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ECOLE NORMALE SUPERIEURE  
DEPARTEMENT DE ANGLAIS

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UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I  
HIGHER TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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## **IDENTITY AND PHANTASMAGORIA IN NGUGI WA THIONGO'S WIZARD OF THE CROW.**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Higher Teacher Training College (ENS) Yaounde in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of a Postgraduate Teacher's  
Diploma (DIPES II) in English Studies**

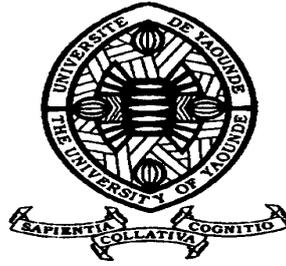
Par :

**ROCKAIYATU KINYUY  
BIMELA  
Licencié études bilingues**

Sous la direction  
Dr YVONNE IDEN NGWA  
Senior Lecturer



**Année Académique  
2015-2016**



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## ABSTRACT

This work, titled “Identity and Phantasmagoria in Ngugi wa Thiongo’s *Wizard of the Crow*,” examines the effects of colonialism in post independence African states. To achieve this, it presents the idyllic pre-colonial society hinted at by the author and emphasizes the fact that the distorted Africa identity is the major ill of colonialism from which others accrue. Portraying hybridity as the fundamental cause of the decadence of the contemporary African societies, the work equally looks at the remedy that can be envisaged for the reconstruction of the African cultural identity and the society. The postcolonial and psychoanalytical theories have been used to analyse the work under study. While the first has made it possible to x-ray the colonial saga of post independence African states, the latter has focused on the psychological consequences of colonialism on the individual African as well as the Africans as a people. The study has arrived at the conclusion that the negative impact of colonialism on post independence African states bears on the continent’s social, cultural, economic, political and psychological lives. Nevertheless, the author thinks that the African’s and Africa’s redemption are envisageable however slim the chances of such a redemption maybe. In the pedagogic dimension, this work also shows how Cameroonian Secondary Schools students can be introduced to creative writing and be able to produce a folktale. This is done in the process of teaching issues related to identity and the imaginary.

## RESUME

Ce travail intitulé “Identity and Phantasmagoria in Ngugi Wa Thiongo’s *Wizard of the Crow*” examine les effets du colonialisme dans les sociétés post Independence africaines afin d’accomplir ceci, il dépeint la société précolonial comme étant une société utopique. L’auteur insiste sur le fait que la dégradation de l’identité africaine est le mal majeur du colonialisme. En outre, cette étude examine les possibilités envisageable afin d’aboutir à la reconstruction de l’identité africaine y compris celle de la société africaine. La théorie postcoloniale et la psychanalyse ont été utilisées dans cette étude. La théorie postcoloniale démontre, d’une part, le débat causé par l’impérialisme causé en Afrique. D’autre part, la psychanalyse se focalise sur les effets psychiques de cette emprise coloniale sur les sujets africains ainsi que sur tous les peuples africains. En guise de conclusion cette recherche scientifique présente le fait que l’impact négatif du colonialisme sur les sociétés africaines postindépendance est basé sur le domaine politique socioculturel, économique et psychique. Néanmoins, l’auteur pense que les rédemptions sont envisageables malgré le fait qu’il limite les chances d’une telle rédemption. Ce travail démontre également comment initier les élèves des écoles secondaires du Cameroun à la création littéraire en leur permettant de produire des fables.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am particularly grateful to my supervisor Dr Yvonne Iden Ngwa, for her guidance, constant availability and, ceaseless efforts in reading and correcting this work. Her constructive criticism and suggestions significantly contributed to the writing of this work. I equally thank her for the provision of relevant material that have enriched the work.

I am also thankful to all the lecturers of the Departments of English and French for contributing enormously to the knowledge I have acquired throughout these years of training. My profound gratitude to my classmates, especially to Christine Kamdem, Brenda Ekwe, Armelle Etoga and Maxime Fopa for their collaboration that greatly enhanced the conduct of this study.

Special thanks go to my parents, Mr Musa Bimela and Mrs Pascaline Gohla, for their financial and spiritual support. Much thanks to all my brothers and sisters for their material, financial and moral support; I want to especially appreciate Francis Bong, Alimatu Bah, Andrew Suikahngavem and MarylineYaya.

Finally, I express heartfelt gratitude to my friends: Eric Chakouande, Olivier Mbah, Zion Komgheh, Rev. Sr Veronica Nyibeh and Bertha Ekema for the multiple ways in which they all supported me in the course of this research endeavour. Their support boosted my spirit and made the achievement of this research work possible.

## **DEDICATION**

To my adorable son,

Noubeyi Marc Jason Tchingue

## **CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this work, entitled “Identity and Phantasmagoria in NgugiWaThiongo’s *Wizard of the Crow*”, is the original work of Rockaiyatu Kinyuy BIMELA, Department of English, Higher Teacher Training College Yaounde, University of Yaounde I.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dr Yvonne Iden NGWA**

Senior Lecturer

ENS, The University of Yaounde I

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The awareness that the decadence of African societies today is related to the legacy of colonialism is not new. Identity, as the main concept involved in colonial discourse, influences thoughts about political, social, and economic conditions. It is equally known that identity crisis has harboured disarray and dissolution in the African society thereby causing alienation and leaving behind the feeling of disappointment. The knowledge of possibilities for change is thereby derived from the social consciousness which prompts African nationalism. The consequences of neo-colonialism on identity are enormous because they affect and even infect the minds of developing nations in one way or the other thus giving way to positive or negative results. The outcome of these negative results is the wakefulness of African nationalism.

The Kenyan novelist, Ngugi Wa Thiongo — in relation to the points mentioned earlier— presents the political and social satire of African societies due to neo-colonialism. His approach has also contributed significantly to the analysis and understanding of African politics by showing that the dependency of African societies are partly imposed by developed societies. On examining *The Wizard of the Crow*, it is clearly noticeable that (through the use of phantasmagoria) there is still hope for the redress or the reconstruction of the African society through related issues analysed such as the clash of modernity with traditional ways and values; gender equality; abuse of power, and poverty.

Through his works, Ngugi depicts the fact that— though all of the African lost values might not be recovered— there is still hope that part of it could still be restored. Apollo Amoko opines that:

Like many contemporary writers who emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, Ngugi has a fundamentally ambivalent conception of postcolonial Africa. While much of his writing explores the romantic possibility of African restoration and/or postcolonial revolution, a discourse of tragedy and despair seems to pervade his work. He appears to depict postcolonial Africa as a place ripe for restoration and renewal. But he also seems to recognize, often with bitter irony, the sheer impossibility of realizing such intellectual longings... (*Postcolonialism in the Wake of the Nairobi Revolution: Ngugi Wa Thiongo's Idea of African Literature*, 2)

Amoko establishes the fact that Ngugi's conception of postcolonial Africa is different from that of other writers of the same period. Although the latter's works present postcolonial Africa as a place ready for reconstruction and reformation, he also admits a great possibility for that to occur. This view ties in with the idea of this study as Ngugi— in *Wizard of the Crow*— validates this assertion. He presents a minor impossibility for restoration to take place in this text because of the poisoned identity of most Africans who favour the western view of the world and accept being marginalised even to the detriment of African values. Another center is created among Africans themselves and the 'margin' is mainly made up of the oppressed. This binarism leads to irrational treatments (suppression, exploitation, and corruption) showered on the 'Other'. However, the author believes in the reconstruction of the African identity through self re-definition.

It is peculiar that, although Ngugi's concern in this book is the prevalent situation in a sample post independent African nation plagued by the ills of colonization, the author writes a novel in which realism is not the only chosen weapon. Instead, he blends it with a fantasist approach that is highly phantasmagoric. The work examines (in a critical manner) the notion of identity representation in Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow*. It looks at how the author uses both realism and phantasmagoria to convey the African's identity in the pre-colonial, independence and post-independence eras. It equally demonstrates Ngugi's efforts at reconstructing or reviving African lost values. Lastly, the study presents the pedagogic relevance of *Wizard of the Crow* to Cameroonian secondary school students.

Hence, the main concerns of this work are as follows:

- How does Ngugi represent the pre-colonial African by depicting some realities in *Wizard of the Crow*?
- Which colonial realities does the writer capture and how do these realities distort the African's identity?
- How does the author summon the phantasmagoric to suggest the possibility of the reconstruction of the African in the text?
- What is the pedagogic relevance of *Wizard of the Crow* to Cameroonian Secondary School Students and how can it be used to teach identity problems?

This work is based on the hypothesis that Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow*, though set in a post-independence African state, portrays the African's identity from the pre-colonial to the post-independence eras. It argues that the writer does not only deplore the devastating effects of colonialism on the African's identity, but equally resorts to the phantasmagoric to imply that there is hope for the African's restoration. He artfully juxtaposes realities such as binary polarities (self-other, centre-margin, civilized-barbaric, etc); alienation and hybridization and mimicry with the phantasmagoric.

This work goes beyond the academic framework as it examines issues that greatly affect most post- independent African societies. It presents Africa's contemporary political and social situation as it addresses issues related to despotism, corruption, poverty, rationalism, globalization, culture, natural and supernatural, to name a few. Moreover, it is equally significant because it can, for instance, lead to critical reflections on the type of leaders suitable for a particular society. Furthermore, it is important in that it shows the relevance of *Wizard of the Crow* to Cameroonian Secondary School Students as the writer's creative artistry in creating an imaginary world through magic realism can be explored to teach students how to write folk-tales.

The work is limited to Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow*. Ngugi Wa Thiongo is a Kenyan novelist, teacher, and political thinker considered the foremost writer among East African writers in English to emerge after Kenya's independence in 1963. *Wizard of the Crow* is a novel of 768 pages published in 2006. The novel paints the socio-political, economic and cultural realities of Africa, in general, and Kenya (in particular). As such, it discusses themes that fit within the scope of this study's concern.

It is impossible to thoroughly analyse Ngugi's novel in this work without some conceptual clarifications. The study requires the definition of two key terms which are "Identity" and "Phantasmagoria". According to *Online Etymology Dictionary*, the term "Identity" which means "sameness," is derived from the Middle French "Identité" of the 14<sup>th</sup> century ([www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com)). This, on its part, previously emerged in the 5<sup>th</sup> century from "Identitatem" (nominative Identitas) which equally meant "sameness" in Latin. The initial form of the word in English in the 1560s was "Idemptitie" from the Medieval Latin "Idemptitas". This definition echoes part of the concern of this work because it bears on the

description of the colonised as a particular set of people having the same experiences and common cultural markers. Also, the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* describes identity as the difference of character that marks off an individual from the rest of the same kind.

Literarily, Beverly Daniel Tatum, in “The Complexity of Identity: “Who Am I?,”” describes the concept of identity as a complex one shaped by individual characteristics, family dynamics, social, political and historical factors. He states: “How one's racial identity is experienced will be mediated by other dimensions of one's self: male or female; young or old; wealthy, middle-class, or poor...” (*An Anthology on Racism, Sexism, Anti-Semitism, Heterosexism, Classism and Ableism* 9). From this perspective, biological and/or environmental aspects can influence one's identity. Identity here embeds many proportions depending on the message being conveyed. It can be discussed in terms of gender, religion, race, culture, ideology, to name a few. Every aspect of this concept integrates the past, present, and future into a unified sense. The concept of identity is basically about peculiarity; the way things are perceived as exceptional. The peculiarity here can be seen at the level of sameness or oneness; difference of character that marks off an individual amid others—central force in thought, emotion, and behaviour— and other aspects such as biological (natural) and environmental (societal influence like religion and history) aspects.

In relation to this study, the question of identity starts from the root of African history. On the threshold of this African history is slavery, followed by colonialism followed then neo-colonialism. It is generally known that colonialism left behind its legacy in Africa affecting the cultural identity of the African people. In the context of this work, identity is influenced by the effects of experiences gone through (Black experience). The African identity or mind has been damaged as Africans consciously or unconsciously accept the white man's philosophy causing them to be addicted to the Western world and culture and to marginalise theirs. The deterioration of the African mind is projected through the dysfunctional state of the African society. Thus, identity here, apart from being the state or condition of being the same, equally implies the way of perceiving the world that affects or infects our thoughts, behaviour and aptitude.

Phantasmagoria is another key term in this work. According to *Online Etymology Dictionary*, it is the name of a ‘magic lantern’ brought to London in 1802 by a Parisian showman, Paul de Philipstal. This appellation is from the French word “fantasmagorie,” a compound coined from “fantasme” which is “phantasm”. The magical connoted by this definition is relevant to this work because it examines how Ngugi uses fantasy (that borders on the supernatural) to address issues of identity in *Wizard of the Crow*. Linguistically, according to the *Webster New College Dictionary*, phantasmagoria is a dreamlike constant changing medley of real or imagined images. According to this same source, phantasmagoria is also defined as an internal or mental representation dealing with illusions and hallucinations. As it is the case with dreams, the phantasmagoric has to do with that which is not real, the fictional, the legendary, and the mythic which in this case, is utopian. It fits in with magical realism used in this work because both bear on the supernatural.

In this work, phantasmagoria refers to the supernatural that the author resorts to in order to paint the African cultural values. He portrays these values through representation and ethnicity, defamiliarisation, indigeneity and patriotism. This view of phantasmagoria suggests that (despite the chaos and the dystopian state in which colonial African societies are) there is still hope for Africa and the continent can regain its lost values. Phantasmagoria can equally be conveyed through orality. In the traditional African context, orality is a narrative genre celebrating African culture and tradition. Magical or fantastical elements are very recurrent in it.

The theoretical framework used for the analysis of this work is the Postcolonial theory. Another notion incorporated within this theory is the historical aspect of the black plight. This work equally rests on the psychoanalytical theory. This theory is an approach which demonstrates the political and social attitude that opposes Western domination and colonial discourse. It equally portrays the outcome of colonialism on nations which have gained independence from the rule of other imperial states. Some proponents of this theory include Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi K. Bhabha, Bill Ashcroft, Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Chinua Achebe, Ayi Kwei Armah, and Ngugi Wa Thiongo. In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin postulate:

Post-colonial theory involves discussion about experience of various kinds: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place, and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy and linguistics, and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being. None of these is 'essentially' post-colonial, but together they form the complex fabric of the field. (2)

In a nutshell, this quotation recognises the postcolonial theory as the effects of colonialism on African culture, societies, and the identity of Africans. It addresses any kind of marginality experienced by formerly colonised countries and countries under neo-colonialism. In other words, this theory seeks the restoration of the lost African's history and dignity. The theory represents a challenge to Western tradition.

Pre-colonial Africa had many different forms of politics and government that was narrowly related to the economic organization prompting production. Village-style government had a council of elders including village chiefs that had control in hunting and gathering without leaving out agricultural societies. Tax collection was recurrent and was done in form (cowries, baskets of farm production, livestock, to name a few). The communal life projected the African's real identity through tradition and culture. In other words, Africa in the pre-colonial era was not void. Instead the European invasion (slavery) took away this entertaining lifestyle and inflicted pains and humiliation.

This study attempts to determine the nature of the self and to shed light on some postcolonialists' view on the possibility of how it should be achieved. The notion of "self" here is considered as the African cultural identity. Frantz Fanon's sense of otherness and black selfhood opposes the ideological construct design to uphold imperialist perception of selfhood (which can be seen as egocentric). His sense of selfhood implies black identity which embeds black history and the African culture. Jacqueline Crowell mentions in "Marxism and Frantz Fanon's Theory Colonialism: Parallels between Racial and Commodity-Based Fetishism" that Fanon describes the rendering of the Black's selfhood to an insignificant level due to the colonization of the black identity (par.3). Together with Karl Marx and other postcolonialists, Fanon acknowledges the black colonial experience and attempts to counter the achieved black selfhood thereby redefining black identity.

Maggie Ann Bowers— in *Magic(al) Realism*— posits that “Postcolonialism, like postmodernism, is a complex term that is still being debated and transformed. Essentially it refers to the political and social attitude that opposes colonial power and recognizes the effects of colonialism on other nations, it refers specifically to nations which have gained independence from the rule of another imperial state” (91). She further explains that the postcolonial theory can be a way of reconsidering the identity of a nation after independence or a means of expressing opposition to the ideas of colonialism. Postcolonialism is a theory which demonstrates the effects of colonialism on colonised nations. The greatest effect of colonialism (in this work) is the lost of the African identity through the notions of hybridity, defamiliarisation, to name a few. Ngugi, in *Wizard of the Crow*, uses the concept of phantasmagoria as a remedy to these effects. It should be noted that ethnocentrism is very crucial in this theory because both the colonisers and the colonised are convinced of their own cultural superiority; consequently, the African cultural superiority is valorised through aspects like myth, songs, legends, proverbs, and stories which are means of restoring the African identity. The African culture is therefore portrayed as a weapon of protest and resistance in the struggle against the colonial heritage.

Magical realism, as a concept emanating from the postcolonial theory, struggles to speak or to decode the veiled— the reason things are the way they are— through historical dimension. It is a fictional style which portrays the disillusionments of post independence African politics. It equally seeks to critique the statement of truth about the modern world by demonstrating that they are culturally, politically, and historically incidental contrary to their belief based on perfection and superiority. Just like phantasmagoria, Magic realism deals with the supernatural and presents the notion of identity all together with its traits (as demonstrated in this work). The use of the Postcolonial theory in this work is to present the experiences of the post independent African states caused by neo-colonialism. The theory also portrays, through the concept of identity blended with phantasm, the political and societal present situation of most African states.

The psychoanalytic theory according to Freud is also apt for the analysis of the work under study because it encapsulates both the concepts of identity and fantasy. Psychoanalysis, as a theory that deals with the mental functioning of the human psyche, is a theory founded by Sigmund Freud. Other proponents are John A. Bargh, Albert Bandura, Lois Tyson to list a

few. In the process of understanding human behaviour, Freud presents three different levels in his conception of the human psyche: the unconscious mind, the preconscious mind and the conscious mind. According to him, the unconscious mind or the id includes internal forces like feelings, motivation, thoughts, and urges that are outside our conscious awareness yet influence our behaviour. They are the things we are not aware of.

The preconscious mind or the ego acts as a gatekeeper between the conscious and unconscious part. Its role is to balance the urges or the demands of the id and ego. They are things we are not thinking of at the moment but can be easily drawn into conscious awareness at any time. The conscious or the superego mind is simply everything inside our awareness. They are concerned with social rules and morals. They include things like sensations, perceptions, memories, feelings and fantasies inside of our current awareness. Thoughts, speeches and actions here are done in a rational way. The most fundamental of these three levels of the mind is the unconscious because the psychoanalytic view holds that our behaviour is directed by the unconscious. Behaviour influences identity in one way or the other because it affects the way people live in the society.

It should be noted that the colonial experience influences all three levels of the African's psyche and determine identity. Going through the colonial experience was getting in contact with the Western world and culture. At the level of the id, the African's psyche—that has been brainwashed by the colonial experience—adheres blindly to the colonisers' fundamental principles without thinking about the repercussions on the African society. For instance, we have African societies that copy (without hesitation) the Whiteman's post independent policy of democracy. This can influence the society in that wrong choices are often made to the detriment of the nation. Thus, Africans follow the Western system of belief without questioning it to the disadvantage of their own system of belief and principles. This aspect just encourages the extermination of the pure African identity thereby giving way to the contaminated African identity. As far as the ego is concerned, the African mind perceives the Western world or culture as ornate but reconsiders the African culture which they view as richer. The superego prompts the African psyche not to accept the western philosophy basically because it believes this philosophy will tarnish and even deteriorate African moral and cultural values. This African psyche has conservative values as it tends to valorise the African culture and strives for the lost African identity. Ngugi, in *Wizard of the Crow*,

presents the effects of the colonial experience on the African's psyche through these components of the human mind. Identity is determined here through the way or the manner in which the human mind reacts to the impact of the colonial experience.

Ngugi was born in Limuru near Kamiriithu in 1938 and was baptized James Ngugi. His academic pursuit was successful and, in 1963, he received a BA in English from Makerere University College in Kampala, Uganda. Then he attended the University of Leeds in England where he did his postgraduate studies. As noted before, Ngugi's literary productions are many. He started writing as a student in Leeds University and some of his celebrated works are *Weep Not Child*, *The River Between*, *A Grain of Wheat* all published in the 1960's. *The Devil on the Cross* came later in 1978. Some of his non-fictional works and scientific writings include: *Detained*, his prison diary published in 1981, *Decolonizing the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature* that same year. This second work argues for African Writers' expression in their native languages, rather than European languages, in order to renounce lingering colonial ties and to build an authentic African Literature.

It should be noted that Ngugi's works provide the strongest links with Kenya's political past and also cover the four major stages in the development of modern African writing in English: imperialist incursion into Africa; the entrenchment of colonial rule and foreign culture and the beginnings of the anti-imperialist movement; revolt against imperialism and colonialism; and the post-independence period of disappointment. Ngugi's nationalistic bent is justified by the fact that his family was involved in the Mau-Mau Rebellion (where he lost his step brother and his mother was tortured). Other reasons included the banishment of his writings such as *I Will Marry When I Want* by the Kenyan regime; his imprisonment in a maximum security prison ordered by the Vice President, Daniel Arab Moi, in 1977; and his forceful exile in order to avoid death and the risks of the safety of his family. His exile was due to his writings about the injustices of the repressive government in Kenya at the time. He stayed in exile for 22 years until Arap Moi was voted out of office and he felt safe to return.

In 1992, he became a Professor of Comparative Literature and Performance Studies at Amherst, Yale and New York University, where he held the Erich Maria Remarque chair. He is currently Professor of English and Comparative Literature and the director of the

International Centre for Writing and Translation at the University of California. He has received many awards including the Paul Robeson Award for Artistic Excellence, Political Consciousness and Integrity (1992), Gwendolyn Brooks Center Contributors Award for significant contribution to the Black Literary Arts (1994), the Distinguished Africanist Award by the New York African Studies Association (1996), the Fonlon-Nichols Prize (1996), and the Ninono International Prize for Literature.

Manifestly, a great deal of research has been carried out on Ngugi's works including his text, *Wizard of the Crow*. However, the review that follows is restricted to the opinions of some critics whose works are related to the interest of this study. Brenda Cooper, in her work entitled *Magical Realism in West African Fiction. Seeing with the Third Eye*, states:

But Western educated and well travelled writers of magical realism are not themselves inserted within these indigenous, pre-technological cultures that provide their inspiration. Although connected to such communities by their own history, such writers are separated from them by their class, despite claims they may make for an 'authenticity' derived from a unity with indigenous culture.(16)

Cooper demonstrates here that magical realist writers are hybrids as far as culture is concerned. They have been westernised by education and trips to the West and only the past (history) links them to their places of origin. In spite of this, they celebrate the African culture to the detriment of the European culture. This study sheds more light on this point. It agrees with the fact that magical realist writers like Ngugi indeed celebrate ways of being and of seeing that are uncontaminated by European domination though hybrids. But the dissertation equally demonstrates how colonialism and neo-colonialism have done more harm than good by causing confusion, dystopia and decadence in Africa. The consequence of this is that the African emerges from these experiences as an ambivalent person.

Unlike Cooper, Abdul R. Janmohamed focuses on the opinion expressed by colonialist literature which contradicts the stance of writers like Ngugi. In 'The Economy of Manichean Allegory', he asserts:

Colonialist Literature is an exploration and a representation of a world at the boundaries of 'civilization,' a world that has not (yet) been domesticated by European signification or codified in detail by its ideology. That world is therefore perceived as uncontrollable, chaotic, unattainable and ultimately evil. Motivated by his desire to conquer and dominate, the imperialist configures the colonial realm as a confrontation based on differences in race, language, social customs, cultural values, and modes of production. (*The Postcolonial Reader* 18)

According to Janmohamed, in this quotation, the African world without western civilisation is seen as obscure, irrational and out of control. Moreover, Westerners give the impression that (without this civilisation) Africans would still be barbaric, uncouth, and merciless. In brief, Africa would be synonymous to evil. This work counters this colonialist view. It deviates from this thought because it seeks to demonstrate that civilisation has done more harm than good in Africa. In fact, Chapter One of the work examines the African utopia Ngugi hints at in his text. Through misrepresentations like those mentioned by Cooper, the African's identity is distorted. Chapters Two and Three of this dissertation examine how Ngugi attempts both to deplore colonialist representation of the African and to rehabilitate this representation of identity in *Wizard of the Crow*.

Abiola Irele, on his part, focuses on aspects of African discourse. He sees African discourse as a movement emanating from the Black experience and as a historical consequence of conquest and domination (which left a sense of grievance). In *The African Imagination: Literature in Africa & the Black Diaspora*, he posits that:

The most striking aspect of African discourse is of course its character as a movement of contestation... The point that emerges from this aspect of African discourse is its strongly articulated sense of historical grievance... The fact itself has further implications, beyond its immediate reference to our relationship with the West, for it has determined in African (and Black) thinking and attitudes a conflation of the categories of race and culture, which still exerts an axiomatic force even in the postcolonial period. (68)

This historical consequence of conquest and domination does not only affect the African relationship with the West but it goes further, triggering the fusion of race and culture in the

African thinking and attitude even after the period of post-independence. The critic perceives this discourse as a straight dichotomy between Western civilisation— which he considers as aggressive— and the humane African sensibility. According to him, this discourse has implication for the African debate on modernity. In other words, the question of civilization has to be reviewed or questioned. This work is in line with Irele's point, but it goes further to demonstrate how the African identity, even after independence, is affected due to this past experience and how western ideology has impaired the African sensibility and mentality through mannerism, thought and attitude.

The two last critics whose works are reviewed mention the orality typical of African traditional literary forms and it is such forms that magical realists like Ngugi explore to pass across their message. The first of these two is Mark Mathuray. In *On the Sacred in African Literature: Old Gods and New Worlds*, he postulates that African literary criticism revolves around the question of authenticity as far as nationalist discourse is concerned. According to him, what makes an African text different is its ability to subvert or distance itself from the European literary forms. Also, the ability to elaborate and celebrate African values through the appropriation of the oral tradition (in form and content) including the use of myth and ritual equally makes the African text unique and authentic in quality (1). In a nutshell, Mathuray believes in the uniqueness of African texts through orality and their ability to challenge the European western tradition of realism. Similarly, Ato Quayson relates orality to reality in 'Magical realism and the African novel' (*The Cambridge Companion to the African Novel*). He assumes that orality in Africa is not just a mode of speech different from writing but it equally secures or strengthens a nation's entire way of life. Basically, the traditional aesthetics produced within African orality have an influence on society, even through its occurrences (159). Quayson therefore presents orality as an element which reinforces a way of life and is retrieved from or inspired by daily experiences. The proverb, for instance, expresses a fundamental truth which may be applied to occurring situations. Thus, resources of orality inspire African writing so as to establish a specific description of the African world.

This study agrees with the points of view mentioned above but it further demonstrates the cultural significance of orality and presents it as a means of creating awareness of who the indigenes are. Thanks to orality, it is possible to have an insight of the people, their environment, and their identity. The work equally highlights African cultural inheritance

through proverbs, songs, myths, stories and legends. Furthermore, it presents the domestication of oral tradition as a tool of writing back to the West and re-reading African history. It should be noted that magical realism greatly operates in oral tradition basically through short stories, myths and legends.

Similarly, the review of the works mentioned initially demonstrates the westernised nature of some magical realist writers through education and their devotion in celebrating African culture to the detriment of European culture. Furthermore, it presents the African world from the colonialists view (a world out of control, fraught with obscurity, barbarism and irrationality without civilization). Moreover, the review depicts African discourse as a movement emerging from the Black experience— as a historical effect of imperialism— which left a sense of grievance. In addition to the above, it portrays orality as typical of African traditional literary form through which some postcolonial writers pass their message. As contribution to research, this work sheds light on how the ills of colonialism and neo-colonialism (western ideologies of Christianity, education, democracy, to name a few) affect the African's identity. But the work does not limit itself at showing identity representation or black selfhood. It goes further to highlight ways in which phantasmagoria (psychical representation) is a panacea to the effects of the black experience.

Apart from the general introduction of this study which gives an overview of the complete work, the study consists of four chapters and a general conclusion. Chapter One, labelled "African Identity in the Pre-colonial Setting", examines the pure and uncontaminated African identity represented in *Wizard of the Crow*. Chapter Two is captioned "From Utopia to Dystopia". It focuses on the devalorisation of the African culture due to hybridity and other negative consequences of colonialism on the African ideologies. Chapter Three, "Fantasia, Identity Representation and Reconstruction", explores the possibility of recovering a utopian state notwithstanding the stains of colonialism. Chapter Four is titled "*Wizard of the Crow* and Creative Writing: An interdisciplinary Approach". The chapter shows how to initiate Cameroonian Secondary school Students into creative writing by resorting to the imaginary. The chapter presents how to Secondary School students can be propelled to write a folktale using their imagination. The general conclusion is a recapitulation of the aim of the study, its conceptual framework and the arguments raised in the work. It also makes suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER ONE

### AFRICAN IDENTITY IN THE PRE-COLONIAL SETTING

This chapter examines the African's identity in its natural state in the work under study. It equally presents the projection of identity representation of the pre-colonial subjects by showing its socio-cultural, economic and religious states (before colonialism). By so doing, the chapter discusses the valorisation of the African culture as it portrays Africa's rich cultural heritage that obtained in the pre-colonial era in Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow*. Having defined "identity" in the introduction of this work, it is worth mentioning the fact that identity can be seen from different perspectives. For instance, social identity comprises one's religious beliefs, gender, ethnicity and social class. At the level of cultural identifiers or cultural markers, they are traits (such as race, language, history, religious beliefs, nationality and even food) that shape the identity of a particular set of people. "The sameness" some individuals share to make up the same kind can be reflected on the colonised or Africans in the similar experiences they shared (slavery, imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism) and cultural markers. The identity of a set of people can cause hatred or subversion towards another person or another group. Elements defining identity and prompting subversion can be that of skin colour, language, customs, and place of birth or any factor that supposedly reveals the basic nature of a person or a group of people.

It cannot be denied that racism has existed throughout human history. Many people living in different societies are racists in one way or the other. However, the highest form of racism which exists is that of the Whites against the Blacks as mentioned by Mona Chalabi in "We're all Racists. But Racism by White People Matters More". This has influenced the black experience or the experience undergone by Africans. Njogu Waita in "Identity, Politics and Gender Dimensions in Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*" declares that

The question of Identity and the African personality runs deep into African history. It can be viewed against the backdrop of the decade's slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and now globalization. Throughout history, the aim has been uniform; to uproot or distort the cultural identity of the African people for the ultimate economic gain of the Western World. (46)

The Whites— as a set of people sharing the same beliefs and values— have always belittled the Blacks because they feel superior to them. The quotation above mentions slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism and globalization as means through which the West has distorted the African's identity. The colonisers have thus stripped Africans of their identity and have given them new ones mostly through their beliefs and philosophies; all of these to the detriment of Africa and Africans and to their own advantage. They highly influenced the identity of Africans and some of these Africans are now reclaiming their lost identity. The Black's conception of identity mostly goes along with that of the White in terms of superiority and inferiority. The colonised have accepted subjugation as they consciously or unconsciously accept the Western philosophy of the coloniser's superiority and the colonised's inferiority.

Africans have always had something peculiar— apart from the black experience— that makes them unique or one of a kind. This specificity are the cultural markers they bear and from which they can easily be identified as Africans. Some of these cultural identity markers can be seen at the level of their belief system and other embedded elements. One of the most important traits is that of custom and tradition. In the pre-colonial epoch, Africans equally believed in rituals and the power of healing. Their rituals can be rites carried out or practised for a specific purpose. But they are often considered to be superstitious by the colonisers.

Rituals in Africa are done in cases such as births, deaths, marriages and cleansing ceremonies. For instance, in *Wizard of the Crow*, Ngugi shows this inclination for ritual through the second theory (a curse from the cry of a wronged he-goat) that presumably accounts for the strange illness of the Ruler of Aburirian land. The land cleansing— prompted by epidemics that threatened the survival of the community — is necessary because of the ruler's ill-deeds. A concoction made of the Ruler's hair, salt, grass and some magic potion is given to a he-goat to swallow. Later on, the he-goat's mouth is sealed and its anus is sewed with thread and needle by a medicine man before it is cast out of the land. But before the goat's mouth is sealed, it utters a cry and that cry is believed (by some Aburirians) to be the cause of the Ruler's strange illness (4). The banished he-goat represents the ruler and is considered as being the evil-carrier while the concoction it swallows as the evil of the land. This may sound superstitious but it is the Aburirian (a sample of the Kenyan and African) cultural belief.

In the African context, goats and other animals are generally synonymous with agents of cleansing. Chinua Achebe portrays this aspect of the Nigerian (Igbo) culture in *Things Fall Apart* when he mentions, through the character of Ezeani, that “the evil you have done can ruin the whole clan... You will bring to the shrine of Ani tomorrow one she-goat, one hen, a length of cloth and a hundred cowries” (24). This shows that land cleansing is common practice in Africa and it projects African’s identity. The belief in traditional healing is equally very current in the African societies. In times of difficulty, Africans generally have recourse to the traditional method of healing or, better still, they consult herbalists. This choice is incited by the ancestral supernatural belief in the traditional healing. That is why, in the text, even characters that have been alienated resort to the Wizard of the Crow for healing. This is the case with Maritha and Maritho— fervent Christians— who visit the shrine during their spiritual struggle with the demon of adultery. Africans apparently have greater faith in African medicine or traditional healing than in the Western style of healing through medication and therapies.

The education domain in the pre-colonial period was ensured through recounting experiences, proverbs, stories, songs and others. Although it was informal, it was very rich and highly instructive. Ngugi makes a projection of cultural African identity through the use of Oral tradition. Oral tradition can be referred to as the way in which Africans do pass on tradition orally from one generation to another without written instruction. This entails the African way of celebrating and promoting their own culture through the use of proverbs, songs, legends, myths, and stories to name a few. Hazel. A. Verbina, says

The Oral tradition was the basis of African culture... The Nigerian oral tradition thrives from the indigenous beliefs and general attitudes to life. They transmit and store the values of their experiences by telling the tales to the younger generations as guide. Therefore, validating the assertion of Chinua Achebe (1975) in his essay, "the Image of Africa", (African) oral traditions do have significant functionality and serve a far more utilitarian purpose, which doubles as mainstream intention meant for cultural preservation and ultimate ‘survival’ of the people. Far from the overblown purpose of entertainment, African oral literature functions as a viable medium to educate, preserve history and foreground indigenous norms. (*Oral Tradition and Literary Dependency* 35)

Oral tradition is not only seen as a form of entertainment but equally as a means of bringing out wisdom in the African language and tradition. It is through expression that Africans incorporate everyday patterns of life. The act of transmitting tradition to younger generations enables the storage and preservation of cultural values. It is equally a way of enabling younger generations to learn from experience, master their culture, and know who they are and where they come from because this is what makes their identity as Africans. Oral African tradition is also a way of writing back to the West to tell them that Africa had a culture and was not that empty before they arrived and imposed their own culture. Dennis Lee states in “Writing in Colonial Space” that, it is a way of writing English in our own way so that it says home to us. He equally posits that

I shall be speaking with “words”, but not merely those you find in a dictionary.  
I mean all the resources of the verbal imagination form of a single word, from  
single words through verse forms, conventions about levels of style,  
characteristic versions of the hero, resonant structure of the plot. And I use my  
own experience with words because I know it best. (3)

According to Denis Lee, to convey feelings or experience may not necessarily be in the form of a language that can be clear. For him, to show experience or to express thoughts, one should use a form of language in which he is at ease with even if it is hazy to others. The choice of words might not forcefully be the ones found in a dictionary or in a conventional manner but the essence is the transfer of experience through words. To know your experience best is to present them through the words you are comfortable with. This statement tallies with the Oral African tradition because some terms or statement employed in the course of relating a story, legend or proverb may be ambiguous. Also, the choice of words found in songs and myths might be hazy and not even standardized. This is because the individual transmitting tradition knows best the experience he is trying to convey and believes it should be done in a form of language which suits the context in order to transfer it in a pure state.

Ngugi makes use of oral tradition through Kamiti’s father when he tells the latter about his grandfather, Kamiti Wa Kienjuku, considered as a legend. This enables him to decipher the source of his healing powers. Kamiti’s father states that “With us, seers are born holding a seashell; and my son you were born gripping a shell in your little fist” (*Wizard of the Crow*, 295). For a non-African, this revelation may sound obscure and ambiguous because he is not

part of the experience and does not master the culture or the tradition recounted in such an elevated style as mentioned by Denis Lee.

In the text, the context in which oral tradition takes place is different because we are in a post-colonial era (because of the colonial experience). Nyawira uses traditional education to instruct Gaciru and Gacigua (Vinjinia's children) when she narrates the myth of the ogre to them. She tells them that the Marimu were humanlike creatures who sometimes fed on humans including children. She describes these creatures that have two mouths and four eyes, some in front and some behind the head are well-hidden by the creature's long hair which falls over its shoulder (*Wizard of the Crow*, 154). The morality in this myth is that one should be careful with visible appearance of humans because they can appear to be good but cunningly dangerous or harmful within. The circumstances in which she narrates this myth (in her office— a western space— instead of the traditional way beside a fire-side at night) indicates the deteriorating state of African tradition. At the same time it shows that no matter the situation in which Africa is found, there are still some people who valorise and strive for the preservation of the African's culture. The Western educational system produced some hybrids that are able to maintain their identity to the advantage of the African culture and tradition. These Africans, such as Ngugi and Achebe, use the Western education acquired to write back to the West and to promote African culture.

In *Wizard of the Crow*, protagonists like Kamiti and Nyawira after having acquired Western education, become university graduates with nationalistic spirits. They are aware of the poor political situation in their country and strive to use the acquired education and patriotic spirit to transform the state to a utopian one. Meanwhile, Agrigaigai (policeman and traditionalist) is a hybrid who uses his position as a policeman to save the Wizard of the Crow from many situations. He unconsciously enables Nyawira to escape when Kaniuru and his men are waiting to arrest her in the Mars Cafe. He equally saves Kamiti's life when he prevents Kaniuru from shooting him. Agrigaigai believes his promotion is as a result of African magic and equally believes in African medicine as he is the one who suggests that the Wizard of the Crow should be called in the USA to heal the Ruler. He is seen as a traditionalist because he is the main narrator of the story (as he portrays the African's sense of community life). People gather, share and converse with him as he narrates the story. At the end of the novel, Nyawira thank him for the gift of life for he has been of great help to

the Wizard of the Crow. These characters are able to bring out something good out of an unfortunate situation by using the colonial heritage to fight for the recovery of African lost values.

The author uses the character of Constable Agrigaigai Gatherer (A.G.) as a narrator in the novel to present an example of nationalists who are deeply-rooted in their culture. He is a traditionalist couched in modernity. Though a policeman (Western ideology), he acts as a storyteller as people gather around him to listen to his encounters with the Wizard of the Crow. The text states that

... Constable Agrigaigai Gatherer always found himself surrounded by crowds wanting to hear story after story about the Wizard of the Crow. It was then that people started calling him fondly by his initials, A.G., some listeners allowing that they stood for “attorney general of storytelling.” ...When the setting was a village, a market place, or the crossroads, Constable Agrigaigai felt charged with energy on seeing the rapt faces of the men, women and children waiting to catch his every word. But whatever the setting, his listeners came away with food of the spirit: resilient hope that no matter how intolerable things seemed, a change for the better was always possible. (96)

The result of this gathering is the representation of the African cultural value because it is considered as an ancestral heritage. It presents the pre-colonial epoch when people used to meet to tell and share stories or experiences (though it was mostly done at night). Such instances have almost been dismissed in the modern period where people now focus more on labour, working day and night in order to earn a living especially with the high living standard caused by neo-colonialism and globalization resulting into a tremendous increase in misery and poverty in African societies. A.G., though living in this new world, sticks to oral tradition. He praises and sees the Wizard of the Crow as a god-sent who has come to free Aburiria from the pains inflicted by colonialism... This is why he keeps mentioning *Hakiya Mungu* (righteousness of God) whenever he talks about the Wizard of the Crow. The latter, being a traditionalist, prompts A.G.’s dedication to him for he himself strongly believes in tradition and culture.

Proverbs as an item embedded in oral tradition are expressions (African wisdom) of basic truths which are applied to occurring situations in life. In the novel, Ngugi uses them as

mediums to instruct, direct, correct and warn the society. For instance, we have a proverb in the text which states that: “Two blind men cannot show each other the way” (67). The author uses this proverb in relation to the Kenyan society at the time when poverty was the order of the day. A good number of people were jobless and it was difficult to make ends meet. Through Wariara, this proverb indicates that two people under the same condition cannot be of help to each other. Thus, the best solution is to be parted from one another in the quest of better conditions. Another states that: “Birds of the same feather may flock together in times of peace, but when there is danger, each flies alone” (75). In this proverb, Ngugi portrays the belligerent actions of the oppressors towards the poor (as the authority threatens the peace of these miserable people who have accepted their fate and resort to begging). He equally presents a situation whereby the oppressed cannot face their enemies and fight for their rights as they instead cowardly runaway in the presence of the enemy for the safety of their lives. Furthermore, he presents one as a warning as it goes thus “A person who chases after fame and wealth and love is like a child who leaks honey from the blade of the knife. While tasting the sweetness of honey, he risks damaging his tongue” (211). In other words, Ngugi advises that one should not be greedy to the point of doing things to the detriment of others; because he or she will only be hurting him or herself. Similarly, through the character of Ambassador Gemstone, the author posits that “Throw peanuts to a monkey you will distract it long enough to be able to snatch its baby” (641). Here, he raises awareness, calling on people not to get distracted but to focus on their objectives. In this part of the novel, he demonstrates how politicians connive to blindfold and manipulate the people in order to get their support.

Sayings are also very common in the African culture. Just like proverbs, they warn and direct the society. They often have meanings that are different from the simple meanings of the words they contain. Ngugi uses some African sayings in the novel to instruct the society. For example, in the hope of grabbing a job, Kamiti gets excited and is self-confident over an undetermined interview with Tajirika. But then, he acknowledges the fact that everything has not yet been settled when he says “One should not count one’s chickens before they are hatched” (58). This saying holds that one should not draw conclusions before hand or should not claim ownership of anything until it is acquired. There is another saying which holds that “Even the most skilled barber needs another to cut his hair” (208). This indicates that everybody needs help at one point in life. It projects the essence of unity and corporation. The saying also serves as a reminder that people have to work hand in glove in order to attain an established objective for the good of the society.

Furthermore, the African saying that states that “He who eats alone dies alone” (356) is uttered in the text by the wizard of the Crow when he warns Kaniuru of the repercussions of avariciousness and selfishness. A selfish person should always be ready to face the consequences of his actions. Another instance occurs when the Sikokiuru tells the Ruler to be careful of his entourage (referring to Machokali). He states that “The bug that bites one’s back is carried in what one wears” (521). This statement is a warning which highlights betrayal or the deceitful nature of men. It calls on people not to trust everyone around them and to know the type of people whom they trust. There are other examples of sayings found in the text. One states that: “A Donkey shows gratitude through its kicks” (535). This simply says that appreciation is not always shown for a service rendered. A good action is often repaid with a bad one. Another notes that “The sun never waits for anybody, not even a king” (573). This saying simply acknowledges the fact that nothing can prevent an occurrence from taking place. No matter what people do or say nature can never be cheated upon.

It should be noted that most of the sayings and proverbs found in the novel are Waswahili and Kiswahili sayings and proverbs (all varieties of the Swahili language). Ngugi challenges Western sayings and proverbs through these African varieties by presenting the latter as meaningful and sustainable. Kaniuru, boasting of his wealth in the sight of Wangahu — who showers him with praises— states the African saying which holds that “the early birds catches the worm” (286). Through Wangahu who is pretty much fond of the Western culture, the writer renders the Western sayings meaningless when he says “Hurry and Hurry-it broke up the house of Harry and Harriet.” Kaniuru is not amused by the English proverb (as he calls it) and rectifies it by saying “as you like it, for as the saying goes, the one in need is the one who presses his need” (286). Ngugi uses this instance in the novel— where proverbs from both cultures are presented— to demonstrate the wisdom and the power of language found in Africans sayings and proverbs. These proverbs and sayings, as well as the metaphorical language in which they are expressed, are significant cultural markers of the pre-colonial African’s identity.

In the African society in general, songs play an important role since they depict the socio-cultural milieu and the state of mind of the singer. Like proverbs, they put a stamp of originality and authenticity on the text. They are sometimes used for relaxation or to impel courage in characters. Songs are also important in bringing out tradition. There are often

accompanied by gestures that express feelings (appreciation or discontent). During the inauguration of the Marching to Heaven site, the women sing songs and perform gestures to show their dissatisfaction as they clamour for Rachael's liberation and condemn the Marching to Heaven Project. These women sing and display their buttocks to express their disgust for the occurrences in Aburiria. What they do is simply a simulation of what their female ancestors used to do as a last resort when they had reached a point where they could no longer take shit from a despot: they urinated and farted loudly (*Wizard of the Crow* 249-250). Songs that tally with signs and gestures are typical of the African culture as they convey moods or the states of mind. From this quotation, we can see that it is a practice that has been existing for ages.

Other African cultural identifiers are traditional dishes, outfits, names and languages to name a few. An example of a dish frequently mentioned in the text and considered as a cultural identity marker is *Ugali*. This is a Kenyan dish made of maize flour (cornmeal) generally eaten with vegetable or soup. To show how traditional it is, Ngugi presents how it is eaten (generally with the fingers) when he narrates "Nyawira cooked *Ugali*. Dipping *ugali* balls in the broth that Kamiti had made earlier in the day, they ate their last dinner together in near silence, each self-absorbed" (124). Through this quotation and the regular mention of *ugali*, the author promotes this traditional dish which can be seen as an ancestral legacy.

Africans can easily be identified by their names and languages. Names in Africa generally have meanings in African languages. Names mean a lot and are often believed to influence the being given the name or/and the family. We have Nigerian names like Abeni which means "we asked for her, and behold, we got her" in Yoruba. Ngugi makes great use of African names in the text in order to show that characters are first of all Africans despite the fact that their minds are not free from colonial influence since they are very much attracted to the western culture, and this, to the detriment of the African culture. They are Africans and will always be identified as Africans even if they change their names. It is noticeable that those who are in the quest of the white identity are psychologically unstable and think only about their self-interest. Those in favour of African names and identity are nationalists who want to conserve the African culture and are striving for communal good.

In the pre-colonial era, Africans knew nothing about Christian names. At birth, a child was given a name that has a specific meaning or signification in its mother tongue. This practice continues in the present era with the difference that Christian names given names of which the signification and the origin is unknown— are added upon the African's name which becomes the family name. As mentioned in the introductory part of this work, Ngugi (baptised as James Ngugi) changed his name to NgugiWaThiongo in order to best identify with his African origin. To celebrate the African culture, he presents characters in his plays and novels with African names. In *Wizard of the Crow*, the author present characters who modifies their names by deleting their Christian names as he did. For instance, Kamiti was born Comet Kamiti but later on changed his name to KamitiWaKimiri (63). Comet was his Christian name and Kamiti is his African name which means 'Committees' (like a guardian or one in charge of the others). Ngugi probably gave the protagonist this name because of his role in the novel. Nyawira prefers to be called 'Nyawira' rather than Grace. She was born EngenethiNyawira Charles Mathew Mugwanja often written as E.N.C.M.M. Wangahu.

She was not very keen on Engenethi and became Grace Mugwanja... Her father liked Grace more than Engenethi, and Roithi, her mother, liked Engenethi more than Grace, and both hated Mugwanja with equal intensity... She herself continued struggling with these markers of identity, and after going to college she eventually settled for NyawirawaWangahu,...(78).

It should be noted that Nyawira acquired the Christian name 'Grace' back at Brilliant Girls High School because she used to say grace (prayer). Unlike her parents— who favoured Christian names to the native names which they detested— she asserts herself as an African thereby projecting the African identity representation through names. African names are highly symbolic and rich in meaning as earlier mentioned. Characters like Tajirika— who has always dreamt of becoming a White and even has recourse to surgery which renders his left leg and arm white— can be considered as one of those who is alienated. He changeS his name and declares himself Emperor Titus Flavious White Head after the TV announcement of the Ruler's Self Induced Disappearance (753). Through his (Vinjinia), the meaning of the name 'Nyawira' and 'Ng'endo' is revealed in the text:

They had married and had thought of naming their first child, a girl, Nyawira, but then they decided against it because Nyawira meant "work" and they did not

want to condemn their child, even symbolically, to the life of a labourer. Instead they called her Ng'endo to symbolize their hopes for a life journey better than theirs as teachers earning a miserable income. (450)

It is believed in the African culture that names given at birth greatly affect the personality or the future of an individual. Tajiriki and his wife choose their daughter's name with the hope that she will have a brighter future than theirs. Ngugi does not share their view about the signification of "Nyawira" and rather relates the name to hard work and freedom through the character of Nyawira (who works for a better government by fighting for justice and freedom).

Language is another fundamental African identity marker. The African language is considered as one of the most important ancestral legacies. After gaining independence, most African countries made the former colonial masters' languages their official languages. However, in recent years, African countries have noticed that their languages are disappearing because of these colonial languages. Consequently, most African nationalists and governments strive for the conservation of African languages through the promotion and the establishment of an African Language Department in higher academic institutions. For instance, we have the department of "Langues et Cultures Camerounaises" in the Higher Teacher Training College of Yaoundé - Cameroon.

As nationalists, Ngugi and some of his colleagues advocated the creation of a department of African Language and Literature in the place of the unfamiliar Department of English in the University of Nairobi in the late 1960's. Ngugi's advocacy of this department was not in vain, "The department's nationalist mission was unmistakable: The aim, in short, should be to orientate ourselves towards placing Kenya, East Africa, and then Africa in the centre. All other things are to be considered in their relevance to our situation, and their contribution towards understanding ourselves" (*Postcolonialism in the Wake of the Nairobi Revolution*, 10). He believed that the Department of African Language was more acquainted with and masters the African situation. This was unlike the foreign Department of English which was out to promote colonialist culture. In most of his writings, this writer promotes the Kenyan culture through the Gikuyu language and varieties of Swahili language like Kiswahili, Waswahili and Sheng.

*Wizard of the Crow* as earlier mentioned, is his first novel written in Gikuyu language with its original title *MuragiWaKagogo*. Most of the sayings, proverbs and some of the words found in the text are in Swahili. To valorize the African culture, the author makes use of the African proverb which states that: “The bug that bites one’s back is carried in what one wears”. He later puts the transcription in Kiswahili which gives “*Kikulachokimonguonimwako*” (521). The linear translation of this proverb as coined by the Kiswahili gives: *Kikulacho*— Insect (a specific insect), *Kimo*— Stature, *Nguoni*—Sleeve, *Mwako*—Combustion. In other words the insect found on someone’s sleeve bites or burns. In the novel, Agrigaigai, in all his utterances, (especially when he narrates his encounters with the Wizard of the crow) states “True! *HakiyaMungu*” which means the righteousness of God. He uses this expression each time to confirm the deeds of the Wizard of the Crow. “...at that very moment, A.G. shouted, True! *HakiyaMungu*, that is exactly what the Wizard of the Crow did...Let nobody lie you— the Wizard of the Crow will never die. *True HakiyaMungu*”(766). A.G. sees the latter as a liberator or a deity who has come to free Aburiria from the chains of the colonial products.

Tajirika, frightened with the idea that Sikiokuu might harm him, makes this Waswahili statement: *Pakaakiendapanyahutawala*. The linear translation of this statement is cat walking, mouse strips. Which means the mouse takes the power when the cat is not around. He therefore dreads the idea of being eaten up by the powerful rat (299). The Sheng language is used in the text by Sikiokuu when he tries humour to ease the tension on seeing wild and bitter Tajirika who is brought into his office carrying a bucket of shit. He states “*Hui, sasa, story zako? Ni ninimakalauwanakubringiyakinaa? Ni haariwunakuitia?*” which means: present your story, what is the *KubringiyaKalau* irony? Is children’s thrust dedicated? This is a sort of child’s play in the African context. Ngugi makes use of many other Swahili words in the text such as *Hakunamatata* (no worries) and *Napana* (no).

It should be noted that African languages generally have common sounds, words, and syntactic structure in sentences. In the construction of an African sentence, the determiner comes after its noun. For instance, *Shauriyako* (629) means ‘your counsel’ but the linear translation will give ‘counsel your’. By presenting this piece of work in Gikuyu and using varieties of the Swahili language, he valorises the African culture through language (for language as earlier mentioned is one of the fundamental cultural markers of identity representation). It can also be said that the writer’s choice to use African languages other than

Kenyan national languages suggests that Ngugi is interested in celebrating the identity of all Africans as a people. Linguistic diversity here is symbolic of the continent's rich cultural heritage.

The pre-colonial African society depended on cowries and barter for commercial exchange. The society's economy was mainly based on agricultural, hunting and livestock. As Kamiti's father narrates "We are descended in part from hunters who dwelled in the forest, mostly, and came to know it well..."(294). People at that time owned as much pieces of land as possible which they variously exploited. Communal life was prevalent and a great man was known from the number of children he had and the output of farms and livestock. When Kaniuru visits the shrine (for the protection of his wealth), the Wizard of the Crow asks him the reason for his visit and he replies that his coming is not an ill wind but the healthy breeze of property. On hearing this, the Wizard of the Crow asks him if it is all about land, cows and goats (356). His reason for asking this is because as a traditionalist— who is deeply rooted in culture— he evaluates wealth in terms of land (agriculture and livestock).

In the pre-colonial epoch, Africans had their own ancestral theistic beliefs. They believed in supernatural gods which they worshipped and considered as being their guides and protectors. The African identity has greatly been affected by Western invasion. The colonial experience, together with hybridity evokes the question of religious beliefs which have changed the African culture to the detriment of the African belief system. The novel presents the arrival of the missionaries with their own god as a decline of this traditional belief system. Post independence African societies are stepped in Christianity (the Whiteman's religion) in such a way that the traditional belief is subverted. It is believed that Christianity was a tool or a strategy by colonisers to take control of territories.

Ngugi demonstrates the insignificance of Christianity in the African society. According to him, the Whiteman's religion has no place in the African community because the traditional belief system has always proven to be the best since most Africans always resort to it for solution. We have the case of Vinjina, Maritha and Mariko that are devoted Christians. Vinjina turns to the Wizard of the Crow for solution when Tajirika, her husband suffers from the IF illness as words stuck in his throat. She also visits the shrine when Tajirika

is imprisoned by Sikiokuu and when he beats her up mercilessly. Mariko and Maritha visit the Wizard of the Crow to heal their lust for other people's flesh which prayers could not heal.

These characters go against the church in Aburiria which forbids its members from visiting the shrine. Tradition is revealed to be efficient as compared to Christianity because the Wizard of the Crow is able to solve their problems that the church seems unable to solve. Ngugi uses these cases as a write-back to those who consider Christianity superior and claim that tradition is useless and evil. The shuttling between Christianity and tradition that are supposed to be opposites projects the syncretism practised by many African Christians. It should be noted that this fluctuation changes their personality as well as their identity as they unknowingly integrate beliefs and practices from both belief systems.

Africa has always been considered as the heart of evil as seen in the works of most critics of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The Westerners generally believe that Africa is fraught with evil, superstition and witchcraft. They do so to the extent that they think traditional healing is part of sorcery. In the period before colonisation, healers used plants and other natural resources for healing. Some of these healers were born with the capacity to see things beyond the ordinary sight. Ngugi portrays this in the text when Kamiti's father tells Kamiti about the supernatural powers the latter's grandfather had.

...Nearly all were healers. There was not an illness against which nature did not provide the necessary juices of life. Not only were they healers, but some had the gift of seeing things hidden from the ordinary eyes. Some could even fly like birds. Consider your grandfather,... He sometimes found himself atop a mountain impossible for humans to climb or floating in the middle of a lake though he did not know how to swim. (294)

It is obvious that supernatural forces operate here. But this does not necessarily mean it is synonymous with evil. It is said that Kamiti's grandfather, KamitiwaKienjeku, lived with the British fighters in the mountains during the war: teaching them how to be at peace with one another, settling conflicts and cleansing them of evil after their confrontation with the enemy. From this part of the novel, one can decipher that Kamiti's grandfather was an agent of peace and had virtues though a sorcerer. Kamiti is the version of his grandfather in the modern period. We are told about his ability to fly like a bird and to have a bird's-eye view as he

could have a panoramic view of all the regions and landscape in Aburiria (38). He is a sorcerer; but one who advocates peace and justice in the society by healing his people and guiding his land.

Drugs or medicines made by the Whites are plants and other natural resources (same used by African natives) that have undergone some scientific processes. This modern medicine is now prescribed to Africans as a discovery. Ngugi portrays traditional healing as therapy done in a native way. This is why he brings in the character of the Wizard of the Crow: one who uses his patients' imagination or psyche to heal them. For instance, he heals Tajirika from his IF illness by showing him the negative aspect of his alienation from his origins and culture in favour of the Whiteman's cultural identity (181-188). Also, he cures the couple, Maritha and Mariko from their lust for other people's bodies. He indirectly gives them tips on how they could yearn for each other's body again and thus solves the problem they once thought could not be solved. Furthermore, he helps the Ruler get rid of his IF illness in America by simply asking the incident that took place before the illness. From this, he deduces that the illness is related to the Ruler's wish to be a White and the anger he harbours towards Whites because of the ill-treatment he suffers from them. To confirm his assumption, he proceeds with the mirror test whereby both the Blacks (his ministers) and the Whites (his physicians) have to pass in front of the mirror for him to see the Ruler's reaction after each passage. This succeeds and confirms his assumptions as Dr Din Furyk's passage prompts the Ruler's violent reactions (491). By establishing the Seven Herbs of Grace, the Wizard of the Crow provides tips of healthy living to its patients:

Though they performed divination, Kamiti and Nyawira based their practice on the philosophy that illness of the mind, soul, and body were bred by social life. They even wrote down seven suggestions of healthy living:

*Take care of the body, for it is the temple of the soul*  
*Watch ye what you eat and drink all the time*  
*Greed makes death greedy for life*  
*Cigarettes arrest life, alcohol holds the mind prisoner*  
*Life is a common stream for which plant, animal, and human draw*  
*The good comes from balance*  
*Don't abandon yours for a mirage. (275)*

This is a sort of therapy practised by the Wizard of the Crow because it believes that most of the problems faced or illnesses had by their patients stem directly from their lifestyles and futile wishes (like the IF illness suffered by Tajirika, Vinjina and the Ruler). Thus, the Wizard of the Crow is a healer or a sorcerer who watches over his people. Ngugi presents this character as the healer of the evil of colonialism in Aburiria: his healing starts from the individual's soul, body and then extends to all the nation.

This chapter has argued that the African of pre-colonial Africa had an identity of his/her own before the ravages of colonialism set in as portrayed by Ngugi in the work studied. The writer shows the pure state of African ideologies by presenting the socio-cultural milieu of the pre-colonial setting embedding traditional practices. Cleansing through rituals here is seen as an ancestral heritage. Education in this milieu is done through oral tradition. Other cultural markers that display the African identity are dishes, names and the linguistic cultural heritage which is valorised by the author through the use of other African languages. In the economic domain, he presents how the communal life was prevalent at the time without the use of Western entities. The belief system as portrayed is based on ancestral theism and power of healing which is set in the supernatural. Through *Wizard of the Crow*, Ngugi demonstrates an arena where identity is presented in an uncontaminated state. Aspects of identity derived from the pre-colonial period are considered by nationalists as cultural values or heritage. This explains the why some nationalists still hang on the sleeves of these values, not wanting to let go while the colonial experience is gradually retrieving it from Africa and the Africans.

## CHAPTER TWO

### FROM UTOPIA TO DYSTOPIA

This chapter examines the devalorisation of the African culture due to western hybridity –emerging from neo-colonialism – and associated colonialist influence on post-independence Africans (especially politicians) who have been alienated from the African culture. It equally presents the chaotic state of the post-independent African society from the political, economic, social, and cultural perspectives. Finally, it portrays the adulteration of postcolonial subject's identity because of colonialist influence in *Wizard of the Crow*. From the outset, Africans had their way of life and knew nothing about the Western world or their principles till the arrival of the colonisers. The postcolonial claims of the utopic African society has been presented in Chapter one. But when the colonisers came along with their ideology, opposing and downgrading the African ideology, they caused the deterioration of pre-existing African values. Although the Whites claim to have given independence to African societies, they have left huge imprints of their culture and ideologies all over Africa. This makes them more present than ever on the continent (even after independence).

These Western ideologies, though not superior to the African world view and culture which are being marginalised, are believed to be best and this affects Africans' ways of seeing things. Culturally, the African identity is deeply affected and adulterated by hybridity. Nationalism is perceived here as the possibility of deracinating the inculcated cultural identity of the African people to the detriment of the economic, social and political gain of the Western World. *Wizard of the Crow* presents the African identity in post-colonial African societies. It depicts hybridity as the outcome of colonialism and this outcome is revealed as being devastating to Africans, to their cultural and their psychical identity as well as to African societies.

Even after independence, the Western culture is still dominant and has eclipsed the African culture in Africa. Thus, the colonised is “the other” who adheres to his/her ex-colonial master's philosophy and culture. In these societies, Civilization can be seen as imperialism in disguise. Edward W. Said says that: “At some very basic level, imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is

distant, that is lived on and owned by others. For all kind of reasons it attracts some people and often involves untold misery for others” (*Culture and Imperialism* 7). This quotation simply demonstrates the fact that the colonisers are still able to control Africa, including its occupants, through neo-colonialism. Civilization simply serves as a strategy used by imperialist powers to fulfil their hidden agenda. Ngugi acknowledges the fact that imperialism, under the guise of civilization, continues in Kenya after independence by asserting through his protagonist that:

I saw this: around the seventeenth century Europe impregnated some in Africa with its evil. This pregnancy gave birth to the slave driver of the slave plantation, who mutated into the colonial driver of the colonial plantation, who years later mutated into the neo-colonial pilots of the postcolonial plantation. Is he now mutating into the modern driver and pilot of a global plantation?” (*Wizard of the Crow*. (681)

In a nutshell, this statement recounts the colonial experience and its continuation through neo-colonialism and globalization. The Colonisers came to Africa with the pretext of bringing civilization (western ideology such as Christianity) meanwhile their aim was to gain territories and establish political, economic and cultural dominance over Africa. George Ryga attests this in his *Ecstasy of Rita Joe* when he states that: “... long ago the white man come with Bibles to talk to my people, who had land. They talk for hundred years... then we had all the Bibles and the white man had all our land” (*The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, 44). Thus, upon their coming, they had a plan of action intended to accomplish their goal. After imperialism and the colonial epoch, comes the post-independent period. The latter brings in the Western ideology of neo-colonialism (which is technically imperialism generally conveyed through African leaders) with globalization as its device. The independence granted to African countries was just a strategy to establish another form of colonisation in order not to retribute the African’s stolen identity.

Neo-colonialism, through hybridity, has affected the vision of Africans including their mentality and attitude. Ngugi creates a situation where characters that have been brainwashed with the Western notions of civilization see themselves as the ‘self’ because they believe in the white man’s superiority and in their ability to have attained this superiority. The Ruler and his Ministers are at the peak of Aburiria because they are involved in Western policies.

Whenever any of these characters is promoted to an upper level in the administration, he feels closer to the Whites and believes he is as superior as they. They even go to the extent of procuring themselves anything that can make them most equal to the Whites. Kaniuru, who is a teacher at Eldares Polytechnic, becomes Deputy Chairman of Marching to Heaven Project. Just after this appointment, he sends the press several pictures of himself so that he can be popular and venerated in the society. He even offers himself a brand new expensive Mercedes-Benz with a personal driver to drive him around and open the door for him (285-286). Tajirika is another character whose greatest wish is not only to become as powerful as a White, but equally to become a White. And though his wife does not want to become a White, she opts for the style of Western women and desires to always remain young:

...the cure the Wizard of the Crow had prescribed had been in response to Tajirika's desire to become a white Englishman, moreover an ex-colonial type. The white American male was desirable ideal. Yes. He should have aspired to be a white American male... Tajirika and Vinjimia were soon back in New York, and after one week Vinjimia was the happy recipient of a more youthful face and firmer breasts and Tajirika had added a white left leg to his one-white-armed body. Half white, half black, he always wore pants and long-sleeved shirts, and of course a glove on the right hand. When people commented on the glove he explained that it was his way of commemorating the first time his minister's hand had shaken the Ruler's. (741-742)

Tajirika is obsessed with the idea of becoming a White that his drive takes control over his thoughts. He travels abroad, spends a huge amount of money just for his wife and himself to satisfy their urges and become a model of a western couple (without even taking into consideration the repercussion or the side effects of the surgery on their bodies). He even goes further to change his name from Titus Tajirika to Emperor Titus Vespasianus Whitehead when he takes over the Ruler after the latter had gone Self Induced Disappearance (SID). Going through all of these, according to Tajirika is attaining his objective— perfection— because for him, White is synonymous with perfection. He thus changes his identity to the detriment of the African identity.

This is just to show to what extent Western culture has destroyed the African psyche. These characters, whose identities have been affected, set those who are still somehow close to African culture and tradition at the margin. This class of people in

African societies are those who sold their African values or exchanged them for that of the colonisers. Meanwhile, the conservatives and the nationalists are those who strive to recover these lost values in order to restore the African's lost identity. The novel presents characters like Nyawira, Kamiti and A.G who do not focus on Western riches or ideologies. Rather, they remain dedicated to African values and preserve the black identity. Most Africans in the post-colonial period are obsessed with the Western culture. Some are always at their former colonial master's disposal and they tend to forget or refuse to acknowledge the fact that the West cares less for them.

There is the case of Kamiti's grandfather who, when alive, was dedicated to the British. He fought by their side during their war of independence, healed and even counselled them on how to be at peace with one another. However, he is killed by these same British. This is seen in the text when Kamiti inquires about his grandfather: "How did my grandfather die?... his grandfather, Kamiti Wa Kienjeku had been a holy seer, a spiritual leader working with forces fighting the British in the war of independence. The British shot him dead one day, but his body was never found" (294). A similar instance occurs on the day of the so-called National Self-Renewal. On this day an uprising takes place and in the course of escaping— Dr Furyk, Dr Kaboca and company— rush towards the American sheltered place. Unfortunately for Kaboca who arrives after the others and the gates close right in front his eyes, he is not allowed to enter the haven because he is a Black. Whereas, his closest White colleague, Dr Furyk, is allowed in. Upon insisting on knowing why he is shot out and trying to identify himself, he is shot following instructions of Ambassador Gemstone who ordered that only the Whites should be allowed in without questioning in the course of escaping from the uprising (691). This only shows how the Whites can be selfish and heartless when it comes to Blacks.

Politics in one way or the other it brings uncertainty, instability, and insecurity to Africa and to the African mind. War, displacement, misery and poverty are the product of this legacy that weakens the African society. We have such instances causing confusion, rivalry and division in the Kenyan society (for example the Luo and the Gikuyu tribes are always in conflict). It is clear that the political culture that invaded African societies is inefficient due to the attitude of leaders or the government in place.

Ngugi portrays the ineffectiveness of post-independent government through its poor governance that results into a discontented society. Political distrust emerges due to poor governance and incompetent leaders; leaders who do not have the commitment of the people as their priority. Post-independence African leaders focus more on strengthening relationships with the West rather than concentrating on solving problems at home. The attention given to the West by African leaders is not reciprocal. They venerate Western leaders meanwhile these leaders consider them as ordinary Blacks and even nonentities. For instance, the Ruler (who is highly respected and even juxtaposed with God in Aburiria) during his visit in America upon the Marching to Heaven Project, is put to shame by the American government. First of all, he is disappointed because he thinks he is going to be received, shake hands and sit next to the US president. Unfortunately for him, when he arrives there he sees thousands of people (and there is no possibility of approaching the US president) and discovers that the occasion is all about raising money for the American president's charities.

He feels humiliated given the fact that, in his country, he is at the centre of every attention and is highly respected but invisible here. As if that is not enough, he gets more humiliated when he invites his entire delegation for a luncheon in his special dining room to receive the Board of Directors of the Global Bank. He makes a fool of himself by asking the protocol officer where he thinks the chairman of the board should sit. His guests do not show up but instead send a letter to the effect that the bank cannot release funds to support his project. This turns out to be a pill difficult for him to swallow and causes him to develop the IF illnesses (485). When the Ruler returns to Aburiria, the American Ambassador, Gabriel Gemstone, and a special envoy of the American president decide to visit the State House. He believes they have come to apologize for the humiliation brought upon him in the US. But that is just a mere dream because they have instead come to propose something else to him: democracy and globalization making him more upset (577).

Ngugi presents the inability of post-independence African leaders to manage their countries properly. They focus more on futile missions and exchange with the West to satisfy their avarice while the society are deteriorating. When social change is advocated, most of these rulers consider the act as a nuisance and inflict more pains on the dissidents.

The Ruler was proud of having eliminated seven thousand and seven hundred citizens in just seven days for posing a threat to the stability through protest in the major cities demanding social change. He would take this opportunity, he said, to renew old friendships and earn their trust by showing that he had not forgotten how to use strong-arm tactics against dissidents. (579)

Through this assertion, the novel portrays how post-colonial African leaders refuse to listen to their people in pains and instead sacrifice them to impress the West. This shows the despotic nature of post independence African rulers. The Ruler considers his own people as enemies not knowing that his real enemies are those he is trying to impress. His people are just militating for positive change for the benefit of the society.

The contemporary political system, and even the judiciary system, is fraught with corruption and avariciousness as politicians manipulate each other and even the entire society in their quest for power to their own advantage. Ministers go to the extent of harming and killing one another just to obtain power. For instance, in the text, the Ministers (especially Machokali and Sikiokuu) are always in conflict and compete to obtain the Ruler's favour. The rivalry between these two increases in such a way that they even plot against one another. When Kaniuru gets into politics and enters the political arena, he becomes worse than the other ministers. He even lies publicly against his friend and mentor, Sikiokuu, just to justify his theft. Tajirika, on his part, fluctuates between remaining loyal to his old friend and benefactor (Machokali) and gripping unto Sikiokuu's sleeves.

His relationship to his former friend and benefactor would depend on the relative strength of Machokali and Sikiokuu in the game of power. If Machokali should prove the stronger, then Tajirika would tell him everything he knew about what Sikiokuu had been cooking in Machokali's absence. But if Sikiokuu proved himself the stronger, then Tajirika would continue on his side and forget the past. (433)

The political world turns out to be a place where there is neither pity nor friendship. It is a jungle where the survival of the fittest is the only rule. One needs to cheat in order to win. Tajirika being a good player ends up being the next Ruler. This section simply presents the damage caused by the Western policies on the African psyche. Instead of ensuring the good governance of their people, they focus on destroying one another in the quest for power which they use their personal interest.

The discourse on identity, as the text tries to demonstrate, presents the fact that things are dysfunctional in Africa due to the Whiteman's post-independence policy of democracy. This system is seen as irrelevant to the African context; yet, it is still established in African societies. It is obvious that Africa was not ready for democracy after independence. This is because Africans have not mastered the concept. In the pre-colonial epoch, the traditional set-up was well organized with the presence of a ruler (chosen by an oracle or proceeding from a chosen lineage), the council of elders and other subordinates. It was by merit that one became a member of the council of elders. In case there was a decision to be taken, this political structure would discuss before taking it. And this was a traditional form of democracy since decisions were not taken by an individual alone.

It is no news that colonialism has caused instability in Africa, democracy as a product of colonialism has worsened the situation with its so-called ideal of equal chances, justice or political equality. This Western ideology (in its general definition) is acceptable but when couched in the realities of post-colonial African societies, it is bound to have structural flaws. For instance, many public clashes occur when the population is not contented with the results of the elections or when leaders try to extend their tenures. We have cases like that of Burkina Faso where Blaise Compaore's action of trying to prolong his stay on power led to a violent uprising. Meanwhile, a violent revolt did not stop Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi from succeeding in prolonging his term. It should be noted that the passing over of power is generally done in violence. Violent uprisings entail massive killing and the destruction of property thereby adding untold pains and misery to African states.

Elections are considered as the sole indicator of a successful democracy. But then, elections in Africa (apart from the fact that it is generally fraudulent) generally prompts the wrong choice for good governance. It should be noted that most politicians lose focus and forget about their objectives (set for the welfare of the society) as they strive for votes. This transforms their main objective to the thirst for power since they are found in a competitive milieu. They manipulate and blindfold people with petit gifts and even make promises that they do not respect once elected. This can be seen in the text when the American Ambassador, Gemstone, advises the Ruler to blindfold his people when he says "don't you have a proverb that says that if you throw peanuts to a monkey you will distract it long enough to be able to snatch its baby?" (641). Through this prompting, he encourages the Ruler to mislead his

people for his personal gains. This part of the text simply shows how African leaders are being manipulated by Westerners to the detriment of African societies. Thus the decadence of African states can be blamed on the Western system of democracy which gets Africans to appoint leaders and ministers that do not even deserve their posts.

The writer presents democracy in Africa as a myth. For him, this concept is a failure in most African societies because he sees deceitful African leaders as hindrances to the continent's political identity. The Ruler and his Ministers reflect this type of deceptive and unfulfilled leaders or politicians whose main concern is power and riches causing the entire nation to suffer. The name of the country in the novel is the Free Republic of Aburiria. A Republic entails a state where sovereignty rests with the people or their representatives, rather than with a monarch or an emperor. Thus we expect to see the so-called democratic system where there is freedom of expression. Unfortunately, this is not the case for Aburiria. Through the character of Tajirika, who proclaims himself as Emperor Titus Vespasianus Whitehead when he ascends to power, Ngugi portrays the improbability for African states to perfectly apply this concept. Emperorship is synonymous with monarchy and this represents a government in which sovereignty is embodied by a single person.

The climax of Tajirika's ascension to power came when he addressed the nation and pronounced the end of Baby D. A new era of imperial democracy had dawned, he said, and ordered the construction of a modern coliseum on the site once earmarked for Marching to Heaven.  
(754)

Tajirika turns the so-called Free Republic of Aburiria into an imperial state. Throughout the text, it is shown that his greatest wish is to become a White. Coupled with the fact that he is fond of the White man's culture, the Western control over the territory is made easier. Through this quotation, Ngugi depicts the fact that Aburiria, just like any post-independence African state, is in a state of decline if nothing is not done. It should be noted that corruption and misery will continue through Tajirika's construction of the modern coliseum.

Africans find themselves in this chaotic situation simply because they have been alienated and subjected by European control even after independence. The writer shows this

European control over Africa after independence when Gemstone tries to convince the Ruler to accept their ideologies by stating:

We are in the post-cold war era, and our calculations are affected by the laws and needs of globalization. The history of capital can be summed up in one phrase: *in search of freedom*. Freedom to expand, and now it has a chance at the entire globe for its theater. It needs a democratic space to move as its own logic demands. So I have been sent to urge you to start thinking about turning your country into a democracy. Who knows? Maybe with your blessings, some of your ministers might even want to form opposition parties.”(580)

Gemstone in this quotation is trying to persuade the Ruler to accept the Western ideologies of globalization and democracy fully knowing it will be to the detriment of the African state. Initially, the Ruler rejects this request when he states “...America might have helped install him in power, but this was no longer the twentieth century; now he was his own man and he would not let America tell him when to retire” (584). But further in the text, the Ruler succumbs to this proposal by getting pregnant and giving birth to Baby D which he later presents to the entire nation to everyone’s shock (698). The Ruler’s acceptance of Western proposals or ideologies shows that African leaders have contributed to the decline of their states as they have whole-heartedly accepted the social and political system imposed on Africans after independence.

The text equally presents a society where people are persecuted daily for expressing and exteriorising their minds. This satirises the Kenyan society at the time when people like Ngugi were persecuted and some of their writings banished because they sought justice and condemned the policies at the time. It presents characters that fight for the preservation, truth, and justice of Aburiria (members of the Movement of People’s Voice) and others (politicians like the Ruler and the Ministers) who are the product of neo-colonialism. This binarism satirizes the post independent African societies who have chosen the Whiteman’s policies and have made it primordial. It is obvious that politics (as a colonial heritage) is very present and causes ravages.

M.S.C Okolo states that the reorientation of attitude, especially on the part of the leaders, is required for an effective government. He believes that, where there is poor

governance, the idea of social and economic justice would be compromised. Political distrust emerges where leaders are seen as not performing well (*African Literature as Political Philosophy* 91). For him, a society can only reflect the leaders in control; good governance—contented society, bad governance—discontented society fraught with misery and complains. Aburiria represents the discontented society where there is poor governance and misery. Ngugi shows his disgust for post independence African leaders through the act of Tajirika, who splashes shit on the Ruler's face on the picture. "Then he saw some spots on the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth of the image, and for a few seconds he had a strange sensation of seeing, or thinking that he saw, a thick darkish liquid oozing out of them" (404). This portrays the disgust Kamiti (as a nationalist) has vis-à-vis of the regime in place. The stain on the Ruler's face is thus synonymous with the filthy stain or print of colonialism on the African society.

From the economic point of view, capitalism (an economic, political and social system based on private ownership of property, business and industry and directed towards making the greatest profits for successful organizations and people) was introduced in most post-independent societies with little regard for Africans. Instead, it has increased misery and poverty in Africa. Africans produce goods and export the majority of these goods to the West for more profits whereas their nations are starving. This capitalist system even causes African countries to fight against each other in this neo-colonial era. For instance, the Civil War between Cameroon and Nigeria over the Bakassi peninsula and around Lake Chad was due to the crude oil found in those areas.

As an economic system, Capitalism ushers in class inequality in post independence African states. It fetches excessive riches for some and excessive poverty for others who do not have enough and are greatly being exploited. Under a capitalist system, the profit motive is far greater than altruism. People focus on their pockets and avoid helping their fellow human beings. For them, the only thing that matters is income. Ngugi presents a situation whereby the Ruler and the Ministers are very rich. They exploit Aburirians who struggle for survival as each day passes by. For instance he presents the character of Tajirika who, apart from being the chairperson of the Marching to Heaven Project, is first of all the proprietor of Eldares Modern Construction and Real Estate. He is unable to provide vacancies for his fellow countrymen. He even proceeds to publicly humiliate Kamiti who is in search of a job. Through the Marching to

Heaven Project, he exploits citizens (those who are in search of jobs and those who are in search of contracts) to satisfy his avariciousness. Kaniuru is another selfish person who believes helping the poor or the needy will lower him to their level. Instead of pity and compassion, his mind is fraught with hatred and disgust for them. In *I Will Marry When I Want*, the same writer brings out the effects of capitalism and class struggle in postcolonial societies.

Post-independence leaders and others from the bourgeoisie class boost the economy of European countries to the detriment of theirs. We see the importation of luxurious goods into Africa by the upper class while others live in total misery. These people boost the economy of other nations while draining their own states to satisfy their personal drives. The novel projects this occurrence through the character of the Ministers that spend government money at random. Ministers like Machokali, Sikiokuu and Big Ben Mambo all go abroad to enlarge their eyes, ears and mouth with the justification that it is to serve the nation better whereas they do that to gain favour from the Ruler. This is ironical because they are expected to serve the country better through good governance and not by focusing on their personal being and gains. Kaniuru, once appointed deputy chairperson of Marching to Heaven and head of the inquiry into the queuing mania offers himself a brand new Mercedes car (the latest brand). This is to show off his new status in the society especially to Nyawira's father who once refused to have him as a son-in law because he was poor at the time. He offers himself this comfort with the money he extorts from other citizens. Moreover, the fact that Sikiokuu orders the importation of mirrors from abroad (Japan, Italy, France, Germany, Britain, Sweden, and the USA) so that Nyawira can be captured through them, shows how a great amount of money can be wasted just to get back at someone who opposes a regime and advocates its freedom (418). Furthermore, the text presents Tajirika wasting money to offer himself and his wife surgeries in order for him to have part of his body white. As for his wife, she desires a younger face and a youthful pair of breasts: "...So despite his incomplete state and loss of money boot, Tajirika dared not complain remaining a man in transition, with a white left leg and a white arm" (742). Hence, the text does not only present a situation where African leaders boost the economy of the West while causing bankruptcy at home. It also shows how, in the same country, some use money for selfish and futile interest while others wander about looking for jobs and even food. That is the case of Kamiti who moves from one place to another at the beginning of the text searching for a job on an empty stomach.

It should be noted that Tajirika, in the process of taking bribes from people, becomes ill and three bags of Buri notes obtained from bribery is given to the Wizard of Crow for healing. This money is later on buried at the prairie by the Wizard of the Crow where it grows into trees of money. At the moment of the harvest, the leaves (money) is eventually eaten up by a variety of insects (551). This is to show that money obtained through corruption cannot be of any help the society. Through this instance, the writer equally devalorises the currency inherited from the colonial master which does not measure up to the pre-colonial system of trade by barter and the use of cowries. He portrays how perishable the White's currency can be.

The effect of colonialism can also be seen in the devastating consequences of industrialization. The text somehow portrays the peaceful nature of the environment and the landscape before the arrival of the Whites. It then shows the polluted nature of the environment in post-colonial states due to the presence of industries that perturb the tranquility of these states. This is seen when Kamiti, in his bird form, flies over Aburiria and at one point gets intoxicated: "...but he started sneezing as a whiff of gases from the factories below reached him. Is there no place on earth or in the sky where a person might escape this poison? (39). The presence of factories in Africa produces an impure air making it difficult for Africans to feel at ease in their own countries. It should be noted that the establishment of these factories are the cause of global warming of which the same Whites claim to fight against.

Social identity representation based on gender is very current in the African culture and society. The traditional gender role in Africa goes beyond the conventional identity representation of male/female. Males are predominant in roles in this social system and have authority over women in all aspects of society. Nevertheless, women are highly respected and valorized. . M. S. C. Okolo, in *African Literature as Political Philosophy* postulates that:

...women are confined to marginal space, men dominate the centre. Such cultural stereotyping not only gives rise to imaginative and interpretative associations about male and female, but also influences our perceptions of ourselves. Gender could play a key role in determining the rate of political development in any given culture. (67)

In patriarchal societies, women are culturally downgraded and considered as feeble creatures as men dominate the centre while they are marginalised. This stereotypical discourse of the traditional representation of an African woman is dismantled in the postcolonial context where colonial experience has rendered women resilient as they struggle for their well-being and contribute to the formation of an utopian society. *Wizard of the Crow* presents a situation whereby African women are seen as submissive. This is the case of Vinjina who is described as an organised woman who succeeds in the managing of domestic and business affairs (when her husband is not around). She endures torments from her husband; yet, is still devoted to him.

Initially, women were limited to the domestic sphere. In the pre-colonial period, women were expected to be respectful and dedicated to their husbands. They could not even talk nor mingle in the affairs of men. Due to the experience undergone by Africans in the process of colonization and its heritage, they have been empowered because of the chaotic nature of the state. They play vital roles in these patriarchal societies as they clamour for political development. In this text, Ngugi celebrates African women on their selfless sacrifice and struggle for freedom and liberation as they are entrapped in the patriarchal and colonial experience. They are resilient and challenge patriarchal rule due to the effects of colonialism. One of them is Rachael, the First Lady, who is ill-treated and humiliated by the Ruler just because she questions him on his sexual transgressions on school girls. For this daring act, the Ruler banishes her from the State House and imprisons her in a mansion built on seven acres of land just to see her cry and beg for forgiveness. Rachael, on her part, is hearty as she holds back her tears because she does not succumb to the Ruler's obsession of striving to see her tears flow. The narrator states: "What he yearned to hear was any news of her tears, the one sign that would unerringly point to her breakdown and desire for redemption. But he didn't" (10). She revolts and deviates from the traditional value of submission because her husband is the product of the Western culture who equally violates the African culture.

Also, Vinjina revolts by visiting the shrine in the quest of a solution to the beatings she receives from her husband. Her husband undergrades and beats her because he sees her as a nuisance to his political career not knowing that the prospects he considers are just a set-up by Sikiokuu. However, Tajirika is punished, he is beaten mercilessly and his testes threaten to be cut off by the court of women when Vinjina reports her case to the Wizard of the Crow

(431). Her husband is so addicted to Western ideology that he becomes suspicious of everybody and is ready to deal with anyone who tampers with his political affairs, even his wife. The latter therefore decides to fight back. Njogu Waita describes her as one “who is trapped in postcolonial structures of the political elite... To the very end of the novel, she still clings to her status as the wife of the political elite and savours the benefits of that position by having a face-and breast-lift for herself as her husband is partly transformed into a white man” (*Identity, Politics and Gender Dimensions in Ngugi Wa Thiongos’s, Wizard of the Crow*, 48). She eventually becomes the creation of the Whiteman’s philosophy as she later on adheres to her husband’s style of living. Other female characters in the novel like Jane Kanyori are equally victims of the colonial experience. Kanyori confronts Kaniuru and blackmails him to marry her because she realizes the latter used her to satisfy his selfish political interest.

Grace Nyawira, the heroine, is born into the middle-class; nevertheless, she is self-conscious. She rejects her father’s control over her life. She gets married to Kaniuru but later on divorces him when she realizes that he is out for her father’s wealth. Patriotic, she willingly lets go her riches to fight for the emergence of social and political development. Being the leader of the Voice of the People (an underground movement against the Ruler’s policies), she represents the awareness of a woman who can provide significant political leadership and can fight against the infected colonial legacies. At this point, she does not care about patriarchy; she challenges it because she believes the most important thing is to free the nation from colonial bondage and withstands whosoever stands in on her way (male or female). In a nutshell, women in the postcolonial period serve as eye-openers to men who have allowed themselves to be misled by Western ideologies. They have to take things in their hands for the common good because their men are going astray.

This work equally exposes the super structural nature of post-independent African societies. Colonialism has caused segregation giving rise to class division (the base, the working class and the upper class). Africa is dominated by “Big men” (the upper class) while the proletariat is set at the margin. The two queues formed in front of Tajirika’s office that separates separating the poor from the rich represent the class division in Aburiria. Class division in the African society makes the presumed of liberty of Africans meaningless because the lower class is not given the chance to operate in matters pertaining to the state. The base are oppressed and marginalised by the upper class. Okolo says that, “In a class

society where a dominant economic class ends up with determinate political and economic influence in all spheres of that society, the law is unlikely to reflect the interest of the underprivileged” (*African Literature as Political Philosophy*, 99). The oppressors are seen as those who care less about the nation and the future of the country because they are so corrupt and heartless.

This is the case with the Aburirian Ruler and Ministers whose main goal is power and riches. This depicts aspects related to identity such as alienation, ambivalence, hybridity. The oppressed are presented as the nationalists who advocate political and social change for the love of their country. This group is opposed to the upper class which contributes to the decline of the society as well as with its cultural values. Ethnicity and indigeneity is what the oppressed portray. The effects of colonialism have come to destroy the sense of oneness and peace that once reigned in the traditional setups and this causes the decadence of African states. There is still no freedom after fighting and gaining independence, Thus, the independence given can be considered a poisoned gift because the presence of the Western ideologies in Africa still cause many afflictions to Africa and Africans (especially to the proletariat). The colonial experience also causes a global change in the identity of Africa, different from that of pre-colonial and uncontaminated Africa.

Pre-colonial education as earlier mentioned was conveyed informally through the channels of oral tradition (myths, legends, proverbs, songs, to name a few). With the western notion of civilisation imposed on the colonised, traditional education has been rendered valueless. The Western philosophy of education for better living conditions through the obtention of certificates has caused more misery to post-independence African states. This colonial ideology is technically imposed on the colonised in form of a condition whereby, if there is no certificate acquired there will not be any job; hence, low living standard. Back in the period before colonialism, individuals earned their living directly (through livestock, agriculture, and trade, to name a few) without going through processes and conditions. One’s wealth was defined by his hard work at these tasks. But the white man’s ideology acquired by the colonised indicates that the wealth of a man can be defined by his level of education.

It should be noted that in the post-colonial period this assumption is not effective because many youths are still jobless and miserable after having obtained these certificates.

This is the case with Kamiti who at the start of the story is seen in garbage. He is a holder of a Bachelors Degree of Arts in Economics and a Masters Degree in Business Management yet he is jobless. Even with these qualifications, he is humiliated by Tajirika when he goes to Eldares Modern Construction and Real Estate to job-hunt. This humiliation causes him to resort to begging (65 – 68). Another case in point is his former girlfriend, Wariara. The latter is the owner of a high school diploma and has acquired training in a secretariat course— typing and computer literacy— yet she is still jobless. The two lovers, with their certificates in their pockets, job-hunt as they move from one place to another, but to no avail. It is recorded that

So at the time they met, Wariara was still looking for a job. The newly arrived Kamiti was bubbling with hope and told her not to worry. He thought that with two University degrees in his pocket, he would get a job in no time; he and Wariara would marry and start a family, and even if that failed to work he would still help her build her own life. (66)

Kamiti it will be very easy for him to get a job not knowing the situation at hand in Aburiria. His plans of getting a job upon arriving from Eldares after his studies in India and settling down with Wariara are ruined because of the lack of jobs. At one point, Wariara gets tired of the situation and decides that they should part ways to broaden their horizons (67). This situation makes Kamiti more depressed and Wariara prostitutes herself in order to make a living. Unfortunately for her, she finally dies of AIDS. Through these two, the text presents how the dreams of some youths are killed because of the poor governance of post-independence states. The trauma these youths face and affect the psyche of most of them.

Ngugi portrays the fact that those that are educated and enjoy a high standard of living exploit or steal from others. This is the case with the Ministers who are mostly thieves. Opposed to this group are who are honest and educated but have no jobs as is the case of Kamiti. According to the author, the Western system of education either produces the best thieves ever or intensifies the survival of the fittest as some people are obliged to oppress and exploit their brothers while others wander around looking for jobs in order to earn a living.

The writer projects the loss of African cultural values as a result of hybridity in this chapter. This loss has inflicted pain on Africa, has caused the continent's decadence and has

adulterated the African's identity. The decadence of the post-independence African society is seen politically through the poor governance and incompetent African leaders who blindly serve the West and abide to Western ideologies to the detriment of the African society. As far as the economic domain is concerned, the Western capitalist system ruins the African states' accounts and the established industries contaminate and destroy nature thus affecting the landscape. Socially, the Whiteman's culture has prevailed over the African culture, thereby causing the loss of the African identity and values. The author equally shows how dysfunctional postcolonial African states have become due to the fact that colonizers still have full control over Africa through Neo-Colonialism. Nevertheless, through the text, the author hints at the fact that all hope is not lost for Africa. It is still possible to recover the lost African values and identity as will be seen in the chapter that follows.

## CHAPTER THREE

### FANTASIA, IDENTITY REPRESENTATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

The focus of this chapter is on the use of the imaginary to show identity representation and reconstruction. It depicts the psychological setting; in other words, the state of mind of the post-independence Africans whose world view is to deracinate the inculcated Western ideologies from the African mind. Since the Western imprints are very deep, this section presents the possibility of re-instating African culture at the expense of the Western culture through the valorisation of the former. A point of interest here is to see how Ngugi represents and reconstructs post independence Africa's identity using phantasmagoria otherwise referred to as fantasia. Magic realism and psychoanalysis are used for the chapter's analysis.

Phantasmagoria, as earlier mentioned in the general introduction, depicts the mental representation shaped by illusions and hallucinations. This concept portrays the nationalistic and patriotic possibility to envisage change that is seemingly impossible. Ngugi uses this concept to demonstrate his vision and that of other nationalists on how self-redefinition is the only way to fight cultural imperialism in order to restore the lost African identity. Identity both affects and is conditioned by the human psyche.

Literary fantasia is synonymous with phantasmagoria in this study because, it depicts the use of the magical and the supernatural. In works in which it is used, fairy-like worlds where magic and magical creatures exist are common. Fantasy comprises myths, folktales and legends because the plot, theme or characters of these literary types are beyond the ordinary. Pratiksha Thank in *Fantasia: A Literary Breakthrough* posits that:

...they have chosen the form that gives them freedom to incorporate diverse symbolism; myths and layers of reality ...the notion of fantasy has been exploited by many writers to the similar purposes in the past. Taking a thorough look at the background of these genres, imaginary voyages, wish for immortality and tales of strange people in distant land reflection the contemporary times...(21)

Some writers, in one way or the other, endeavour to capture some reality through the supernatural. In this case, the past can influence the supernatural plot based on a historical setting. Though the place in which the events unfold is seemingly unknown, most works portray familiar experiences. In *Wizard of the Crow*, the Republic of Aburiria is a strange land which is familiar because of the historical experience (colonialism). This imaginary setting displays how colonisation has influenced the African mind. As already mentioned, the Austrian neurologist and father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, believes that the human psyche has three components: The unconscious, the pre conscious and the conscious.

The unconscious/the Id, is concerned with instant gratification of basic physical needs and urges. It operates entirely unconsciously (outside of conscious thought). Ngugi in presenting Aburiria as a fairy land portrays the decadent nature of post independent African states through African minds. These minds have been contaminated to the detriment of the African identity. They unconsciously allow themselves to be carried away by the colonial heritage to the extent that they forfeit their own legacies as Africans. Through magical instances, *Wizard of the Crow* presents some characters that are weird due to their drives. For instance, there is Ruler and his Ministers who are described with gross exaggeration or as having some abnormalities. Tajirika ends up with a body that is half-white and half-black while his wife, Vinjina is reduced to a subhuman that her children cannot recognise. In both cases, they both become hideous creatures that can be considered unearthly. Driven by the id, these characters are blinded by their desires to the extent that they do not think before acting. It should be noted that this part of the human psyche is considered as the most primitive and uncontrollable.

The novel equally presents characters whose minds are dominated by the ego– the part of the mind that Freud considered to be the "self." As noted before, its job is to balance the demands of the id. To achieve this, it easily draws these demands to the conscious and frustrates the id. The text portrays such psyches through the character of Vinjina. The latter, though presented as a modern woman, does not forget her roots and does not allow the West to consume her entirely.

...this time around, Tajirika did not hide his secret desire and what he intended to do about it from Vinjina. Vinjina agreed

that Tajirika could become an American white if he so wanted, but she insisted on quid pro quo, a face-and breast-lift for herself, to which he readily agreed...there was nothing completely out of the ordinary about Vinjina. But Gaciru saw her father naked as she was going to the bathroom to change, she thought that she was seeing an ogre ... (741-742)

Vinjina, as a hybridised, does not completely reject her identity as a Black. Initially, she is tempted to accept the white colour just to be by her husband's side (185). But at this stage, she resists this temptation because her ego frustrates this desire of the id. She is also a devoted Christian but this does not stop her from visiting the shrine in search of solutions to her problems. This is because she still somehow believes in tradition. She is equally devoted to her husband and this too is an African value. Just like her, Mariko and Maritha have intergrated the Western ideology of Christianity, yet they believe in the Wizard of the Crow (tradition) as earlier noted. These characters are alienates from the African culture and are hybridized. But, at the same time, they cannot completely turn away from the African identity because their ego regulates the demands of their id.

The Conscious or the Superego as said before, is concerned with social rules and morals. These social rules and morals here are those that valorise the African culture. This part of the work focuses on this component of the human mind because it presents the imaginary inside the current awareness of the nationalistic views. The text through this portrays Ngugi's vision and that of his characters such as the Wizard of the Crow and Agrigaigai. Through them, we are shown how to envisage an idyllic state and recover the lost African values. Kamiti, Nyawira and Agrigaigai are characters that are already aware of the fact that the Western ideology is out to downgrade and to even eradicate the traditional values. Unlike other characters, they have foreseen its repercussions on the African society and decide to fight for the freedom of the oppressed and of the nation. Through literary fantasia, the writer presents how an utopic state should be. Magic patterns operate through instances whereby, every one that resorts to tradition for a specific problem miraculously finds a solution. The manner and the speed in which healing occurs is magical. The facility in which the Wizard of the Crow restores health is beyond ordinary human thinking. Through such instances in the text, African tradition is being valorised. Thus, for the author, a utopic state is one in which cultural heritage is fundamental.

Since mental representation implies the way of perceiving the world that affects or infects our thought, behaviour and aptitude, identity (as earlier mentioned) can equally be the central force in thought, emotion, and behaviour that marks off an individual from another. For instance, the thought of an individual can make up his identity. Philosophers such as Rene Descartes known as the father of Modern Philosophy also reflected on the concept of identity in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In his mantra, "I think, therefore I am," or later "I think, I exist," he presents the assessment between the mind and the body. If an individual exists (body) then he or she must have a thought and this thought represents an identity. Also, Descartes— through his philosophy of radical doubt— advocates the doubting of one's own beliefs in order to find out which beliefs are actually true. He believes that anything perceived or sensed is not necessarily true; instead, it can be mere cultural superstition. Ngugi brings this philosophy at regular intervals through the exchange between the characters of Tajirika and Sikiokuu.

... A person like you should not trust people. A certain Frenchman, I think his name is Descartes, says: Doubt your closest friends. Doubt everything. I doubt, therefore I am. That's what they call Cartesian logic... Descartes says you doubt everything and everybody... (*Wizard of the Crow*. (351-352))

The writer, mentions this philosophy (emanating from a Westerner) to instruct those who are immersed in the western culture and think it is the best to the extent of forgetting theirs. When a Westerner calls on people to doubt everything and everybody, that includes themselves and their culture which they are trying to convince Africans to adopt as being the best. Through this quotation, Ngugi presents the careless mentality of Africans who blindly accept Western ideologies (that can be qualified as a mere superstition) without verification or without thinking about the repercussions they will have on the society. Throughout the process of doubting and judging, the mind (human psyche) is actively involved.

If one exists, then that person must have a thought or a view. The characteristics belonging uniquely to someone constitute that person's personality for life. This can equally be seen at the level of the human mind as the psychoanalytic theorist, Erik Erikson, indicates in *Identity: Youth and Crisis* that:

In psychological terms, identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which the individual judges himself in the light of what he perceives to be the way in which others judge him in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant to them. ( 2)

According to Erikson, one's identity is related to the biological changes associated with puberty, the maturation of cognitive abilities, and changing societal expectations. He posits that self-consciousness is due to the capacity for self-reflection which generally starts in adolescence. Hence self-reflection is the ability to judge oneself by asking and knowing who one is and what he or she wants or wants to do. Erikson's concept of identity fits in this study because the latter presents the notion of identity as a mental representation (psyche). Thought, attitude and mannerism— the psyche— is what makes up an identity. The individual mental representation of identity gives rise to the tenets of identity such as binary polarity, hybridity, ambivalence and nationalism.

In this context, identity is therefore the re-examination and self-definition of national identity amid the existing cultural hybridity which emanates from the effect of gaining independence from a colonial power. The postcolonial African is lost in the imaginary world created by colonialism in all its forms and guises where there is seemingly no hope. But Ngugi portrays, from a nationalistic perspective, that no matter how intolerable things seem, a change for the better is always possible. For this reason, prescribes introspection in *Wizard of the Crow* as a way of dealing with the existing colonial ills. He believes that introspection (which is the examination of one's own conscious thoughts and feelings) is the imaginary that envisages possible solutions to problems existing in the post independence African states. Through his protagonist the Wizard of the Crow, he projects this possible change. If a mere mortal like the Wizard of the Crow can change himself into any form of being without changing his mentality; then nothing can prevent the human will to change and Africans to resist colonial hybridity. This change is however only possible if the Africans would accept their identity; go back to search their lost roots and stop living up to an impossible Western life. Self-redefinition is thus the only way to fight cultural imperialism.

The fact that the Wizard of the Crow is capable of changing his human form from a human to that of a bird symbolises freedom or liberty given that he is free to roam from earth

to sky. This equally implies freedom from materialism. The Wizard of the Crow as a bird and as a nationalist has detached himself from colonial riches which he considers as valueless as compared to African heritage. This shows that he is not imprisoned by the Western world like the other hybridised characters. The title “Wizard of the Crow” points to the phantasmagoric ability to metamorphose into a bird. In the natural realm, it is not normal for human beings to do so. Moreover, it should be noted here that, this bird is attributed human mental capabilities such as desires, feelings and emotions.

... he saw that he looked like a bird and floated like a bird; he enjoyed the rush of cold air against his wings. He recalled a Christian song he had once heard...He started to sing but because he could not open his beak as wide as his mouth what came out was a whistling reminiscent of the song...(Wizard of the Crow,38)

At one point in time, he observes from the sky the pathetic nature of Aburiria and realises the misery in which the state is found and this prompts him to speak as he says “So I am not alone”(39). Later on, he starts sneezing due to the whiffs of gas from the factories below before getting down to regain his body as he notices that it is being carried away by some garbage collectors. This incident portrays a bird that has human faculties.

The need for introspection is looking within oneself to redefine or rediscover the true self; in this case, the true self is the African self. With the use of phantasmagoria, the author ascertains the fact that things are not often what they seem to be at first sight. Colonialism has left the African mind with a bundle of illusions that prevent it from noticing the true problems of Africa. The use of magic is made evident in the *Wizard of the Crow* through the Wizard of the Crow and his use of mirror to heal. The Wizard leads his patients to seeing their innermost self in his mirror and prescribes them solutions that require a mere change of attitude from that of a blinded colonised to that of a conscious African.

The Wizard of the Crow provides his patients with an apt atmosphere in which the patient expresses his/her thoughts. This becomes extremely significant when we consider that he helps the people of Aburiria, the ones who have no right to voice their thoughts freely and who did not know their problems lie within them. As such, he leads them to get to the root of their problems by a series of self-analysis or introspection. As mentioned in the novel,

Though they performed divination, Kamiti and Nyawira based their practice on the philosophy that illnesses of the mind, soul and body were bred by social life. They even wrote down seven suggestions of healthy living. (275)

For them, dealing with societal ills has to start with the healing of the mind, the body and soul. Thus, healing the inner self or mind entails healing the society and a healthy society is synonymous with an utopian society.

The metaphor of the mirror is used for introspection. The dialogue technique helps the wizard and his patients to ride on in pursuit for the origin of problems while the mirror shows the patient a perfect image of himself. This brings the patients to a state of self-realisation. It is a kind of psychotherapy that Kamiti uses to drag his patients into making sure they unveil their problem from its source: “my motto is get it by the roots and the illness shall be no more” (480). Tajirika’s greatest wish to be a White prompts his IF illness which blocks his utterances limiting it to a single word “*if*”. In the healing process, the Wizard provokes the utterance (his wish of becoming a White) stuck in his throat; thus healing him from his White-ache. Kamiti makes him gain consciousness by bringing him back to the roots of African history.

“First, help me solve a riddle!” said the Wizard of the Crow.

“Go ahead!”

“What is the first thing that tells who a person is?”

“The color of one’s skin.”

“No Tajirika. Let’s go back to history. When African people were taken as slaves across the Atlantic Ocean in the sixteenth..., what was the very first thing that whites took away from the New World Africans?”

“I don’t know,” said Tajirika,...

“Okay. Let me ask you another question. When children are born, what do their fathers and mothers give them to distinguish them from others?”

“Names?”

“Exactly. So what did the white slavers do to their black slaves? Took away their original names to make them over into what they wanted them to be.” (181)

Through this exchange in the process of Tajirika's healing, Kamiti draws his attention to the fact that he is just blinded by the West. Therefore he has to assert himself as an African and accept his origins because changing his identity to the detriment of the African identity will do him no good. He further portrays to Tajirika and his wife what it will cost them to alienate themselves from their culture in favour of whiteness. In view of this, they gain consciousness and realize it is better for them to remain Blacks: "No! No! Tajirika and Vinjina shouted, opening their eyes in fright. "Black is beautiful. Give us back our blackness," (188). This decision is just temporary for Tajirika because his Id will later prove to be stronger than his superego unlike Vinjina who finally keeps her 'blackness'. This last quotation equally depicts the imaginary or the illusion colonialism has created in the African mind.

The Wizard equally uses the mirror on the Ruler to cure him from his IF illness after the shame inflicted to him by the Whites in America. Modern medicine tries to heal him to no avail; thus failing where the Wizard of the Crow succeeds. This makes the Ruler to say the words that are stuck in his throat which are "*IF I had been a white, would they have done what they did to me? Or, IF I had been a white would they have treated me the way they just did in the presence of my ministers?*" (491). This introspection is the Ruler's awareness that the Whites are racists and dubious; their actions do not reflect the claims they make to Blacks. Another healing instance is when Kamiti heals a man claiming to suffer from severe stomach ache. This time around he uses no mirror but projects the fact that what a person may take for an illness is simply the effects of societal ills. The man thinks he is sick and visits the Wizard of the Crow for healing. The Wizard gives him some herbs as medication but instructs him to eat well before taking them. This baffles the man as he says: "Food? Did you say food? You think I have eaten anything for days? If the medicine depends on food, then it is no good to me". (131). Kamiti uses simple analysis and realises that this man's true problem is actually hunger. So he resolves to give the old man some food to eat and an entire bundle of money as part of the medical treatment. At this, the old man's sudden excitement and joy assures Kamiti that the treatment has been effective as the old man declares "Already I feel better, almost cured" (131). It can be clearly seen that the man had no money to go to the hospital and that is why he visits the shrine. This instance presents the effect of bad governance in post independence African states where misery and poverty is the order of the day. Thus, it is a societal self-examination.

Ngugi also emphasises the aspect of introspection through AgrigaigaiGathere who believes his failures in life are occasioned by some enemy spirits that hinder his progress in the police force. His consultation of the Wizard of the Crow gives him the opportunity to enter a psychological trance which serves the wizard's purpose not only healing AgrigaigaiGathere from his tormentors, but also that of changing his behaviour change his behavioural pattern for the better. The wizard stresses the importance of his vital healing tool, the mirror, "We need mirrors to see our shadows. We need mirrors to see other people's shadows crossing ours"(116). The healing, or rather the psychotherapy (if one would have it called that way), plunges AG to a deep self search in a bid to find the cause of his problem.

Close your eyes and then empty your head of all thoughts: in the shadows of your mind, a picture will form, and when it forms I will capture it in the mirror in the way fax machines and computers copy images and transmit them invisibly. Once the image is a captive in my mirror, I will take a sharp knife and scratch it, and from that moment on, your enemy will vanish forever. I covered my face with my hands, shut my eyes tight, and waited. And indeed, after a few seconds, somewhere in the darkness of my mind an outline of an image was forming...?"(117)

The phantasmagorical and undetermined image that forms in AG's mind is no doubt his cunning shadowed enemy who lays across his own shadow, preventing him from getting any promotion, despite his hard work in the police force. Whether there really are any spirits that overshadow the progress of AG or not puzzles the reader. But one thing is certain; the Wizard of the Crow has now crushed the trapped spirits with his knife.

The sound of his knife scratching the mirror made my teeth hurt, as if they were being scratched. All at once I saw the vague image in my mind explode into a thousand stars disappearing into the edge of the darkness in my mind... I opened my eyes and felt a strange sensation. (117 – 118)

The story unfolds and Agrigaigai who experiences a kind of rebirth and decides to change his ways in favour of the African culture. He becomes a model police officer and soon witnesses his long awaited promotion. It takes him a moment of self re-examination, through the mediation of the Wizard, to discover what he has been and what he ought to be. That is exactly what Africa needs in order to be safe from the economic, political and social

stagnation ushered in by imperialism. The problem, as Ngugi stresses in his *Wizard of the Crow*, lies within and the solution can only be brought about by an introspective survey of the system.

The use of the mirror as a tool of healing is very significant in *Wizard of the Crow* because it symbolises spiritual reflection. It can equally reflect spiritual truth, the life each person creates. Healing through the mirror portrays the supernatural. In the ordinary world, it is unthinkable that a mirror should be a source of healing. Lord Alfred Tennyson, in the “Lady of Shalott,” presents the mirror as a magical tool for the bewitchment the “Lady of Shalott”(Selected Poems of Tennyson,32). In the traditional Africa context, diviners also use it to supernaturally read into the future, communicate with the dead or heal.

Although the mirror is not used on Maritha and Mariko, the Wizard of the Crow heals them from their lust for other people’s bodies as they have actually lost their sexual attraction for each other. While the community believes their lust is the work of the devil, the wizard prescribes them a simple therapy as follows:

The Wizard of the Crow addressed Mariko. “One of these days, you should make her a delicious dish so that she may know how your cooking tastes. A little surprise. Then get a candle, light it, put it on the dining table, and dim all the other lights or even switch them off. Talk, tell stories or eat in silence. The important thing is for you to eat together in soft light. Then warm some water. Undress each other. Wash each other. Then take turns rubbing oil onto each other; no spot, no scar, should be left untouched... Take your time. The night will be yours. If you find blemish on your bodies, go see a doctor or come back to the shrine for the right herbs. (280)

The two are relieved that there is no degree of sorcery in the method of the wizard. They acknowledge the fact that their problem is real and the solution, as prescribed by the wizard is not far-fetched. They say in connection to this that “What he told us is something that we ourselves should have thought about” (280). The events that unveil show hold that the couple finds taste and curiosity in rediscovering each other’s body. And upon making love anew, their healing is achieved as they can henceforth be seen hand- in- hand every now and then.

In the same light, Ngugi prescribes introspection to save the institutions that have been distorted by Western ideologies of evolution- Christianity and Modernism. He wants us to rethink our present selves in comparison to what we used to be and ought to be. The author presents Christianity in Aburiria as a superstitious belief. The church is unable to solve the problems of its faithful and they turn to the African shrine. Some of these characters (as earlier mentioned) are Vinjina, Mariko and Maritha. He equally presents some people who join Christianity for security reasons. This is the case with the three garbage collectors who believe that Kamiti is a ghost and therefore join the Soldier of Christ for protection (42). Through this occurrence, Ngugi presents an ironical situation where these garbage collectors alienate themselves from the protagonist who advocates the welfare of the community to embrace the Western ideology that aims at downgrading African traditional values.

The author makes sure that the text contains an “irreducible element” of magic; He wants the reader to experience some unsettling doubts in the effort to reconcile two contradictory understandings of events; the narrative merges different realms; and, finally, magical realism disturbs received ideas about time, space and identity. The initial and true self of the pre-colonial African has been distorted by the advent of colonialism and the hybridized postcolonial man is somehow lost in confusion and experiencing an identity crisis. The use of sorcery as depicted by Kamiti is a glaring resistance and a write-back to re-establish the identity of the African. Ngugi is prescribing a “back to the source therapy” to Africa. The quest for how to bring about genuine change without losing the basic supporting framework from the past is the search that dominates this work and most of African fiction as a whole, for all the differences that exist within them. He wants Africa to change everything and it is only from the roots that the changing can be done. This corresponds to Brenda Cooper’s idea when the latter states:

Magical realism strives, with greater or lesser success, to capture the paradox of the unity of opposites; it contests polarities such as history versus magic, the pre-colonial past versus the post-industrial present and life versus death. Capturing such boundaries between spaces is to exist in a third space, in the fertile interstices between these extremes of time or space... And then suddenly, out of the centre of my forehead, an eye opened, and I saw this light to be the brightest, most beautiful thing in the world. (*Magical Realism in West African Fiction. Seeing with the Third Eye.1*)

It is not a question of rejecting all the Western ways in favour of purely African traditions as in the pre-colonial era but rather an attempt to reconcile the post-colonial man to an emerging and evolving world. Hybridity is not an ill for the African. The third space for Ngugi is to reconcile tradition and hybridity instead of the total abandonment of the African culture. This merge is necessary given that they are some aspects of hybridity that have already taken roots in Africa and cannot be uprooted. It is thus important for the African to tactfully embrace modernism and white cultures without getting rid of his own true self. Ngugi embraces change, but if change and newness are unambiguously advocated in his fiction, strategies for accomplishing these changes, solutions to the enormous problems in the Kenya of post colonialism are not as forthcoming. The magic might enable Tajirika and Vinjinia to see far into themselves, but there is little comfort in what they see, and great problems in what the novel suggests they should attempt to do about it.

This is glaring evidence, put forward by Ngugi, that the adoption of Western cultures that derail the African mind (from what it is) to some foreign ways of living— that yield confusion, separation and alienation in our social and political institutions, as well as in the individual self is to be denounced. Like many other African writers, Ngugi shares the point of view that Africa is dying or is about to die, that is why it is so necessary—while that Africa still lives— to understand, collect and preserve its things. It is essential to save Africa and Africans by reviewing the history and experiences of Africans. The force of European history, its power to exterminate Africa in the name of its own logic, becomes a major concern to Ngugi and his contemporaries. Through his novels, the novelist also insists that Africans have their own system of values, steeped in long, tested and evolving traditions, which are seriously disturbed by colonial intervention. The continent is split between a dying traditional past and a banal modernity which is obsessed with interpreting an ‘idea’ of African identity. The collection and preservation of Africa’s patrimony requires an in-depth survey of the African mind-set, the riddance of all forms of foreign alienations and the re-establishment of a legitimate African identity that valorises African culture. Ngugi portrays this in *Wizard of the Crow* when he says:

They took him to another room. He felt tears press to his eye-lids. All his carvings of African deities were here. “We brought them here long before you came back from America. For us, they stand for a dream. We were hoping that you can complete them and even add the gods of all the other

black and related peoples.” A global conversation of the deities, he said to himself, remembering his thoughts as a bird in the sky. (760)

Deities are an integral and indissociable part of African culture. These objects represent the spiritual nature of the African; a philosophy of his being and the basis of his identity. Western cultures and ideologies crave to disrupt the order of things in the African society and gradually install ideas that cause negative behaviours of Africans towards things of Africa. The death of Africa will eventually arrive when Africans must have completely abided to Western logic and Africa will only remain a continent “by name;” living the life of Europe. Ngugi seeks to give hope to his beloved society by asking Africans to preserve the culture and the identity of Africa. In line with this vision of the writer’s culture, the Ankh in AyiKweyArmah’s *OsirisRising* represents Africa’s “past, present and future”. It is depicted as being the answer to all questions of identity and misconception of history. The Ankh, as jealously preserved by the protagonist Ast, would unveil the puzzle of man’s origin and reason for being. AyiKwei goes further to design a perfect curriculum that would suit the African context. Knowing the importance of studying the history of the world, it is however more important for young African scholars to focus on the history of Africa in order to understand and preserve the African culture transmitted from age to age by our ancestors.

In valorising the African culture, it is important for Africans to assert themselves by accepting who/what they are. Still in line with the “back to the roots” principle, the story soon spreads, and almost before Kamiti knows what’s happening, he finds customers lined up outside the house where he and his fellow escapee (Nyawira) have holed up, eager to consult this Wizard of the Crow. And it turns out that Kamiti has something of a talent for divination. He resorts to wizardry out of frustration but it appears to be his true calling. One cannot get rid of his true nature, as Ngugi reveals, for Kamiti emerges from a long lineage of traditional healers:

We descended in part from hunters who dwelled in the forest, mostly, and came to know it well. Nearly all were healers. There was not an illness against which nature did not provide the necessary juices of life. Not only were they healers, but some had the gift of seeing things hidden from ordinary eyes. Some even fly like birds. Consider your grandfather, KamitiWaKienjeku, from whom you take your name! He sometimes found himself atop a mountain impossible for humans to climb or floating in the

middle of a lake though he did not know how to swim. I never fleshed out his story because I did not want you to follow in his footsteps. We sacrificed, sent you off to school, to prevent that from happening. But today you have taught me a great lesson. Or, you have reminded me of something no one should ever forget: that the will of God will always triumph over human wilfulness. (294 – 295)

It is clear, as Ngugi would want it understood, that the African is willed to a particular destiny independent of his own will. No matter how the latter may seek other alternatives, reality ends up having an upper hand. Kamiti is a seer, at first by a perfect coincidence, but mostly by a pre-determined force that neither he nor his old father could alter. Young post-colonial Africans are so drowned in the illusions of modernism that they neglect that essential aspect of culture and tradition. After achieving higher education in foreign universities, we remain brainwashed by the ideals of the West and ignore or completely run away from our true selves and ways of life. One cannot force his identity by a mere speculation but by an in-depth examination of self by returning to the source or roots of one's existence. That is why Ngugi emphasises that "a seer is chosen by powers beyond us." Self-acceptance and assertion is, hence, a major concern in Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow*. Kamiti accepts his fate cheerfully and affirms himself without trying to mask his true nature in any way. He is an African healer and does not want to be called by the conventional Western term "doctor". This is seen in his exchange with Machokali when he arrives America to heal the Ruler:

"How do you want me to introduce you?"

"Tell them the truth"

"That you are a sorcerer?"

"That I am a healer. An African healer. That I trap the bad to save the good." (482)

Kamiti, unlike Machokali, is proud of his origins as he asserts his Africanness even on foreign soil. He meets two Western doctors wearing stethoscopes. These two have failed to heal the Ruler and that is why he is called over. His success in this venture simply portrays the superiority of African culture and tradition over its Western equivalents. The text portrays the fact that the best can only come from Africa; thus making it an honour to be from this part of the continent. The redefinition of the African self thus starts with his/her acceptance of Africa's cultural heritage.

In this novel, the writer gives the impression that colonial ills have eaten deep into the African society and mind. Through hybridity, he portrays the sheer possibility for change to occur because things have gone out of hands. However, through his protagonists, he shows that there is still hope no matter how minor it might be. Though things will never be the same as in the idyllic pre-colonial society— as he tries to portray – Africans should start from somewhere with the bit of cultural heritage left. This can be seen when he mentions that:

They took him to their farms where they grew foods, millet, sorghum, yams, and arrowroots, as well as varieties of Aburirian berries. Elsewhere Aburirian soil was dying from being doused with pollutants, imported fertilizers. Here they were working with nature, not against it. The forest was a school to which they often came to hear what it had to tell them: You take, you give, for if you only take without giving back, you will leave the giver exhausted unto death. The gardens were nurseries for healing plants with seeds that could be planted on farms elsewhere; the healing of the land had to start somewhere. (758)

.This uncontaminated part of Aburiria represents the uncontaminated African mind. Colonialism has caused ravages on Aburirian land. It has rendered most of its soil infertile with its chemical products thus affecting their agriculture including plants used for traditional healing. Nyawira and her group believe they can still do something, by collaborating with nature, that the colonisers have attempted to destroy to their own advantage. They decide to cultivate the natural soil which they respect and valorise. This beautiful forest which has been valorised is their zone of departure as they envisage conquering other parts and saving Aburiria from colonial ills. Through this, Ngugi presents the fact that it is not too late for reconstruction to take place. All Africans need is the zeal and courage to start from somewhere.

The author's vision thus hints at the creation of an utopic state. This vision pertains to the imaginary given that an ideal state does not exist. But the author suggests the possibility of the emergence of such a state if Africans reconstruct their identity. To represent the degenerate state of post independence states, he resorts to fantasy to create an imaginary nation with fictitious political leaders. For instance, we have the Ministers with funny faces: Sikiokuu with very large ears; Machokali— with pretty big eyes; Big Ben Mambo with an

extra-large tongue and Kaniuru with a big nose. These characters have abnormalities that are not acceptable in the ordinary realm. The narrator makes use of this gross exaggeration to show the ridiculous nature of the ministers in this contemporary era. The fact that Tajirika appears half white and half black— after his surgery— and his wife completely transformed projects the infected African mind. This makes their children dreadful as they are shocked by their father and even see him as an ogre. At the same time, they hardly run to their mother because of her new appearance which renders them sceptical (742). Another character in a similar situation is the Ruler. He goes Self Induced Expansion and becomes tremendously big and is said to be pregnant though his body is light as he floats in the air: “What? His legs dangling in the air? ... The image of a Ruler suspended in the air with only the soles of his shoes visible from the floor.” (653) It comes to the extent whereby his sitting room cannot contain his size and a large hole is created in the ceiling for him to rest.

In order to deal with these colonial shortcomings, Ngugi visualizes a society without class inequality. The text presents the Aburirian society where the proletariat are oppressed by the rich. This soars misery and inflicts pains unto the citizens. In the text, the oppressors are so fond of the Western philosophy that they forget their roots and care less about their fellow countrymen. While the oppressed work, the bourgeoisie such as Tajirika steals state’s money to satisfy his bestial urge which is to become a White (Wizard of the Crow, 742). It does not matter that the society is fraught with misery. He believes a society without class distinction and oppression can be a perfect one because it will purvey peace and stability in the state.

The products of colonialism (such as democracy, Christianity and education) are already present and cannot be easily suppressed even by the nationalists. Ngugi sees a better Africa through good governance with conscious leaders; leaders that have a sense of communal life for the common good and not those that satisfy the West and their personal interest to the detriment of their own people. An utopian state for him is one without colonial legacies such as democracy. Since democracy is already implanted, it should be one where there is political freedom and equality. This ideal democratic state should be one in which there is no corruption; one where the laws are respected by all including those in beginning from the authority; one where there is no bloodshed caused by sit-tight leaders.

This chapter set out to discuss identity representation and the reconstruction the African identity and societies through the imaginary. In the course of this work, we discovered that there is a possibility to restore the pre-colonial lost identity due to imperialism. And this restoration can only occur through self-evaluation. Ngugi presents the fact that the reconstruction of the post independence African states will be difficult to take place because some Africans have alienated from their culture; thus much efforts is needed for this rebirth to occur. The author resorts to the imaginary to suggest the returning to the source and valorising the African culture in order to be free from imperialism cultural to the benefit of African identity. Also, we found out that phantasmagoria, equally referred here as fantasia or magic realism represents the imaginary where events unfold on the supernatural realm or setting including zany characters and themes such as sorcery. It should be noted that fantasia as prevailed on this work, shows the decadence of the contemporary African states through the infected psyches on one hand and presents how an idyllic state should be on the other hand.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### WIZARD OF THE CROW AND CREATIVE WRITING: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

*Wizard of the Crow* is an imaginary piece of work which presents the colonial experience and its effects on the African society. The “imaginary” here is very pertinent because it appeals on the physical involvement of Ngugi’s characters in mutations involved in the distortion and reconstruction of their identity. Next, it refers to the writer’s use of fairy-like representations to discuss identity problems and reconstruction in post independence Africa. These are the reasons why this chapter embarks on proposing the teaching of creative writing in the sixth form of Cameroonian Secondary education. As such, this chapter discusses the objectives of literature and language teaching and the place of creative writing in language teaching. It further highlights the importance of creative writing to the emerging generation. The chapter also looks at methods and techniques that can be used to teach creative writing. It eventually presents a lesson plan for a writing lesson.

Every human being has the capacity to interpret and conceive a world of his/her own through the five senses. Before something comes to existence, the idea is conceived mentally. Mental production cannot be seen directly; however, it can be observed through demands and beliefs (mental acceptance) that still remain invisible. This can however be made concrete through the act of writing. In *Wizard of the Crow*, Ngugi resorts to the imaginary in order to share human experience (the black experience in particular). He interprets the world– and occurrences– and conceives the way changes can be made through his imagination. He has recourse to both his imagination and the imaginary.

Creative writing is any work that expresses thoughts and ideas in an imaginative way. These thoughts and ideas should be original and self-expressive. Over the years, the Cameroon Secondary school program has got two main objectives for teaching an aspect of language. These two main objectives pertain to linguistic and literary concerns. At the linguistic level, teaching focuses on the functional use of language (through the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills) the literary focus provides students with productive linguistic features that will enable them to exteriorize their ideas. The program lays emphasis

more on language teaching thus rendering literature teaching less noticeable. Literature is very useful in a language class because it provides learners with original samples of language features with a variety of style through different types of texts and registers. It is equally necessary because it portrays the student's state of mind as it brings out their emotional states. Texts prescribed for language teaching and learning are generally ambiguous and do not trigger the students' attention when compared to literary texts that use their attention and emotions, making the lesson more interesting. Apart from providing a fulfilling source of linguistic input and making the learner improve the four skills, the literary text creates a multi-sensorial classroom experience because language of literature engages students' emotions. Gillian Lazar states that:

Literary text have a powerful function in raising moral and ethical concerns in the classroom...these texts should encourage our students to explore these concerns and connect them with the struggle for a better society...In fact, being made to read texts so alien to their own experience and background may only increase students' sense of frustration, inferiority and even powerlessness. We therefore need to select texts for classroom use which reflect the lives and interest of our students. (*Literature and Language Teaching* 3)

Lazar believes that literature, in a language, class is highly instructive and is fraught with moral lessons apart from being entertaining. This creates awareness in students, helping them to decipher the right from the wrong and telling them how they should behave. This is because literary texts associate students to life experiences and elicit their views for a better society. He equally thinks that introducing texts that are estranged from the students' day-to-day life may affect their feelings. When a text is not from the students' background, it affects their emotions negatively because it makes them believe their background is inferior.

*Wizard of the Crow* is a text which fits in the student's cultural milieu as it recounts daily experiences in Africa: colonial experience, sorcery, hybridity, misery, to name a few. When one mentions one of these themes, students identify themselves it. Exposure to these themes enables the students to know what to avoid and what to do in order to build a better society and how to be better future leaders. It should be noted that literary texts, apart from helping learners to understand the cultures of others, develop their interpretative abilities and challenge them to think critically. Expressing a personal opinion and knowing that their

opinions count make students feel they are useful and can contribute in one way or the other to constructive discussion which might improve communal life. Thus, literary texts foster liveliness and motivation in a language class.

Indubitably, reading literary texts cultivates the mind; however, writing enables the learners to express themselves in relation to what they have read or experienced. The Cameroonian secondary schools' program includes writing skills in the language teaching program; nevertheless, the variety of writing types is rather limited. The aim of the writing lessons lay emphasis on structures and grammatical features and there is a minimal exploration on ways of inciting students to use their imagination. In the course of writing in language teaching even topics are often provided for the learners to work upon. This limits the learner's view to what is proposed and does not engage his/her cognitive faculties. At times, learners are not well informed about the topic they are asked to write about. Supplying a topic is already providing guided practice to students thereby reducing opportunities to use their imagination.

That is what partly makes the teaching of creative writing in secondary schools. Its absence from these programs is bad because it plays a vital role and has its place in language and literature teaching. Not only does it motivate students to develop three basic language skills (reading, speaking, and writing skills) to achieve communicative competence, but also creates it creates space for the learners to comment by providing acceptable explanations as well as and mirror themselves in the situations mentioned. Creative writing instigates a personal response from the learners and therefore urges them to write about their own experiences. This boosts the learner's interest in the process of language learning. Also, creative writing is important because it develops self-confidence and identity. Teaching creative writing is necessary because it reflects on the students' personalities and enables the teacher to know them better (their experiences and desires) in order to facilitate the teaching-learning process.

As earlier mentioned, creative writing broadens learners thinking scope and provides them with an emotional outlet as thoughts and ideas are expressed in a safe manner thus encourages the use of the imagination. For instance, in *Wizard of the Crow* gives every reader the opportunity to interpret the text according to his/her understanding and decide to write

his/her text projecting what is in his/her mind. David Morley, in *Cambridge introduction to Creative Writing* states that: “The pleasure of creativity illuminates aspects of knowledge that we regard as non-literary, especially if we begin to accept the arguments of cognitive science: that ‘the literary mind is the fundamental mind’, not a separate kind of mind” (8). According to Morley, the brain and imagination cannot be separated. He proceeds on that same page to illustrate the fact that in the process of associating creativity and imagination, complementary senses are developed—sight with sound, taste with touch, time with hearing. That is to say that one sense triggers an image or sensation in another.

Creative writing can be fictional or non-fictional. Our focus will be on the creation of fiction which is purely imaginary. The *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines fiction as “the type of book or story which is written about imaginary characters and events and not based on real people and facts” (525). *Wizard of the Crow* is a work of fiction which recounts the African experience in the process of colonialism. It presents the effects of colonialism on the African society and eventually portrays the possibility for change. The novel is based on imaginary people who do not exist and events that have not actually taken place. M. H. Abrams in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* defines fiction in an inclusive sense when he states that:

In an inclusive sense, fiction is any literary narrative, whether in prose or verse, which is invented instead of being an account of events that in fact happened. In a narrower sense, however, fiction denotes only narratives that are written in prose (the novel and short story), and sometimes is used simply as a synonym for the novel. Literary prose narratives in which the fiction is to a prominent degree based on biographical, historical, or contemporary facts are often referred to by compound names such as "fictional biography," the historical novel, and the nonfiction novel. (*A Glossary of Literary Terms* 94)

Abrams believes that all stories or novels are fictitious. For instance, if a novel or a story recounts a person’s life and experiences, it becomes fictional biography— “a compound name”. A compound name because though biographical, it remains a story. This is the same with stories or novel-based on historical facts. *Wizard of the Crow* is a novel which does not only relate human experience, but is equally based on historical facts: the colonial experience that encompasses the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. It is nevertheless

imaginary because it creates its events, setting and characters. Milhorn supports this view when he defines fiction by relating it to the exceptional ability to create from the imaginary. He states that:

Fiction is a literary work whose content is produced by imagination and is not necessarily based on fact. Writing fiction is generally conceded to be a combination of craft and talent. This is sometimes stated as:

Writing Fiction = Craft + Talent

The craft part of the equation is the part that can be taught or learned. The talent part is the part that cannot be taught nor learned. You were either born with it or you weren't. It's like a lot of other things in life. (*Writing Genre Fiction. A Guide to Craft* 15)

Milhorn believes that fiction writing, just like any other thing in life, can be a gift or a natural ability to produce a work of art. At the same time, he thinks some aspects of it can be taught or learned. He thus assumes that it is both the capability and the aptitude to write fiction. In other words, writing fiction can be taught and learned hence this study's concern at this stage.

Initiating students into creative writing can be very challenging if some key elements are not taken into consideration. Malhorn says, to create a fictional world that seems real to others; writers use a minimum of six key elements: (1) plot, story, and structure; (2) setting; (3) characters; (4) point of view; (5) prose; and (6) theme and subject (*Writing Genre Fiction. A Guide to Craft* 15). These elements can be used to facilitate the teaching and learning of creative fictional writing. It should be noted that, Ngugi— in writing the *Wizard of the Crow*— respects these key elements and even more.

In this section of the chapter, some suggestions are made to enable the teaching of creative writing and understanding. Preliminarily, students can be introduced to the first five parts of Book One: The Power Demon in *Wizard of the Crow* page 3 – 11 (given the bulkiness of the text). In these parts, the author paints a negative picture of Africa and the changes brought about by colonialism through the occurrences in Aburiria. The valorisation of African culture is equally included. After getting students to read the text, the teacher may apply the

questions and answers, and discussion techniques thanks to which the expected answers will lead to the key elements of creative writing: plot or story line, setting, characterisation, narrative point of view, theme, structure, and narrative strategies and figures of speech. Through these techniques, the realities described in the section that follows are established about these elements.

Plot is a sequence of events that appear in the story the way the author wishes to present them. It is a chain of subsequent events which generally creates tension and arouses emotions as the reader will be eager to know what happens next. Aristotle, in his poetics presents it as the most important element of grammar and thinks it must have a beginning, middle and an end. At times, the sequence of events may not appear in a chronological manner and so the students and the teacher are the ones to decipher and rearrange the events in a chronological manner in order to make the story easy to understand.

In *Wizard of the Crow*, the story takes place in Aburiria after independence and recounts the effects of colonialism on the state. It presents how the colonial heritage such as hybridity has affected and infected the colonised as they all have different views and adopt different attitudes. The Ruler of Aburiria and his Ministers are instrumental in causing the providing space for the deterioration of the African cultural identity as they accept and adhere to Western ideologies. Meanwhile some nationalists— such as the Wizard of the Crow— try to recover and reconstruct these lost values and withstand the Western view.

The setting of a novel is the background which has to do with the place where and at time on which the author sets the story. The mood is equally included in the setting because it involves emotion. Setting is seen from different perspectives: from the historical, the geographical and the psychological perspectives. This helps to show the cultural context from which the story is drawn and enables readers to the students familiarise themselves with their culture or with that of others. Ngugi uses aspects of independent Kenya to portray the historical setting of *Wizard of the Crow*. He juxtaposes *Wizard of the Crow* with the reign of Arap Daniel Moi who ruled Kenya from 1977 – 2002. As far as the geographical setting is concerned, the text is set in an imaginary and fictitious Free Republic of Aburiria in Africa. The psychological setting depicts the state of mind of the characters by showing how characters view the same environment in different ways. Ngugi illustrates this through the

hybridised oppressors (The Ruler and his Ministers) and the nationalists (the Wizard of the Crow and others).

Themes are mainly the subjects or topics of the story. They are not generally stated explicitly in the text, but instead expressed through the characters' thoughts and actions. Themes generally present universal problems faced by people and, at times, provide possible solutions. Before engaging in creative writing, learners should have a topic or a subject they want to talk about and these topics should be reflected through the characters they have chosen. For example, Ngugi discusses themes like postcolonial politics, colonialism, and hybridization in his text. These themes are universal issues experienced in post-independent African states.

Characters are imaginary people in the story whom the reader considers as being real. They generally have different ways of perceiving things and this explains their different attitudes. Learners can produce characters through the description of aspects like physical appearance, names, and personalities. It should be noted that this description should have a direct link with the theme or subject of the story. The reader should be able to decipher the role they play. Through the characters of Kamiti and other patriots, the themes of nationalism and misery while through the Ruler and others we see alienation and hybridity.

Structure is the way the plot is organized. It presents the way the book is divided and can be chronological or incoherent as earlier mentioned. Learners should know that whether the story line is in a logical order or not, the content should be well organized and presentable in such a way that the reader cannot get lost. That is, every incident in the text should have a follow-up even if the story line is not logical. Structure is important in creative fictional writing because it creates suspense and this makes the book more interesting. *Wizard of the Crow*, though not chronological, is divided into six books: Book One – Power Daemons; Book Two - Queuing Daemons; Book Three – Female Daemons; Book Four – Male Daemons; Book Five – Rebel Daemons; and Book Six – Bearded Daemons.

The narrative point of view is the narrative voice through which a story is told. It helps the reader to enter the reality of the story. Learners should know that they can choose from the first person (with the use of the pronoun 'I'), the second person ('you', which is very rare

except in dialogues), or the third person (he, she or they) to convey their thoughts. Ngugi narrates the story through the third person narrative and the first person point of view. In the first person narrative, he uses the characters of Nyawira, AG and Kamiti/Wizard of the Crow to narrate some incidences in the story. The dominant tense in the text is the past tense.

Narrative strategies and figures of speech show the manner or the style in which the author passes across his message. This focuses on the writer's choice of words. Style also involves humour, suspense, sarcasm, and the use of imagery or sense devices. These enrich the novel and best portray the characters and the theme. *Wizard of the Crow* is an allegory in its whole. The Ruler is a reflection of African leaders and African states after independence. Through hyperbole, he exaggerates the ridiculous nature of the Ministers (in his descriptions) as he mocks their situation; showing how there is no objectivity in most post independence politics and how this has given way to the fight for favours. Ngugi also makes great use of other elements of style such as, contrast and flashback.

In the process of teaching creative writing, after having used the questions and answers, and discussion methods to bring out these key elements, the teacher can write the title *Wizard of the Crow* on the chalkboard. She/he can underline the word "Wizard" and ask to write down anything or story from their imagination as they see the word. Drawing inspiration from Ngugi's use of fantasia, the teacher can incite students to write about characters and settings that are derived from the supernatural or the unreal— the use of animals, monsters, extra-terrestrial spaces etc. In the pages that follow, a lesson plan for the teaching of the writing of folktales (that makes allowance for such use of the imaginary) has been suggested.

**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2016

**NAME OF TEACHER:** BIMELA ROCKAIYATU KINYUY

**SCHOOL:** Government Bilingual High School Nkol-Eton

**CLASS:** Lower Sixth Arts

**SUBJECT:** Literature in English

**LESSON:** Writing

**TOPIC:** Creative Writing: “The Folktale”

**NUMBER ON ROLL:** 64

**PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE:** students have already heard, read or narrated some folktales knowingly or unknowingly. They know the elements of the novel/ drama earlier identified and discussed.

**LESSON OBJECTIVE(S):** By the end of this lesson, students should be able to use their imagination to produce and write a folktales

**TEACHING AIDS:** Recomposed extracts of five passages from the text – *Wizard of the Crow*, pictures, chalk, and chalkboard.

**DURATION:** 1h 50 minutes **TIME:** 1:45 – 3:35 pm

**REFERENCE:** WaThiongo, Ngugi. *Wizard of the Crow*. London: Harvill Secker, 2006

STAGES	SUBJECT MATTER	TEACHER'S ACTIVITY	STUDENTS' ACTIVITY	RATIONALE	DURATION
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<p><b><u>Warm up</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Observe the picture presented on the chart.</li> <li>-What do you see?</li> <li>-What do you think must have happened to him/her?</li> </ul> <p><b>Expected Answers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A boy looking sad, angry, worried, surprise,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is hungry, he heard a bad news, he failed his exams, he misplaced his money and cannot return home,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The teacher brainstorms students by asking questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Appointed students provide answers to the questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To draw their attention to the subject matter by making them to unconsciously use them to use their imagination.</li> </ul>	<b>10MINS</b>

	<p>- If I'm hungry I will beg for food. I will go and verify if the news if true. I will work hard next time. I will beg for fare to get back home or I'll trek back home A girl who is sick lying on the floor on a mat. People are standing around her and she is receiving traditional treatments.</p>				
<b>PRESENTATION</b>	<p><b><u>Creative Writing: Writing a Folktale</u></b> <b>Read the following the text (given to you) and answer the questions that follow</b> <b><u>QUESTIONS</u></b> 1-What is a folktale? 2. What are some of the traditions of the people of Aburiria earlier read about in the novel? 3. How does the writer represent them by using the imaginary and supernatural? 4. Which different elements of a piece of writing does he use to write his book?</p>	<p>-The teacher announces the lesson of the day. - Gives students the text to read. - puts students in groups to answer the questions</p>	<p>-The students listen. - Students read the text and answer questions in group.</p>	<p>The exercise helps guide the students towards creative writing.</p>	<b>25 MINS</b>

	<p>Look at the underlined word (on the board) “<u>Wizard</u>,” write down ideas you have about Wizardry in your home town. Do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At random, re-arrange them in chronological/logical order; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who did what, where and when? Which supernatural creatures or places can you use to represent them?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<b>PRACTICE</b>	<p>Develop in about 350 the flesh of the skeletal jottings. Develop the random jottings into short tales.</p>	<p>-The teacher gives some extracts and an exercise. She puts the students in pairs to do the tasks.</p> <p>-She on the representatives of the pairs to give their answers or their points of view.</p>	<p>-The students form pairs and carryout the task.</p> <p>-They present their answers in form of discussion.</p>	<p>To make sure they understood what some of the key elements discussed are all about.</p> <p>-To enable them express their point of views in relation to the text.</p>	<b>30 MINS</b>
		-The teacher gives	-Students focus	-To enable them	

<p><b>EVALUATION</b></p>	<p><b>Exercise</b> Build up and write down a folktale taking Imagine and write any folktale that examines why the snake has no legs.</p> <p><b>Assignment</b> Use your imagination to write a possible end for <i>Wizard of the Crow</i> in about 2 pages. Read the novel's end to see how close or far you were.</p>	<p>another exercise to be done individually in their books. -She moves around the class checking. -She marks some books and call on other learners to present their folktales to the class. -The teacher gives an assignment.</p>	<p>on the task given. -They present their works -They take down the assignment.</p>	<p>express their thoughts in an imaginative manner. -To re-enforce understanding and produce independently a folktale without guidance.</p>	<p><b>40MINS</b></p>
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## CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to show that though Post Independence African States have adopted Western ways and ideologies, due to colonialism, to the detriment of African cultural values; there is still hope of recovery of lost African cultural values through self-redefinition. Nevertheless, all the lost values cannot be regained because some of the Whiteman's culture and ideologies have eaten deep into the African identity. Africans should therefore strive to recover what they can and turn what they cannot change to their advantage by appropriating what has been contaminated. The work has also proposed the exploration of Ngugi's phantasmagoric tendencies to teach creative writing to Lower Sixth students. This work is based on the hypothesis that though the effects of colonialism are devastating on the African identity and society; there is still a possibility for the restoration of this identity through phantasmagoria.

The theoretical framework used for the analysis of this work is the postcolonial and the psychoanalytic theory. The postcolonial theory has illustrated the concept of hybridity and ethnicity. It has depicted the influence of cultural imperialism on the contemporary African society. Phantasmagoria— connected to magical realism— together with the psychoanalytical theory permit this work to show how the African psyche has been affected by colonial experience. Ngugi resorts to the imaginary in *Wizard of the Crow* to portray the postcolonial mind and present the possibility of the reconstruction of the post independent African societies. The author uses phantasmagoria and envisages the recovery of lost African cultural values. He presents the hope for restoration of cultural values through self-examination because he believes that the African mind has to be healed so that the society can be free from cultural imperialism and dependency.

The first chapter of this work, entitled "African Identity in Pre-colonial Setting," presents the African society before the colonial intrusion. The chapter shows how Ngugi celebrate African culture and tradition by hinting at the purity of the African cultural identity of the pre-colonial era. Thus, it portrays the African state, of that epoch, as an utopic state that had its own culture, beliefs and ideology. It was a society characterised by peace and harmony before the arrival of the colonisers.

Chapter Two titled "From Utopia to a Dystopia" portrays how hybridity, as a colonial legacy, has caused the deterioration of the African state and the devalorisation of the African

culture. The behaviour of some Africans vis-à-vis their fellow countrymen has proven that Europeans are to be solely blamed for the decadence of African society of which Africans, themselves, have equally contributed to its decay. The adoption of the Western ideology has thrown the African state into disarray thereby splitting them into oppressors (Western ideology) and oppressed (African state). Colonial dominion is still ensured through neo-colonialism thereby rendering African states dependent of the West.

The third chapter, captioned “Fantasia, Identity Representation and reconstruction,” hints at the possible deliverance of African states irrespective of how slim the chances may be. The chapter has shown how the writer uses fantasia to both represent the African distorted identity and the possibility for its reconstruction. Phantasmagoria here is presented as the starting point to this remedy. Ngugi presents the mental representation of the nationalists as a panacea to colonial ills and invites Africans to examine and re-define themselves. In order to revive the pre-existing African state and have a functional society, the negatively hybridized Africans should go through a deep introspection. Tradition here is portrayed as a solution or a cure to societal ills that have caused so much disillusionment. It is true that all cannot be recovered from the lost African values; however, with much effort, the majority can be restored.

Lastly, Chapter Four labelled “*Wizard of the Crow* and Creative Writing: An Interdisciplinary Approach” stressed the strengths of an interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of writing after making an appraisal of how the teaching of writing is done. It has proposed the exposure of students to a portion of Ngugi’s novel under study as an activity that prepares students for the writing lesson and has recommended the examination of the different elements that are part of prose and drama. Using these activities as anchors, the chapter has suggested a lesson plan on the writing of folktales in a lower sixth class.

The findings of this work revealed that the African identity and society in the pre-colonial realm was pure and utopic. It equally imparted that Ngugi presents neo-colonialism as the cause of the devolorisation of the African culture thereby infecting the African identity that was once considered as pure. Moreover, the work has disclosed that though the devastating effects of colonialism are enormous on the African identity, there is still hope for the recovery of the lost African identity through self-examination and self-redefinition. In addition, the work has revealed that Ngugi is advocating the valorisation of the African culture through orality and the need to voice experience and feelings through writing the imaginary.

Having discussed the influence of colonialism on the African's identity and the possible remedy for the restoration of the pre-existing values, this work gives room for further research. For example, a research endeavour can focus on the dynamic strikes in post independent African states: case study, *Wizard of the Crow* by Ngugi wa Thiongo.

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**APPENDIX**

**APPENDIX ONE**

**Pictures for the lesson plan**

**Picture 1**



**Picture 2**



**APPENDIX TWO**

**Passage for the lesson plan**