuns are still alive. (108)

The citation above reveals Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii's revelation to their Kenyan people in particular, as a voice of the voiceless poor masses, so as for them to first unite as a community and then stand for their liberation. As it is already revealed throughout this work the question of liberation is not the matter for individuals. Here as an overseer, Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii help their people to question the hypocritical and materialistic religion; and they also reveal to them that every individual is free for the choice of religion. Here again, Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii, through the theoretical method, stimulate their audience (characters, actors, spectators etc.) to be active and altogether feel concerned with such a struggle for freedom. One may realize that Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii's attention and morality is to awaken people especially the poor Kenyan class for the conscious revolution against the so-called brotherhood taught with absurd and hypocritical Christianity.

We can, therefore, bring this chapter closer to the conclusion through Dhar, Tej N; in Ngugi's *Retrospective Gaze*, who places Ngugi Wa Thiong'o voicing his repugnance for what he calls the 'romantic glimmer' of capitalism in which Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirri declare openly their cherished goal: "Africanizing and socializing the political and economic life" of Kenyan societies (12). It is very crucial for him to believe that it is only in a socialist context that a look at yesterday can be meaningful in illuminating today; and construct tomorrow's better life. Thus, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirri's vision, as African standers of cultural, political, economic, and historical stability; and whose play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, earns them a well-deserved reputation, encompasses mankind as a whole and is global in its scope.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In this work under study, it is worth recalling the major points that we have been running through. The main arguments that pervaded the Kenyan societal background of the 1970s. During the neo-colonialism, the Kenyan societies have been victimized by the exploitative and the materialistic motives behind Christianity. The main intention of the new entrepreneurial ruling class was the socio-physical and psychological destruction to take away the native poor masses and workers' consciousness and stamina. In fact, this leads to the social alienation and psychological prison from the Marxist economic perspective; where the means of production is expropriated by the capitalist bourgeoisie, while the proletariat is exploited.

The neo-colonial system is the force that has changed the lives of Africans in general and of the poor masses and workers of Kenya in particular. Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii's play has championed the level of thinking by the working class of his Kenyan society. The play *I Will Marry When I Want* captures the problems of exploitation, deprivation, and class segregation that characterize post-independence, neo-colonial Kenya (14). It also seals, on the other hand, with indirect or reversed alienation.

Religious hypocrisy is dealt with as a tool for social control and overpower on mankind. At this level, we examined how, behind the hypothetical Christianity, the Kiois and their fellowmen managed to amass wealth and land; and also over controlled the proletariat class. The disguised mission of Christianity turns into exploitation, domination, and disintegration of the Kenyan society.

As far as the church principles are concerned, the new converts who have been associated with the white imperialists claim to be servants of God; while they

belong to the hellish world, for they are serving the devil. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii depict the phenomenon of incidents of hypocrisy so as to involve the audience for them to understand to what extent was ironical the Christianity preached by the religious elite class.

The alienation is a result of domination of the state political and economic power, not by the white imperialists, but this time, by African capitalists – the contractors, merchants, entrepreneurs, and elite who are surrogates of colonial imperial power. They are to be figuratively understood as White men. They step into the shoes of the erstwhile European colonial expatriates and carry out the domination and oppression that are the criminal and inhuman legacies of white colonizers, creating a case of neo-colonial or national bourgeoisie alienation.

The Christian religion also proved itself to be disruptive for the Kenyan poor masses and workers. For instance, the Kiguundas are forced to enter the church and consenquently are cut off from their cultural and traditional way of worshiping, and they saw their society divided and broken down. The Kenyans accepted to co-operate with the neo-colonialists; animated with the fate of friendship and brotherly relationship. Thus, though religion preached by the Kiois, the former lost their ancestral inheritance; and their societies were destroyed, too. This impacted on the Kenyans who are no longer united and the neo-colonialists, whose agenda behind the hypocritical profited from was not far from political exploitation, profited from this chaos to easily still overpower on the proletariat class.

The colonial new system of ruling, that is, the neo-colonial oppressors, is betrayed by the business merchant Ahab Kioi's business partner Ikuuwa Wa Ndindika. The latter are 'expatriates' in black skin who alienate the less privileged class, as typified by the characters: Kiguunda, Wangeci, Gathoni, Gicaamba, Njooki.

From the Marxist perspective, the play presents the theme of alienation of capitalism versus peasantry, where capitalism monopolizes the social economy. Both Gicaamba, the factory worker, and Kiguunda, Kioi's farm labourer, are being paid less wages by their employers; which cannot help them make ends meet. Regarding the high level of productivity, the daily price uprising, we are observing a net paradox between the devoted effort and the salary that does not commensurate with it. Mankind is always in conflict with man's social position, otherwise the starving life condition constraints regardless one's well off position. Religion is, thus, presented as an 'opium of the masses' an instrument of alienation – often used by the capitalists to continue silencing and making the masses more obedient, whereas they are being continuously exploited and socially dominated and over controlled by the former. It also serves to instil self-restraint, discipline, and materialistic behaviour or feeling in the poor Kenyan society so as for them to daily dream of it as Christ is my only saviour.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Wa Mirii in *I Will Marry When I Want* present religion as an alienating mechanism in the satire of Kioi's attempt to convert Kiguunda, the poor labourer, to Christianity. It seems very ironical for a capitalist man like him to try to persuade Kiguunda and his wife, Wangeci to have a lawful Christian marriage. Kioi says:

> If you have agreed to our plans
> We shall now become true friends.
> Your house and mine becoming one,
> In the name of the Lord. (83)

The church wedding is too expensive for a poor family like that of Kiguunda to afford it. They are too poor enough to be able to pay for the cost of such a modern church wedding. Kiguunda says:

But there is a problem!
A modern church wedding
Requires a lot of things.
We cannot enter the holy church
The way we are
With muddy feet
And these are rags ever on our shoulders. (84)

One may realize that the play also expresses the church avidity that it has become a materialistic, capitalistic, and bourgeoisie social institution and thus, another facet of social alienation. Thus, post-colonial Kenyan society, the church has responded rapidly to the commanding imperatives of history that religion can be used as means of exploitation.

A social exploitation can reveal a possible 'hidden' class war especially when Kioi's son, John Muhuuni, impregnates Gathoni, Kiguunda's daughter, and he refuses to recognize the pregnancy. In reacting to this, the humiliated father of Gathoni, i.e, Kiguunda, draws his sword to kill Kioi, an attempt that Kioi considers aggressive, insulting, shameful, and a contamination of his family's economic pedigree. He complains:

I am a mature person, I've
been made mature by Christ.
And I can let my son marry
Only from the home of a mature person. (110)

In this very work under study we can therefore pre-assume that "violence breeds violence". This is to underpin Fashina's assertion that "The Kiguunda's violent reaction to Kioi's socio-economic and religious exploitation that hides behind it

materialistic intention or vision through ironical Christianity precipitates the action of the final act, in which Kiguunda is shot at and loses his job; and consequently his small piece of land is bought at an auction" (20). As a result, Marx and Engels, in their *Manifesto of the Communist Poetry*, assert that:

> In countries...where the peasants contribute for more than half of the population, it was natural that the writers who sided with the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, should use, in their criticism of the bourgeoisie regime, the standard of the peasant and petty bourgeoisie, and from the standpoint of these immediate classes, should take up the cudgels for the working class. (64)

This work has addressed the socio-cultural, economic, and political problems of exploitation of man by man; and the consciousness of Kenyan societies as depicted by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's revolutionary play, *I Will Marry When I Want*, to rise up against the ruling class of oppressors by the oppressed poor working class. In this same perspective, religious men have shown themselves indifferent regarding man's sufferings.

Religion has also been observed and discussed as to be a tool for neo-colonialism in the newly post-independence Kenyan state. The western religion gave way to the traditional gods' disappearance and thus, the Kenyan society values collapsed. It is also found out that it was used to subjugate, to exploit and dominate so as to get raw materials, riches (money), servants and man's power to work for the post-independence religious leaders.

This work is a continuation to the already existing criticism on neo-colonialism in Kenya and the role of African writers and/or playwrights on conscientizing the

Kenyans with great emphasis on the use of stages (theatre) on one hand, and on the relationship between the religious elite class and the starving poor masses on the other hand.

This work, therefore, is still too broad and needs further researchers to still remaining on carrying out their survey. Our work was mainly focusing on religion as an exploitative instrument (or means) for one to fulfil his/her ambitions particularly in Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ngugi Wa Mirii's *I Will Marry When I Want*. Other researchers should for instance deal with stylistic use of the language by underlying the metaphor, euphemism, etc. and examine them in different perspectives. Finally, they may explore this play as a rhetorical stage of sin, damnation and the world earthly inclination.

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