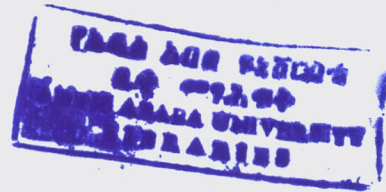


**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND
LITERATURE**



**Ideology and the Representation of Female
Characters in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *The River
Between* and *A Grain of Wheat***

BALEW DEMISSIE

JUNE 2009

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Between* and *A Grain of Wheat***



A Thesis

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Languages and Literature**



**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
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June 2009

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By

BALEW DEMISSIE



Approved by Examining Board:

Advisor

Olga Yazbec

Dr. Melakch Meunak

Examiner

Signature

[Handwritten signature]

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Abstract

This thesis aims at showing and analyzing the representation of female characters in Ngũgĩ's two novels-*The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat* from ideological perspectives. To accomplish the study, the notions of ideology and literary representation are discussed. Though ideology is defined as a set of beliefs, it has specific definitions depending on its kinds. Different types of ideologies such as dominant, authorial, aesthetic, patriarchal and gendered are looked at in the study. Thus, based on ideology and literary representation as a theoretical framework, all female characters in the selected novels are examined.

The study is divided into four chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction to the study. The second chapter is devoted to the review of literature on the issues of ideology and representation. The third chapter is analysis and interpretation of the two selected novels. The analysis is divided into four major sections and it analyses and interprets the representation female characters from dominant, authorial, aesthetic, patriarchal and gendered ideological points of view. Finally, the last chapter deals with the conclusion to the analysis in the third chapter, where the representation of female characters in the two novels is examined from the ideological dimensions.

The analysis and interpretation of the novels show that female characters are victims of the dominant, gendered and patriarchal ideologies. Ngũgĩ, using his authorial ideology, has shown the different nationalistic roles female characters have played in the two novels. Finally, the study has confirmed that the representation of female characters in the two novels reveals the realities of women in the social context of the period when the novels were written.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background to the Study

Probably the most common aspect about literature is that it is a representation of life. Representation has always played a central role in the understanding of literature. Cavallaro(2001) maintains that all arts are modes of representation and for many authors, the primary cause for representing their subjects is ideology. Lentricchia and Mclaughlin(1995:15) also say "It should be clear that representation, even purely aesthetic representation of fictional persons and events can never be completely divorced from ideology."

According to Ngara (1985), the representation of characters in a novel is mainly a result of the situation they are present in. They reflect the ideology that surrounds them or they live in an environment described in the novel. He argues that a novelist does not create characters accidentally to his mind; they may be created and conditioned by what the novelist guesses about other people, about himself or the society. In addition, Cavallaro(ibid.) also explains the relationship between ideology and representation as:

It is also important to bear in mind that the collusion of representation and ideology is not a contemporary phenomenon, for representation has been intertwined with ideology throughout human history (41).

Usually, ideology is a variety of constructs that originates from different outlooks. It goes along with different interested groups and all these opposing ideologies of the groups have to be investigated with respect to representation. Ideology functions as an illusion and it gives people ideas about how to realize themselves and their lives. And, these ideas disguise or mask what is really going on. Eagleton (1976:26-30) explains that ideology signifies the way people live out their lives in a class society and it gives people the notion of representation for the values, ideas, and images that tie

them together in the social functions. As to him, ideology also camouflages people from a true understanding of their situations.

According to Mbilinyi and Omari(1996),African women felt like outsiders for centuries because of certain ideologies. They were not engaged in any discussion even before the advent of the white men. The colonial rule also aggravates women's misery by introducing a lopsided system in which African men are relatively favored. In a similar vein, this situation has also brought an impact on the representation of women in literary perspectives. To show the representation of women in such historical events, not only a feminist prospect is enough but Marxist theories of ideology are also helpful to understand women's experiences and contributions. Therefore, drawing insights from feminist and Marxist theories, it is helpful to realize the representation of women particularly in the context of different ideologies being analyzed. Thus, a close ideological analysis is significant to discern the source, nature and extent of the representation of female characters in literary works.

Researches in African literature have shown that literary representation of female characters can be rationalized from different directions. For example, Belsey and Moore (1997) have discussed that some feminists propose a psychoanalytic account for movie depictions of women. In this criticism, the analysts' engagement in a movie depends on the viewers' unconscious desire. For other feminists, a representation is an expression of ideology. A form of a depiction represents ideology. Such critics do not use a psychoanalytic framework rather they analyze whether the movie expresses stereotyped ideologies related to women or not.

According to Palmer (1972), the representation of female characters in some African authored novels like Ngūgī's novels is never far from ideological roles. The ideology can be dominant, authorial and aesthetic. Mbilinyi and Omari(1996)also claim that women in African literature are often affected

and victimized by gendered and patriarchal ideologies. These scholars have indicated that women are portrayed as objects or objects to be owned. They also assert that these ideologies will necessarily result in further women's colonization and victimization as far as women themselves perceive these representations as "natural". However, in actuality, women are more than that and they should learn not to accept the hegemonic ideological perspectives the society obliges on them and they have to confront such ideological-biased representations.

The most important question in a critical analysis of ideology and the representation of female characters is not only to describe the way women are specifically represented as objects, prostitutes, motherhood or reliant on male counterparts. Its focus is how ideology as one ground plays a role for the portrayal of women. Customarily, women have definite positions given by a society and they are judged in accordance with certain ideologies. As to Mbilinyi and Omari(1996), theories of ideology presuppose the different social structures women have in the society and these theories make a connection between their experiences and the sources of these occurrences. Therefore, identifying the representation of women in light of different ideologies is useful and sound because it gives a full account for the origin of their portrayal.

In view of the above theoretical background, different literary scholars have mentioned different causes for the literary representation of females in African literature. Writers such as Ama Ata Aidoo and Flora Nwapa (in Gupta,2005:20-23) have insisted that the real cause for representing African women as helpless, dependent and unproductive is ushered by imperialists' ideology. On the other hand,Buchi Emecheta maintains that the image of women in African literary works is caused by traditional gendered and patriarchal mores.Moreover, as to Ngara(1985),most African literature is a direct response to concrete historical conditions and an authoress or an author crafts her or his characters in the form of certain ideological beliefs.

In this way, ideology in its basic sense is believed to be the cause for the representation of women in literary works.

Ngũgĩ, who is one of the renowned African writers, argues that literature does not occur in a vacuum. It is shaped by political, social, cultural and economic ideologies. He (in Berger, 1989) further states that some male writers have to make efforts to reconstitute the fragmented representation of African female characters which is caused by different ideologies in their early writings. In his two novels_ *The River Between* (1965) and *A Grain of Wheat* (1986), he has portrayed female characters in certain ideological turmoil and the center of this research is on this assumption. Moreover, the interplay of ideology and literary representation stated above can be an aspiration for this study. Therefore, the main focus of the research is to explore and interpret different ideologies in relation to the representation of female characters as reflected in the selected novels.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In real life, human beings encounter distinct representations of what it means to be a woman. Often these images are taken for granted and the ways in which women are represented seem "natural" and these representations shape the way people view women and their relationships to them and to the world around them (Mbilinyi and Omari, 1996).

When the representation of women is discussed, it has to be realized that it refers to the portrait of women in the society. Representation is the concept which is found in individuals' minds on women and it can be created by themselves or by the other self. Whether it is created from the other self or by themselves, the outside world inserts ideologies in the perceivers' minds on women's image and this impression might be contradictory or consistent with the existing ideologies (Belsey and Moore, 1997).

Sometimes in place of representing female characters accurately in literary works, an author might misrepresent them and the causes for such subjective misrepresentations can be ideological reasons. Cavallaro (2001:47) asserts that ideology is one of the reasons for this distortion and he states as: "Theories of ideology have stressed that misrepresentation plays a central role in the construction of personal and collective identities: what we think we are is often a product of how our culture misrepresents and of how we misrepresent ourselves."

As to Cavallaro (ibid.), representation can be taken as two faces- actual image (reality) and mental image (illusion). He claims that it is very difficult to differentiate reliable representation from fragmented representations because of ideologies. On the other hand, other critics like Bryson (1983) and Boyer (1996) in Cavallaro (ibid.) also assert that since some nations in the world have not gone through specific ideological divisions, representation of characters are more or less taken from common sense or realism; however, Lentricchia and McLaughlin (1995:311) maintain that realism or common sense is a form of ideology and they state that "Ideology is not the opposite of common sense or realism and there is no such thing as a social discourse that is non-ideological. Indeed realism can now be understood as the pragmatic form of ideology."

In most cases, feminist literary criticism is employed to analyze whether women are represented or misrepresented in literary texts. But, analyzing the representation of women from a feminist point of view is not sufficient by itself. Feminist criticism can be combined with sociological, cultural or psychological criticism. Tyson (1999:80) defines feminist criticism as: "Feminist literary criticism examines the way in which literature reinforces or undermines the economic, political, social, psychological oppression of women." Here, it may be asked what the real sources for these oppressions are. In order to detect the origins of such coercions in the African literary landscape, it is relevant to address the issue of ideology in the portrayal of

the females' persona. In addition, conducting a research on African women in western feminist ideologies is not an effective method.

As discussed above, there are different approaches to literature to present a reading of a text in which female characters are the focus. Since the aim of this study is to discuss ideology and the representation of female characters, it has been designed to use Marxist literary criticism and African feminist literary criticism in an eclectic way. Marxist literary criticism often shares a similarity to African feminist criticism. For African feminists, the issue is a marginalized gendered and patriarchal ideology. For Marxists, the concern is different ideologies leading to political struggle. Besides, both literary criticisms desire to challenge the different ideological structures that exist in a society (Keohane et al., 1982:4).

As to Belsey and Moore (1997:77), ideology establishes various kinds of masks that perpetuate women to behave in submissive ways and such behavior in turn inserts the idea that they are naturally subservient. They claim that ideology reinforces women's inferiority and preserve men's greater access to power, wealth and prestige. Keohane et al.(ibid.) also further state that ideological criticisms are interested in asking a range of ideological questions about how female characters are represented in literature. They maintain that ideology is one of the ways that is employed to study the representation of female characters in literature.

So far a number of studies have been conducted on the representation of female characters using various names as portrayal, depiction, and image. However, scholars do not agree with the study of women on such names. Belsey and Moore(1997:77) state as: "we favor currently the word 'representation' because it sustains a needed distance between experience and formulation." Though studies have not been conducted on ideology and the representation of female characters, different researches have been carried out related to this research. Among local studies, Tigist



Defaru(2006),Rahel Itana(2007)and Gebremariam Haile (2007) can be mentioned and their wide-ranging arguments are women reflected in those literary works have been stereotyped and victimized over the years. Moreover, Berger (1989), Palmer (1972) and Gupta (2005) have studied the representation of female characters in Ngūgī's novels and they explain that the treatment of female characters in his recent novels is better than his portrait of female characters in his earlier works. And, most of the grounds of the preceding studies are different feminist theories.

Thus, this study seeks to investigate the representation of female characters from a specific perspective that has not been touched by the above studies. In particular, it examines the link between ideology and literary representation. It is, therefore, significant and timely to make a critical analysis on the representation of female characters in Ngūgī's two Novels_ *The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat* from different ideologies. These ideologies are dominant, authorial, aesthetic, patriarchal and gendered.

Generally, the study attempts to analyze and investigate the influence of the above ideologies on the representation of female characters in the selected novels. And, it is expected to answer the following major points. First, it tries to identify the ideologies of the period as reflected in the novels. Second, it examines the ideologies of the colonized people. Thirdly, the ideologies of the characters and the author as reflected in the novels are going to be explored.

1.3 Objective of the Study

Generally women in a number of African literary texts are represented in an inaccurate way and they have a historically frozen image. Their representation is mostly sloppy and biased and it has been assumed different reasons for this widely circulating representation. Therefore, the major objective of this research is to investigate and to analyze the effect of ideology on the representation of female characters as reflected in Ngūgī's

two novels. In such a way that women are evaluated whether they are victims of the different ideologies or not. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. It investigates how the dominant ideologies as reflected in *The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat* affect the representation of female characters.
2. It examines Ngũgĩ's authorial ideology towards the representation of female characters in the selected two novels.
3. It attempts to show any link between the historical realities of colonialism and the representation of female characters in the selected novels.
4. It also explores how the representation of female characters as reflected in the novels is affected by patriarchal and gendered ideologies.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Apart from showing the way in which ideology and literary representation are linked, the study will serve as a springboard for other researchers to study ideology and literary representation in other works of Ngũgĩ. It could also serve as a reference material for those who need to conduct a research on the same subject. It also helps to critically analyze female characters with different ideologies in literary works. Thus, creating an awareness how ideology affects women's lives, it helps to examine female characters in relation to their roles in the social environment and their interaction with other characters.

In addition, since the novels have been analyzed from the perspective of ideology and the representation of female characters, it is hoped that the study will contribute something new in the area of feminism and ideology. It

also helps to show that social and political beliefs can have an impact on the ways in which female characters view themselves and a society views them. Besides, it can help to understand how ideology creates and recreates the specific image of women.

On the whole, the study can contribute its own share to inform researchers about the multiple approaches to the literary representation of women and it assists other researchers to conduct a study on ideology and literary representation of female characters in other popular cultures like film, play, advertisement and etc..It has also a great advantage to show other researchers the integration of literature and history for the reason that reality of an epoch is one way to examine the representation of female characters.

1.5 The Scope of the Study

The main focus of the study is to reveal how ideology can have an impact on the representation of female characters in the selected novels. The novels in focus are- *The River Between* (1965) and *A Grain of Wheat* (1986). The research investigates the different ideologies that exist in the novels. These ideologies are dominant, authorial and aesthetic. It also points out gendered and patriarchal ideology as reflected in the novels. As the representation of female characters in the selected novels is not explicitly stated in the same way as a historical document, a correlation between their literary representation and the realities of the period will be made. Finally, the study pays attention to the representation of female characters in relation to the ideologies stated above.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Although it was possible to look at the representation of female characters from different feminist literary points of view, due to space and time constraints, the research is limited to showing and analyzing the

representation of women only from ideological dimensions. Therefore, the study bases the portrayal of female characters solely on different ideological perspectives.

1.7 Methodology of the Study

This study uses descriptive criticism methods. Since the study depends on a theoretical framework, sources related to the study have been gathered. A critical reading of references available at libraries has been incorporated both in the review and in the analysis part. The primary data for the study is the two novels. Secondary data has been drawn from literature on ideology and literary representation. Moreover, critics' ideas with regard to the study under discussion have been included in the study. Though the textual analysis related to the major objectives of the research has been carried out through a critical reading, the overall ideology of each novel is examined.

Generally, in addition to exploring the literature on the area of ideology and literary representation, the study depends itself on a through textual analysis of the novels selected for this purpose. The review centers on the concept of ideology, its controversial shades of meanings and theories of literary representations. Thus, the theoretical background for the analysis is critical views on ideology and literary representation. The two novels__ *The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat* are selected because they reflect ideological notions.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This study is divided into four chapters. Chapter one is the introduction which contains background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the significance, the scope, limitations, the methodology, organization of the study and definition of important terms. Chapter two is the review of related literature which explores the concept of ideology, ideology in Marxist and African feminist readings and theories of

literary representation. Chapter three presents the analysis and interpretation of the two selected novels. The last chapter is the conclusion.

1.9 Definition of Important Terms

The following concepts have been defined because they are operational terms for the study.

Ideology: A body of ideas, ideals, values or beliefs; false values used to keep people under control; ideas promoted by a specific social class; values that sustain dominant structure of power; the presentation of cultural constructs as natural facts (Cavallaro, 2001:76).

Dominant ideology: It is the beliefs, assumptions and set of values that inform the thoughts and actions of a people in a particular historical moment. It contains politics, religion, art and other values of the ruling class (Ngara, 1985:108).

Authorial ideology: In a situation where are competing ideologies, a writer will project his own ideological stance which may or may not be homologous with the dominant ideology. Whatever ideological stance he adopts will be addressed as his authorial ideology (Ngara, 1985:108).

Aesthetic ideology: It refers to an author's presentation of a truthful and a balanced account of reality in an epoch (Ngara, 1985:109).

Gendered Ideology: It is the set of beliefs that govern African women's participation in the gender order and it explains and justifies the participation. Gender order refers to socially recognized norms and expectations that women have played (Mbilinyi and Omari, 1996:161).

Patriarchal Ideology: It is an internalized pattern of male dominance upon African women in social, political and economic aspects both in a unified family and in a society. It is the justification of male superiority in different practices (Mbilinyi and Omari, 1996:174).

Representation: It signifies the portrayal of female characters in a literary work (with ideological notion). It also refers to the construction of reality in literary texts; how women are represented or constructed within the text. It also includes the processes of production and reception by people for representing women. How others including the society look at images of women, institutions at women, men at women or women at women (Lentricchia and Mclaughlin, 1995:9).

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This section of the research presents a related literature on the area of the study. It has three major parts. The first part discusses ideology in Marxist concept. The second part describes ideology in African feminist reading and the third part deals with theories of literary representation. In the first part, the philosophy of ideology, its definitions, features and sources are argued. Besides, this part attempts to classify ideology into dominant, aesthetic, authorial relating to Marxism. It also addresses the relation between ideology and literature and it describes the general aspects of ideology in African novels. In the second part, the two most common ideologies that are gendered and patriarchal ideologies are examined with regard to African feminism. Finally, definitions of representation, causes of representation and misrepresentation and types of representation are thoroughly dealt with in the last part.

2.1 The Notion of Marxist Literary Criticism

Marxists' approaches to literature occupy a wide field since Marxism is a theory of economics, history, and society. Despite their diversity, all Marxist theories of literature have a general view in common that literature can only be understood within a larger framework of social reality. Jefferson and Robey (1991:167) say that "Marxists hold that any theory which treats literature in isolation and keeps it in isolation, divorcing from society and history will be deficient in its ability to explain what literature is."

Marxist literary criticism sees a literary work as both a reflection and a product of economic conflict between the social classes. The fundamental theory of this criticism is that those who control a society's economy also

control or largely influence its literary and intellectual products. According to Newton (1997), Marxist literary critics are viewed as traditional and contemporary and all of them have devised ways in which a text reveals ideological oppression of a dominant class over subordinate classes. Similarly, Eagleton (1976) claims that both contemporary and traditional Marxists have revealed that texts can reflect or resist a dominant ideology. According to Tyson (1999), Marxist critics also examine characters in a novel either insisting or opposing bourgeois values and they raise questions like whose story is told in the text. Moreover, they investigate whether lower economic groups are overlooked or undervalued. In general, as stated by Tyson (1999:65), Marxist critics inquire literary texts as: "in what ways the texts reveal, and invite us to condemn oppressive socio-economic forces including repressive ideologies?"

2.1.1 The Concept of Ideology

One of the vital points in Marxist criticism is ideology. The word ideology was originally used by a French philosopher of the late eighteenth century to define a science of ideas or philosophy of mind. It has taken a long and complicated journey before its emergence in the newer definitions. Although theories of ideology have been influenced by different literary theories, the most influential development in its theories rests on Marxism (Lentricchia and Mclaughlin, 1995).

According to Belsey and Moore (1997:254), ideology is a belief, a meaning and a practice which shapes our thoughts and actions. They point out that ideology not only defines our understanding of the world and our perception, but it is the condition of our experience. They also assert that all ideologies are produced out of a struggle and it is always the result of a struggle with antagonistic ideologies.

There are different definitions of ideology. According to International Encyclopedia of the Social Science (1968:192), ideology is defined as “the integrated assertion, theories and aims that constitute a socio political programme.” Another definition given by this book is: “an extremist socio political program or philosophy constructed wholly or in part on factious or hypothetical ideational bases.” Karl Marks quoted in GoodHeart (1997:5) defines ideology as distorted or selected ideas in defense of the status quo of a social system. In addition, Newton (1997:234) also defines that ideology is a more or less coherent system of ideas in which its basic intent is for ideological distortion.

In the broadest sense, Tyson (1999:52) defines ideology as: "An ideology is a belief system, that is, a product of cultural conditioning. For example, capitalism, communism, Marxism, patriotism, individualism and religion ... are all ideologies." This quotation indicates that patriotism is an ideology that keeps people fighting against other people; religion as an ideology helps to maintain the believer satisfied with their life. Individualism as an ideology focuses on 'me' instead of 'us'. Moreover, classicism maintains that people at the top of the social scale are superior in nature. In any case, the term ideology is broad and it has different shades of meaning in it. According to Cavallaro (2001), literary scholars and philosophers define ideology in their own perspectives as follows:

A body of ideas, ideals, values or beliefs; a philosophy; a religion; false values used to keep people under control; a set of habits or rituals; the medium through which a culture shapes its world; ideas promoted by a specific social class, gender or racial group; the values that sustain dominant structures of power; the process whereby a culture produces meanings and roles for its subject; the alliance of culture and language; the presentation of cultural constructs as natural facts(76).

As to GoodHeart (1997), ideology is characterized by a high degree of systemized formulation over a very wide range of objects with which it deals. As compared with other patterns of beliefs, it is relatively organized. All ideologies like progressive, traditionalist, revolutionary and reactionary have their own approaches. They lead the lives of their proponents in accordance with specific principles. Ideologies are always concerned with authority and they can not avoid being political.

As to Mannheim (1985), an ideology is the product of man's need for imposing intellectual order on the world. It appears because there are needs which are not satisfied by the prevailing outlook. It is used for an explanation of important experiences, for the firm guidance of conduct and for a fundamental rationalization of the value and self-respect of the groups who feel these desires. However, when there is resistance, ideology changes because of the pressure of external reality and the world does not easily adapt itself to the equipment of ideology.

According to GoodHeart (1997), ideology in its nature is untruthful. It demands a masking of an affirmed motive and interest. It distorts reality for its antagonists. In this view, ideology is a manifestation of a false consciousness and it contains propositions like other social patterns. As to him, a person may accept or refuse an ideology in line with her or his benefits. He claims that a certain reason behind the person exists to refuse or accept an ideology. There are different causes that can be attributed to the sources of ideology and the most common are social strain, vested interest, bitterness about social change, limited social position and persistent old-fashioned traditions.

In general, the concept of *ideology* should not be equated with *idea*. Ideology is always sets, systems of ideas that provide a comprehensive framework for making sense of existence within a society. Moreover, ideology should not be held by a single individual. An ideology is a social framework developed and

shared by many people. In other words, ideology is not an individual's peculiar world-view; rather, it is a world-view that many people believe and follow. Therefore, when it is said character's or writer's ideology, it means the character's ideology or the author's ideology that she or he shares or opposes with the mass.

2.1.2 Types of Ideology

In order to understand ideology, it is necessary to classify ideology into categories. For most literary scholars, the term ideology is difficult to classify because it is associated with sociological and historical aspects. Ngara (1985) considers ideology in an historical aspect and he classifies ideology into dominant, authorial and aesthetic. Fisseha Tesfu (2005) also uses Ngara's (ibid.) ideological classification in his M.A thesis. According to International Encyclopedia of the Social Science (1968), ideology falls fairly into four types. These are conservative, counter, reform and revolutionary and the base for these classifications is both sociological and historical aspect. Mannheim (1985) argues that there are two distinct meanings the term ideology has. These are the *particular meaning* and the *total meaning*. The particular meaning of ideology is regarded as more or less conscious disguise of the real nature of a situation. These distortions range all the way from conscious lies to unconscious disguise. The total meaning refers to the ideology of an age or of a concrete historic-socio group. Both conceptions of ideology that are the total and the particular meaning can be understood more on the following general classifications of ideology in Marxist theories.

2.1.2.1 Dominant Ideology

The dominant ideology in Marxist theory is the set of common values and beliefs shared by most people in a given society. This ideology reflects the wellbeing of the dominant class in that society. The dominant ideology is the ideology of the dominant class. It includes politics, religion, culture and other

aspects of the ruling class (Tyson, 1999).

According to Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (1995), every historical society is critically defined by its class structure and every society embodies a specific relation to the dominant class which controls the major means of producing wealth. The working class lives on selling its labor power to the dominant class. Sometimes any class-divided social situation has an implicit tension that can at any time erupt into an open conflict. The ruling class of this society has certain repressive mechanisms like police, armies and forces to manage the recurrent social tensions. In such a case, the government, rather than force, must use ideology as the primary means of managing social contradictions to save the dominant ideology.

When ideology dominates social reproduction, the process becomes better for the dominant class and the working class will tend to resign to their social weakness. They might express dissatisfaction through relatively easy to control individual forms of violence and self destruction. Thus, to secure the dominant ideology, it is more helpful to use ideology than other forces. Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (1995:309) say that "ideology, after all, is more influential than laws."

Contemporary Marxist theory has reworked the concept of ideology. Traditionally, it is believed that a group who is strong enough economically will have a dominant ideology. However, the correlation between economy and ideology is not a simple fact. GoodHeart (1997) explains that economy is not necessarily a determinant factor to make the economical fertile group as dominant. Similarly, Cavallaro (2001:83) says that "The economic base determines politics and ideology but, at the same time, it depends on politics and ideology as the very condition of its existence." In the same way, the idea that economy determines literary works is not an easy task for recent Marxist theorists. They argue that the link between artistic production and economic structures is not always obvious. Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (ibid.)

explain that works of art are processes and they never produced once and for all; rather, they are frequently susceptible to reproduction.

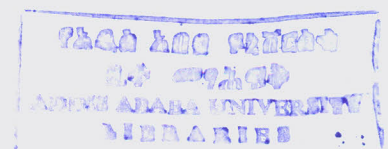
The other important points in a dominant ideology are *residual* and *emergent* ideology. These are ideologies which directly or indirectly influence the dominant ideology. For Newton (1997), at any particular period, different ideological forces are interconnected and the dominant forces in such a case never attain complete power in society. He opposes the economic determine notion and he claims the integration of dominant, residual, and emergent ideology for the complete analysis of a society in a dominant ideology. By *residual* ideology, Newton (ibid.) states:

The residual, by definition, has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present(236).

Newton (1997: 236-237) expresses that a residual culture is always far away from a certain dominant ideology. However, remnants of it or some versions of it will affect the present situation. Most of the time, the residual ideology will have a great influence on the society's ideology if that residual is “from some major area of the past”. By emergent ideology, Newton (ibid.) contends it:

New meanings and values, new practices new relationships, and kinds of relationship are continually being created. But it is very difficult to identify whether a certain new value is an extension of the dominant ideology or the emergent one which is opposite to the dominant (237).

In general, according to Newton (ibid.),the emergent ideology can be understood in relation to a full sense of the dominant ideology and its recognition is very difficult since there might be different factors for that emergency.However, the residual ideology is always simple to understand because a large part of it relates to earlier social formation. In relation to



emergent ideology and literary representation, Cavallaro (2001:39) says “It would therefore mislead to conceive of representation as reflections of a pre-existing reality.”

2.1.2.2 Authorial Ideology

Social consciousness has of great significance for a society. It is the aggregate of people's ideas, theories and views. When social consciousness appears, all the existing ideologies face challenges. It has diverse ideological roles in politics, morality, art, philosophy and religion. To gain a more complete idea of a society, it has to be determined what social consciousness is and how it originated and what role it plays in the society's existing ideology (Ngara, 1985).

According to Gurr (1971), committed African writers are sensitive to the social problems of their day and are relentlessly coming to play their part in changing a society for a better life. He argues that one of the most salient features of African literature is its commitment to communal social values. Ngara(ibid.)also indicates that a writer will project an ideological stance which may or may not be akin to the dominant ideology and this ideology is termed as authorial ideology. A novelist may think that he is non ideological but Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (1995) argue that non ideological instance does not make one's freedom from ideology. Probably, it may make one's involvement in a specific and narrow ideology. In the same way, Negara (ibid.) describes the relation between African novelists' ideology and their literary works as follows:

African artists found themselves producing their work in the context of certain ideological assumptions and they consciously or unconsciously define their own positions in relation to these assumptions(1).

According to Gurr(1971),authorial ideology in most African literature discards art for art's sake in favor of the literature of commitment. Sometimes, the novelists do not have to declare their ideological position. Ideological effects for these writers are not identical, but are related or attached in specific complex ways to political effects. These relations for writers are sometimes explicit and sometimes covert.Abrams (1995:76) maintains that ideology is related with politics and it is reflected in the novelists' works.Even for those critics who argue that authors are ideologically neutral, he says "no one is ideologically free rather the means she/he expresses might be direct or indirect."

2.1.2.3 Aesthetic Ideology

Some western critics claim that there is no aesthetic ideology in African literature because the literature is revolutionary and it is devoted to eradicating colonialist and neocolonialist oppression. Citing these western critics, Gurr(1971:30-35) states that the aesthetic ideology of African literature is drawn from Europeans modes of creativity.However,Ngara (1985) explicates that African literature has aesthetic ideology and the term refers to the literary convention and stylistic stance adopted by the writer. Thus, romanticism, modernism, and realism are aesthetic ideologies. But, for the sake of this study, the researcher focuses only realism as an aesthetic ideology.

In relation to realism,Eagleton(1976:49) explains that "literature does indeed (or at least ought to) reflect or produce social reality in a fairly direct way." Literary scholars argue that ideology and reality are different and they claim that ideology is the opposite of reality.However,Cavallaro (2001:311_313) briefly insists that ideology is the extension of reality. He states as: "Realism whether in politics or literature can now be understood as the paradigmatic form of ideology." He further states that realism is explicit and it is a means

of privileged ways for conveying socio-historical truth; however, he also asserts that sometimes realism can be a manifestation of implicit ideology.

Eagleton (ibid.) says that realism implies truth of detail and the truthful reproduction of typical characters under typical circumstances. Similarly, Ngara (1985:46) says realism consists of three components: "first, telling the story truthfully and plainly, without artificial complications and adornments. Secondly, presenting typical characters and thirdly, reproducing these characters under typical circumstances." The first two aspects refer to the manner of presentation, the style and characters and the third relates to the writers awareness of history.

2.1.3 Ideology and Literature

All art is a reflection of an ideological conception of the world; there is no such thing as a work of art which entirely keeps away from ideological content. As to GoodHeart (1997), literature is nothing but ideology in a certain artistic form. Some also argue that literature challenges the ideology of the time. Eagleton (1976) claims that it is difficult to say that literature is ideology; rather, literature has a particular relation to ideology. He further explains that the content of literature is directly or indirectly affected by different ideologies.

According to Macherey (1966) in Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (1995), a critic should identify the conflicts between meanings in a text in relation to ideology and he argues that ideology is not a single entity but it is a product of different ideologies. Macherey also claims that reality in literature can never be absolute. Moreover, Eagleton (1976) maintains that literature distances itself from ideology and he argues that history can be found in the text in the form of ideology because the text is taken not directly from reality but from the way reality is manifested through ideology. Fredric Jameson (1981) quoted in Cavallaro (2001) and in Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (1995)

says that ideology can be obtainable in all literary texts plainly or covertly and the meaning of a text can be understood by means of ideology. For him, ideologies are tactics of suppression which controls contradiction. George Lukacs(1963) in GoodHeart(1997) asserts that literature reflects socio-economic reality of the period. On the contrary,Althusser(1971)in Lentricchia and Mclaughlin(1995) argues that literature has its own freedom and it can be affected by different factors which can not be justified in terms of socio-economic forces of the period. Though these scholars differ from ideas about the relation between ideology and literature, all agree with literature reflects ideology.

2.1.3.1 Ideology in African Novels

Some Marxist African novelists like Ngũgĩ reflect social problems in their works. Most of the time, their works of art focus on colonialism and different types of revolutions conducted in African history. Broadly, the major ideologies that can be observed in African novels are three types: social revolution, socialist revolution, national revolution (Ngara, 1985).

A social revolution is a disorder in the political, economic and ideological life of society. It is a revolution that brings about the succession of dominant classes.This eliminates aged relations of production, introduces new ones and totally changes social views and institutions. It does not take place by accident. The productive forces of society come into conflict with the exiting relations of production within which they have been at work (Eagleton, 1976).

Social revolutions have tremendous importance in the life of society. It is only through radical, revolutionary changes that the old ideology can be eradicated and a new progressive ideology is introduced. Therefore, believing that only social revolutions resolve economic and class contradictions,

committed African authors reflect this fact in their artistic works because of their concern for social development (Ngara, 1985).

A socialist revolution basically differs from a social revolution. First, social revolutions do not aim at eradicating exploitation, but simply adjust its forms. A socialist revolution, however, intends to abolish every exploitation. It aims at forming a classless society. Second, social revolution does not have to create a new economy. It only brings on political power into the new economic relations which arose within the old society. One of the principal tasks of a socialist revolution is to create a new economy which is the economy of socialism (Ibid. P.92).

The other ideology observed in African literature is the struggle for national liberation from colonialism. Europeans not only exploit Africa, but also enslave millions of Africans. With the help of armed violence, they control Africa to create a system of colonialism and it constitutes one of the grimmest chapters in human history. The death of countless numbers of people, inhuman exploitation, poverty and hunger and disease are some problems perpetrated by the imperialists (Palmer, 1972).

When the colonialists brought their own ideologies to Africa, they always talked a great deal about their humaneness and their civilizing mission. They allegedly brought civilization, modern technology, culture, a new and a better way of life to the African people. According to Barnett and Njama (1966), the oppressed people were not bamboozled by this pretense. They knew that the colonialists were a profitable sphere of capital investment, a source of cheap raw materials and labor power. Related to colonialism is Neocolonialism. As to Gurr(1971), it is a system of economic, political, military and ideological measures which the imperialists design to preserve their domination and political control over the developing countries.

2.1.3.2 Ideology and Popular Culture

Art, music, film, theatre, television and others are aspects of popular culture. For Marxist critics, according to Cavallaro(2001:32), popular culture in its narrow sense, "is the primary bearer of ideology because it reaches so many people in what seems to be in an innocent form" Lentricchia and Mclaughlin(1995)express the advantage and disadvantage of popular culture in relation to ideology. In one side there is an issue that the ideology in popular culture centers on business aspect. On the other side, popular culture destroys a permanently accepted ideological culture into ash.

According to Abrahams (1995), popular culture including media misrepresents people's perception. The popular cultures through which society perceives reality tend to misrepresent the objects of people's insight like "a landscape observed through a stained glass window " which will certainly be modified by the colors and shapes of the window pattern.

2. 2 Ideology in Feminist Readings

According to Richardson et al.(2001),feminist ideology encompasses numerous ideological strands that vary in the scope of thought.There are a number of feminist literary theories as liberal, social, radical and etc..The basic ideology of all these feminist critics is that women should be equal to men in social, political and economic aspects.

As to Keohane et al.(1982),feminists believe that ideology is a political theory and it is born of genuine feeling of a sense of reality. However, the knowledge of oppression remained voiceless because of ideology and the reality of oppression has been hidden by theories of ideology. Women consider themselves sinners against God, lacking God's grace. These scholars also argue that ideology began as a cry against the denial of truth and it was a correct means working for the poor. However, that ideology which began as a

way of restoring one's sense of equality, including women's equality, is substituted by another ideology for its own sake.

For a long period of time, feminists insist that arguments for access to life chances without sex are seen as liberal and individualistic. Feminists advocate that sexuality is the essential aspect which creates, organizes and expresses society. They also contend that Marxism is male defined in theory and it focuses on the interest of men and analyzing society in terms of class obscures women's unity. Marxists say that to analyze society in terms of sex ignores class division among women. And, they claim that work is an essential component for shaping society. Marxists condemn feminists and vice versa. Neither set of these arguments is groundless; rather, attempts for synthesizing the two literary theories should be better (Ibid.P.289).

In every social group, there are enemies who possess a dissimilar ideology. Some groups of people try to keep down the other people whether they belong to the same class or not. The hidden motive behind this ideology is to escape reality and deny real thoughts. In other words, ideology causes conflict among similar groups. Belsey and Moore (1997) argue that the group serves as a mask for hidden thoughts and feelings. If, for example, men are the opponent of women, women who also associate with men soon also become enemies.

Men or women in reality may have contradictory ideologies even though they belong in the same grouping. There might be cases where ideology covers up the truth in the same class. With regard to this notion, Keohane et al. (1982) raise the trouble of representation of women in the same class as a result of a variety of ideologies. They finally assert the complexity of ideology and representation in the same group as follows:

Suppose one feels anger and hatred toward another of the same oppressed group? Suppose a woman hates a woman? These emotions are defined as "incorrect". In this way by its own denials and blindness each new ideology creates its own forbidden, subterranean world of reality (292).

Feminists argue that people are labeled such that they do not recognize the other split because of ideology. In which case, all phenomena, experiences, and human qualities also split into the superior and the inferior, the good and the bad, the above and the below and through this ideology, one group cheats the other. As stated in the introductory part, this research attempts to see only patriarchal and gendered ideologies in relation to African feminism. This type of feminism, unlike that of the western feminism, found upon the principles of traditional African values. Mazrui and Abala(1997:94) define African feminism as follows:

African femnity complements African masculinity and defends both with the ferocity of the lioness while simultaneously seeking male defense. At such, African feminism recognizes the inherent, multiple roles of women and men in reproduction, production, the distribution of wealthy, power and responsibility for sustaining human life (94).

In conclusion, African feminism also shares the above ideologies in its analysis. Mazrui and Abala(ibid.)argue that since ideology creates hostile attitude towards women, the fight for women's freedom and equality should focus on the different prejudiced ideologies that attack African women.They contend that ideologies like gendered and patriarchy are threats to women because they make them prisoners and dependent on the idea of others. Unless the mystery behind ideology is solved, it will mask women's anger, oppression and suffrage.



2.2.1 Gendered Ideology

The term sex traditionally refers to males and females. It focuses only on their reproductive functions. The introduction of the term gender has improved the idea of femininity and masculinity in social life. A gender role is neither "natural" nor optional. It is constructed by various ideological and cultural discourses. Our society's ideology on a person's birth such as "It is a girl." or "It is a boy." contributes to social construction of gendered ideologies (Mbilinyi and Omari, 1996).

According to Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (1995:264-265), scholars have different views on gendered ideology in literature. Some argue that "gender is a cultural idea instead of a biological fact and its study can include class, race, national or religious association." This group claims that denaturalizing the character of women is part of a larger reestablishment of all the class of human character, which appears as both a social and a language construction. Other critics maintain that "If gender is a matter of nurture not nature, the characters conventionally assigned men and women in novels reflect history and culture rather than nature." They further state that literature is about the men of dominant ideology. Therefore, "If literature speaks gender, along with class and race, the critic has to read ideology." Not all critics hitherto agree with the above idea of gender. Still some critics express the idea of gender in literature as: "Talk of gender, as of class and race will rather diminish literature."

According to Mbilinyi and Omari (1996), gendered ideology is both deeper and broader and analyzing gender concepts complicates a reading of a novel; therefore, it is advisable to see gender critics from a narrow dimension depending on the purpose. Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (ibid.) state that though women are always victims of gendered ideology, men can be affected by this ideology. For example, males can not cry in a hard situation for the reason that crying is considered as a sign of weakness for man.

2.2.2 Patriarchal Ideology

Patriarchal ideology is taken for granted for a longer period of time. Feminist criticism examines the ways in which literature strengthens or weakens the economic, political, social and psychological oppression of women. When it is said patriarchal women, it refers to a woman who has internalized the norms and values of patriarchy. Patriarchal ideology privileges men rather than women. Traditional African gender roles award men as rational, strong, protective and decisive and the reverse is given for women (Richardson, et al., 2001).

Authors can not pick their female characters from a blank space rather they reflect the patriarchal ideology of the society. Individuals in the society sometimes sort girls as *good girls* and *bad girls*. Tyson (1999:86-95) also says that patriarchal ideology implies that there are only two identities a woman can have. If she admits her traditional gender patriarchal roles and abides by the patriarchal rules, she is a good girl; if she doesn't, she is a bad girl.

The main aim of patriarchal ideology works to maintain male dominance. Though there are various types of feminist theories, all feminists believe in opposing patriarchal ideology. Tyson (ibid.) expresses this concern as: "Women are oppressed by patriarchy economically, politically, socially, and psychologically; patriarchal ideology is the primary means by which women are kept so." He further states that religion has an impact on facilitating patriarchal ideology. For example, the Bible portrays Eve as the origin of sin and death in the world.

If patriarchal ideology has a persistent influence on the way we think, speak, see ourselves and view the world, feminists ask themselves how they can become non-patriarchal ideology. Different literary theories have their own contributions for understanding of patriarchal ideology. Psychoanalysis for

example helps to understand the psychological effects of patriarchal ideology. Deconstruction can be used to find the ways in which a literary work covertly reinforces patriarchal ideology. Structuralisms see similarities in the experience of women from different cultures. However, for this study, patriarchal ideology is seen in terms of Marxist theories and Tyson (ibid.) puts patriarchal ideology in Marxism as: "Marxism can be used to help us understand how economic forces have been manipulated by patriarchal law and custom to keep women economically, politically and socially oppressed as an underclass."(95). In general, feminist issues range so widely across cultural, social, political and psychological nature and patriarchy operates differently in different countries.

2.3 Theories of Literary Representation

Plato and Aristotle defined all arts as means of representation. Since ancient time, the term has been the foundational concept in aesthetics (the general theory of arts) and semiotics (the general theory of signs). In the modern era, it has become a concept in political theory. According to Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (1995:11), "Contemporary theories of representation is the relationship between aesthetic or semeiotic representation (things that *stand for* other things) and political representation (persons who *act for* other persons)."

Though representation seems simple, it is a complicated concept for literary scholars and readers because it involves different components. Cavallaro (2001:12) discusses the difficulty of representation as: "Representation is always of something or some one, by something or some one, to some one." Moreover, things may represent human beings and vice versa and this leads to the possibility of misunderstanding as a stone may represent human beings. Abrams (1995:7) also states the intricacy of representation as: "In purely representational theories, the patent discrepancies between the world as it is and the world as it is represented tend to be explained by reference to

the kinds or aspects of reality to be imitated." Therefore, a representation having a double purpose is the potential obstacle for literary understanding. Furthermore, Lentricchia and Mclaughlin (1995:13) express the complexity of literary representation as:

Representation is an extremely elastic notion which extends all the way from a stone representing a man to a novel representing a day in the life of several dublins sometimes one thing can stand for a whole group of things, or a political representative stands for a people, or a narrative represents a whole series of events.

Traditional mimetic theory considers representation "as a copy of life, a mirror of custom, a reflection of truth". Similarly, Marxist critics claim that great literature reflects or at least ought to reflect the objective reality of our bourgeois era. However, since the 19th century onwards, different representational theories have improved this idea stating that mimetic includes "from the most refined idealism to the rawest realism". Modern representational theories argue that in mimetic theory the key word should not be imitation rather it should be "image, reflection, feigning, counterfeiting, or representation" (Abrams, 1995:7; Storey, 1996:28).

There are different theories of representation. These are idealist, realist and constructivism. They employ their own representation model for fictional characters and they are distinct on what is to be represented. Similarly, different literary theories follow different models of representation. For example, to Formalism, literature is about itself and life imitates reality in a text and there is nothing outside the text. Modernism as a representation has grown out from the situations of the modern era. Similarly, Medvedev and Bakhtin(1978:17)insist that literary representation is a form of ideology. He states:

Literature always represents man, his life and his fate, his inner world in the ideological purview. Everything takes place in a world of ideological quantities and values. The

ideological environment is the only atmosphere in which life can be the subject of literary representation.

One of the dominant modes of representation from the above lists is the realist's approach. Its main aim to reflect the world that it offers a view on a solid reality shared and recognized by each member of the same culture. Representation according to realists serves eminently for ideological purposes. It is a vital means of supporting a culture's ideology. When realism represses the artificiality of representation, its main objective is to assert itself as an objective and transparent depiction of the world in the name of ideological stability (Storey, 1996).

Realists claim that reality is unchanging and they do not give value to representations which are cultural fabrications. They also oppose constructive or ideal type of representation which can lead readers to get another form of ideology. Cavallaro (2001:41) asserts that "If an image can be constructed, it can also be taken a part into its constituent elements and that each of these elements can offer insights into our culture's ideology."

According to Storey (1996) and Lentricchia and Mclaughlin(1995), theories of representation generally explain issues like why representation is needed, what the sources of representation are and what do diverse forms of representation inform about societies, communities and individuals. It also tries see from which perspective representation is analyzed. Finally, it finds out the people whom the representations are addressed to. The study of representation must take into account a variety of cultural aspects, philosophical views and ideological programme and a representation only represents by virtue of being interpreted in a specific dimension. On the whole, in any analysis of representation, the relationship between the represented character and that which she/he represents is looked into.

Sometimes, there will be definitely a subjective form of representation. Therefore, misrepresentation is an inevitable component of perception. Some



critics argue that there is occasionally distortion of reality for different ideological purposes. The unavoidability of misrepresentation in the representation is expressed in Cavallaro (ibid.) as follows:

We do not perceive the world as it is but rather as mediated by various filters and channels: forms of language and forms of interpretation that do not mirror the world but actually construct it, there by perpetuating or challenging its ideologies (48).

According to Cavallaro(ibid.), even though there are many important developments in relation to representation, the lamp model is good. He citing Abrams (1953) describes the development of representation theory in the metaphors of *mirror and lamp* as follows:"The *mirror* encapsulates the notion that the mind reflects the external world (mimetic approach). The *lamp* embodies the idea that the mind radiates its own light on the object it perceives (anti- mimetic approach)."(39).Therefore, it can be argued that writers taking the ideology of the period (mimetic approach) or their own internal feelings (anti-mimetic approach) mold their own characters for ideological purposes.

As to Forster (1927), readers focus on the question to whom did something happen and this is the focus of character's analysis in fiction. Ngara(1985) states that there is affinity between the novelist and his characters. He also indicates that when an author has a specific ideology, his characters are not arbitrary creatures. Of course, characters like human beings are not always purely ideological. However, it is possible to analyze characters' roles from different ideological perspectives.

Characters in fiction may be represented as having a positive image or a negative image and this representation may be approached from different perspectives. However, as a critic of ideology, Cavallaro(2001)stresses that readers or viewers should be engaged beyond this mere judgment. He claims

that the crucial aim of representation analysis is to question whether specific image seems natural or not. He describes the purpose of representation as:

The central concern of any critical assessment of representation should consist of denaturalizing both the cultural image and the institutionalized responses to such images that surround us at all times. This entails questioning many of the concepts and symbols which are generally invited to take for granted as timeless, objective and a matter of common sense (41).

In general, it should be understood that representations of fictional persons are highly affected by ideological questions. Their thoughts reflect the existing competing ideologies. Therefore, it can be said that patriarchy, stereotypes, alienation in some ways, different forms of subjugations, violence and some other social phenomena that treat women unfairly are the effects of ideologies. When characters are acting to resist such situations, there will be contradictions of ideologies. In short, literature is a representation of life and it tells where characters' levels in all their social and ideological complexities get into the literary work.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Under this chapter, a through analysis and interpretation of ideology and the representation of female characters in the selected novels are discussed. The novels included in the study are *The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat*. The types of ideologies that are going to be examined are dominant, authorial, aesthetic, patriarchal and gendered.

As an approach to the study, all the female characters have been investigated in the selected novels and these characters are examined from different ideological viewpoints. Then, they are analyzed and interpreted with regard to their representation. The study attempts to analyze the representation of female characters from Marxist ideological concept namely dominant, authorial, and aesthetic. And, in feminist ideology, gendered and patriarchal ideologies are looked into the selected two novels.

In handling the interpretation, emphasis is given for the representation of female characters taking different ideologies into account. Thus, the analysis is categorized the representation of female characters in different ideological views and this helps to glimpse the connection between different ideologies and their depictions. In the review part, ideology is defined as a belief and a shared assumption about an event. In this way, other types of ideologies are also specifically defined for the purpose of this study. Moreover, constituents of representation that are the author, the characters, the manner and the setting of representation in connection with different ideologies are used for analysis purpose.

3.1 A Summary of the Novels

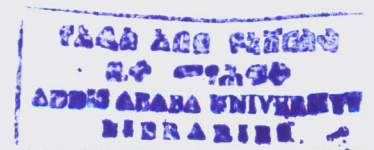
The River Between is a story of conflicting ideologies between two villages due to the intrusion of the missionaries. The names of these villages are *Kameno* and *Makuyu* and they are separated by the river Honia. In the novel, Waiyaki is described as a young traditional leader keeping the customs of the tribe and Joshua is the first man to be converted to the new faith. By using these characters Ngugi enlightens the theme of African traditionalists' resistance against the colonizers' culture. Circumcision has a great symbolic value in the *The River Between*. The main objective of the missionaries in the novel is not to rescue those women from "barbaric" and "backward" culture; rather, circumcision signifies a clear ideology of the missionaries in which women's bodies have been used for political profits in place of women's sexuality and self autonomy. As a whole, the novel has more than twenty characters. Of these characters, there are five female characters. These are Waiyaki's mother, Joshua's wife and his two daughters and Muthoni's aunt.

A Grain of Wheat reveals the need for a continual struggle and suffering for Kenyans' independence. The novel recounts the independence celebration (*Uhuru*) which takes place in a rural village of Kenya. The characters involved are village people and members of the rural community. Though the novel depicts the coming of Independence Day, it also describes those bitter days of the fight for freedom. Moreover, it deals with the lives of ordinary people and their predicament in the clash against the colonizers. The title of the novel conveys sacrifice and it is taken from the Bible which suggests "If a grain of wheat falls to the ground, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." A number of characters have played a part in the celebration of Independence Day. Among the characters, there are thirteen female characters.

3.2 A Critical Analysis of Ideology and the Representation of Female Characters in *The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat*

Usually, a literary representation is understood as describing characters' roles in a literary work as father, mother, soldier, prostitute, doctor etc..It gives prominence to characters' functions in a narrative. However, contemporary theories of representation deal with different aspects other than the characters. The core points that should be included in representation are the following. First, the represented individuals, characters, are studied to see whether their representations are truthful or inaccurate. Second, the one who represents the characters must be examined. Thirdly, the manner of representation can be explored like mimetic copying from the observable environment or anti-mimetic which is an idealized formulation of an appearance. Fourth, the setting (milieu) of the representation that is aesthetic ideology should be investigated. Finally, representation theories are supposed to explain reasons of misrepresentations.

Therefore, in relation to representation theories, characters can be looked at with respect to different ideologies. This analysis focuses on how a dominant ideology of an epoch influences the ways in which characters do something. Since an author is part of a society, how he views those female characters in a period can be analyzed. Studying representation together with history guides to investigate why, where, and how female characters are portrayed. In addition, gendered and patriarchal ideology which a society acknowledges as conventional are explored and interpreted. Sometimes, in place of factual representation of characters, there will be distortions and such portrayals are also assessed. To sum up, with reference to different ideologies, the representation of female characters is analyzed and interpreted in the following sections.



3.2.1. Female Characters as Sufferers and Beneficiaries in the Dominant Ideology

A dominant ideology refers to dominant ideas of an epoch or a class with regard to politics, law, morality, religion, art and science. It affects a society more powerfully in political, economic and social aspects. At times, there are situations in which the society challenges the dominant ideology. In such a case, the ruling class adjusts itself to sustain the ideology by means of different ideological state apparatus. A dominant ideology of a period is not a unitary sense. It holds different components which are stated above. In this study, however, the most highlighted feature of the dominant ideology of each novel is examined. Thus, religion as a dominant ideology is given emphasis in *The River Between* and politics is emphasized in *A Grain of Wheat*. This does not mean that only these aspects are discussed. Other structures of the dominant ideology are also studied as a complementary. In the next section, the dominant ideology of the two novels will be identified and then female characters are going to be analyzed with respect to it. The discussion in this section is arranged by order of the novels. The first part will be devoted to the discussion of female characters in *The River Between* and the subsequent part will concentrate on the discussion of female characters in *A Grain of Wheat*.

3.2.1.1 Female Characters as Sufferers in *The River Between*

The missionaries in *The River Between* devise a strategy to combat female circumcision and they take different inquisitiveness to emancipate women from this custom. They teach the girls that "A daughter of God should never let even a thought of circumcision." (56). There are five female characters. These are Muthoni, Nyambura, Miriamu, Waiyaki's mother and Muthoni's aunt. Muthoni and Nyambura are Joshua's daughters and Miriamu is Joshua's wife.

In *The River Between*, the dominant ideology, which includes politics, religion, art and culture, refers to all the ways of the white men's life. For this reason, the society on account of the dominant ideology is under pressure to abandon its traditional religion. The white men who follow Christianity would like the people to accept this religion. The novel shows the conflict between the traditionalists and the missionaries because of religion. In the next section below, the portrayal of each female character is looked at from the dominant ideology as reflected in the novel.

Muthoni, Joshua's elder daughter, deviates from the missionaries' religious ideology which is Christianity. She proclaims that "I want to be circumcised." The missionaries publicize that no girl should be mutilated and Joshua, the converted man, not only compels this rule to his daughter but also teaches the faith to others. He always prays that the people should leave behind a circumcision practice and follow the ways of the white man. However, his daughter faces a predicament to be circumcised or not to be circumcised. She is represented as a character that runs against the religious ideology of the ruling class. Muthoni's dilemma in the dominant ideology can be illustrated as follows:

'I have thought and thought again about it. I have not been able to eat or sleep properly. My thoughts terrify me. But I think now I have come to a decision.' She stopped; gazing past Nyambura, she said, slowly and quietly: *'Nyambura, I want to be circumcised.'* (28).

Circumcision as reflected in the novel is not only a mere physical act but it has also ideological profits and advantages. It strengthens an attachment between an initiate and a society and a county as a whole. It helps the indigenous people to be united in the ideology of oneness. The novel suggests that circumcision is a life giving force which is clearly linked with individuals' lives. Particularly, for girls, the practice is the central rite in the society's life. A girl who is uncircumcised never gets a husband as: "Who

would ever pay cows and goats for such a girl?" Muthoni used to feel sad for missing this tradition and this point can be evidenced as:

'I want to be a woman made beautiful in the tribe; a husband for my bed; children to play around the hearth.' It was a dream in which he was being carried, forgetting himself and the place where he stood. ..'Yes-I want to be a woman made beautiful in the manner of the tribe.....' (51).

When a dominant ideology works in an epoch, there is also an ideology which tolerates or resists the dominant ideology. It is a fact that every member of a society in a given period adheres to either of the above labeling. In the novel, circumcision aids the missionaries to divide and rule the society. There are Christians led by Joshua and there are the people of the tribe who are against the Mission and its faith. As a result, the religion of the dominant ideology comes into conflict with the indigenous religious ideology. And, for the first time, this condition creates difference of opinion between Muthoni and her Christian sister. Here is a confirmation how Muthoni is challenged by her sister's Christian ideology:

*'I want to be circumcised.'
'Why?' Nyamura asked helplessly.
She knew quite well that her father would not hear of such a thing...the white missionaries had warned Joshua. Perhaps Satan had gone into Muthoni. That was how the devil worked. Nyambura tried to reason with her sister (29).*

When Muthoni tells her sister to be circumcised, Nyambura advises her sister that she is struggling against the reality of the family. She opposes Muthoni's deed and she points out her father and the missionaries as references for her faith instead of telling her conviction. Muthoni knows that her mother is circumcised and other girls of the village inform her about the virtue of circumcision. That is why, she counters Nyambura's persuasion and she argues that father and mother are circumcised. Muthoni aims to

convince her sister that circumcision makes her parent members of the tribe and she claims why I am estranged from the people of the tribe as: "Father and mother are circumcised but why are they stopping me, why do they deny me this? How could I be outside the tribe, when all the girls born with me at the same time have left me?"(51).

At the outset, Muthoni has not any trust in the white man's ideology which denounces circumcision. She only knows that a girl is dishonored unless she is circumcised and she contemplates circumcision is a moral of the tribe's ideology. Though the missionaries rationalize that circumcision is scientifically and religiously wrong, she did it and died of circumcision at last. Before her death, however, she longs to reconcile these two ideologies of the people that are circumcision outlook versus non circumcision opinion. She wants to reunite the Christian and non_ evangelized people. In the following extract, she argues that I can be a daughter of God with circumcision. The excerpt indicates her confession to Christianity:

'Why! Are we fools?' She shook Nyambura. 'Father and mother are circumcised. Are they not Christians? Circumcision did not prevent them from being Christians. I too have embraced the white man's faith. However, I know it is beautiful, oh so beautiful to be initiated into womanhood (29).

Muthoni's death as a result of the brutal mutilation confronts different challenges from the society. Makuyu sees her death as the consequence of deserting Christianity. Kameno views it as a punishment for forsaking ways of the tribe. For both sides, her death epitomizes the ideological divisions between the ridges. The ridge that embraced Christianity condemns the tribal rituals and the traditionalists blame the white man's ideology. However, the novel reveals her Christian conviction at last and it can be illustrated in her words as: "Tell Nyambura I see Jesus."(61).

Muthoni, throughout the novel, endures a great deal due to the opposing factions. She first denies her father for his Christian conviction and this autonomous decision alienates her from the family and her death does not get approval by both ridges. Moreover, her attempt to resolve the two conflicting ideologies that are Christianity and traditionalism is not victorious. Though her death is a consequence of the pain, she is destroyed by the antagonistic forces that exist in the society. The dangerous consequence of this alien ideology causes her death and she meets the first fate of her society. Palmer (1923:65), in relation to Muthoni's attempt to resolve the two religions says: "Muthoni is the first person to see that the two ideologies are not mutually exclusive, and she is the only one who makes a deliberate attempt to reconcile them."

Muthoni and her aunt have a wrong perception for the white man's medicine. They believe that herbs instead of pills would cure a patient. When Muthoni was breathing hard due to the circumcision pain, her aunt was not voluntary to let her to the missionaries' hospital. In the end, Waiyaki's convinced the aunt to take her hospital. However, Muthoni died since she was in a bad state for longer period of time. She might have been saved if she had gone to hospital on time. This extract shows the aunt's resistance to send Muthoni for the white man's medication center:

'Muthoni should go to hospital.'

'Where?' the aunt asked.

'Siriana Mission hospital.'

For a few days Muthoni's aunt resisted the suggestion.

Nyambura beseeched her, hatred seething in her heart. She blamed her aunt for this trouble (58).

When the missionaries hear Muthoni's demise, they become fierce. They state publicly that her death confirms the barbarity of the custom. They urge parents to denounce the rite of circumcision and order them to outlaw the rite upon their daughters. They become angry with Muthoni's act which seems as a breach of religious rule. In the next days, the missionaries told

the children learning in their school and the society about Muthoni and the transgression she did. Some of her relatives in the school and in the village were shocked and wept for. Subsequent to her death, the missionaries had defamed her name ridge to ridge for their ideological indoctrination. Within a few weeks, the name of Muthoni became a topic for discussion.

The other female character in *The River Between* is Nyambura. In the first few chapters of the novel, she is an adherent to Christian religion. Because her father, Joshua, is the spiritual head of the religion, he always teaches her the existence of the one God, the darkness of circumcision and the kingdom of Christianity. For this reason, she understands that circumcision is bad religiously and she rejects to be circumcised.

When Nyambura idealizes the practice of circumcision, she hates this barbarous ritual most. A thin sharp knife which is used to cut through girls' flesh is her worst picture and she acts as if she feels the pain. Initially, she thinks that her sister's deed is unreasonable and she claims: "The missionaries do not like the circumcision of girls. Father has been saying so. Besides, Jesus told us it was wrong and sinful." (29). Nyambura realizes that circumcision is evil and it is a pagan rite. However, her sister's endeavor in carrying out the ritual disturbs her constantly. Besides, her obsession is always to erase the memory of her sister. As the very instance in the family, both were always together and they cared for each other. This ideological conflict caused by circumcision, however, separates them and this is a disappointment to Nyambura.

At one day around Honia river, Nyambura and Waiyaki met accidentally and they introduced each other. In a short time, he captures her heart and they start to communicate about religion. At last, through Waiyaki, her stance towards the practice of circumcision becomes flexible. She would have learnt the severe effect of circumcision from her sister's death. This new Nyambura's action stems from romantic motives and she develops an

emergent ideology to be circumcised. In view of this, she rebels against her father's religion and the white man's religion. This extract shows this assertion:

Every day she thought more and more of Waiyaki...Yet his name, like Muthoni's, was never mentioned in her home. But she always longed to see him, to hear his voice. They had met on so few occasions and always by accident...Nyambura Knew then that she could never be saved by Christ (116).

For Nyambura, the dominant religious ideology of the missionaries does not become persistent since she is baffled in ideological conflict between Christianity and traditionalism steadily. In fact, she first confesses Christianity along with her father despite she feels later that Waiyaki's religion, self fulfillment and self realization are better than her father's religion which needs a strict devotion. Her love affair with him echoes the collusion of her Christian religion with his traditional religion. The growing strength of her feeling towards him and her sudden change of spirit pressurize Nyambura to be ideologically puzzled.

Nyambura, like her sister seeks to negotiate between the dominant religious ideology and the traditional religious ideology towards the end of the story as reflected in the novel. She believes in Christianity which advocates: "Circumcision is wholly evil." On the other hand, she shares the ideology of circumcision which says: "a woman beautiful and healthy in the tribe" This endeavor can be remarked as an emergent ideology. Nyambura desires to live both in the white man's religion and in the traditional religion. In the extract below, she emphasizes a religion of tolerance between the two antagonistic ridges. The pairs of words as "wolf, lamb, cow, bear, lion, ox" in the extract symbolize the previous strong enmity of the two villages. In short, she expresses the resolution between these two ideologies and she aspires to live in such a united form of religion stated as follows:

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox (155).

As discussed above, Nyambura's love towards Waiyaki grows and she develops an ideology of harmony between her family's religion and his society's religion. Yet, she is still bothered by the society's religious factions. His society considers her as a devil and the Christians assume her as a betrayer. Indeed, she should not be condemned by the two rival societies since she leaves neither Christianity nor the traditional religion. In addition, Waiyaki also fails to see his people's ideology and he is blinded by his own love. Before he loves her, he has to consult his love affair with the society. However, his weakness, which is incapable of resolving the two hostile ideologies, makes Nyambura ideological sufferer. This point is revealed in the following instance as follows:

Nyambura had faded from the reality around him and was no longer a consolation. For the reality around him, around his heart, was one of despair because he was aware that he was fighting against forces that he himself did not understand; forces that he had felt in the air all over the country (161).

Both Nyambura and Waiyaki keep on their egocentric ideals rather than convincing the society. If both had preached reconciliation at earlier of their love, they would have not taken a damaging oath. The enmity of the two ridges would have been also minimized. However, because of this egotistic failure, the traditional society judges Waiyaki as a treachery and it humiliates him taking an oath that contaminates the tribe. This condition also causes his mother to feel angry and melancholic and she becomes an outcast by the traditional society on account of her son's attempt to wed a woman who is uncircumcised.

Miriamu's husband, Joshua, accepts Christianity without any hesitation and all his allusions are drawn from the Bible which teaches reason of love and justice. However, his religious ideology is manifested badly in his wife. He asks God to forgive him for marrying a woman who had been circumcised and he constantly reminds her of this fact. Besides, he would like that all the women around the village follow Christianity. In his zealous religious commitment, his wife is tormented and ruined by ideological turmoil of Christianity and her past traditional conformity. When she hears his pray, which is an inflexible confrontation for circumcision, she always becomes frustrated.

To his wife Miriamu, Joshua's religious fanaticism, is dangerous. Joshua, who aspires to go to the Promised Land, preaches that circumcision is so sinful. During Muthon's death, he felt ashamed of not for her death but for an everlasting disgrace she had brought to his fame. When she died, the mother becomes restless and irritated. She has been shocked into grief by her death and she weeps for terribly. The father, however, takes his daughter's death as insignificant, trivial and a source of evils. This extract shows the mother's desperation caused by Muthoni's death:

Joshua heard of the death of Muthoni without a sign of emotion on the face. A slight tremor in the voice when he spoke was the only thing that betrayed him. He did not ask Miriamu when she died or how Miriamu had learnt of the facts. Miriamu wept even more when she saw the impassive face (62).

All the female characters' representations in *The River Between* are not positive in relation to the dominant ideology. Muthoni stands against the white man's religion and died at last. The mother and her aunt cry desperately for Muthoni's death. Her sister, Nyambura, can not adjust herself determinedly to the dominant ideology. In this connection, her love

with the traditionalist Waiyaki ends in failure and the society denounces her “the oath! the oath!” (173).

In summary, the analysis of the five female characters in *The River Between* shows that the two sisters are portrayed as sufferers from the dominant ideology which belongs to the colonizers. Similarly, their mother, Miriamu, undertakes her daughters' grief. Waiyaki's mother also regrets for her son because of his relation to Nyambura who is an outcast in the traditional society. So, the representation of female characters in light of the religion of the dominant ideology is negative. They reflect the prevailing pessimism representation. Muthoni's death, her sister's loneliness, Miriamu's and the aunt's sadness and Waiyaki's mother dissatisfaction with her son show the misfortunes of the female characters. In conclusion, Muthoni, her aunt, Nyambura and the two mothers are plagued by the white man's religion interference with the traditionalists' religion. Thus, as for the dominant ideology, all the representation of the female characters confirms that they are sufferers.

3.2.1.2 Female Characters as Sufferers and Beneficiaries in *A Grain of Wheat*

The story of *A Grain of Wheat* revolves around struggle. The novel is preoccupied with forest fighters' struggle in the name of Mau-Mau. This group fights for land and freedom and one of its strategies in the struggle is killing those members of the colonialists. As a reaction for this attack, the colonizers control the Movement of this group. They kill, beat and detain those suspects of the Movement. Profoundly, the politics of the colonizers is reflected in the dominant ideology.

The major motif of the novel focuses on the struggle for Kenyan independence. To a very large extent, most of the members of Mau Mau rebellion group mobilized in the forest. However, the politics of the dominant

ideology as revealed in the novel suppresses the revolt of this group using different ideological apparatus. Those Kenyans who object to Mau Mau get opportunities for higher education in Britain. They also receive land and compensation for betraying their compatriots. The following section attempts to see the representation of those female characters in the novel in connection with the politics of the dominant ideology.

Women as reflected in *A Grain of Wheat* are against the dominant ideology and they are openly or obscurely support the Mau Mau(which means greedy eating in Gikuyu language but Europeans popularize as a movement) fighter group. During the Movement, they died, were tortured and suffered. This extract below shows the lamentation for a woman fighter called Wambuku:

*When I remember Wambuku
A woman who was beautiful so
.....
Who will forget the sun and the dust today
And the trench I dug with blood!
When they pushed me into the trench,
Tears from my heart freely flowed (144).*

Wambuku was a woman gifted with wonderful capacity with life. She lived for the Movement exploring and overcoming its hardship. By the help of the traitors of the Mau Mau group, she with other leaders of the land is caught by the colonizers and after a short period of detention, she is killed.

Gitogo's mother had died of hunger. The mother did not get any food to eat after her deaf son had been butchered by the colonizer's bullet. Her child, Gitogo, was devoted to his old mother and the villagers by the tenderness of the son to his mother esteemed him. Similarly, Mugo's mother had died poor leaving him without parents. Warui's wife, Mukami had also died of poor. Throughout their life, these female characters were tormented, poverty-stricken and impoverished and miserable as a result of the colonizers'

exploitation. The following extract reveals Gitogo's and Mugo's mothers' misery in the dominant ideology:

She (Gitogo's mother) had a small face grooved with wrinkles. Her eyes were small but occasionally flashed with life. Otherwise they looked dead. It was her eyes that disturbed Mugo. Her loneliness struck a chord of pity in him (5).

Mugo's mother had died poor, leaving him, an only child in the hands of a distant aunt. Waithereo was a widow with six married daughters. When drunk she would come home and remind Mugo of this fact (6).

Njeri was one of the icons of women's in the Mau Mau group. She faced ups and downs during the Movement. Sometimes she hardly ate anything the whole day. When she suffered from a moral plight (the rumors that a number of men and women compatriots are killed and arrested by the white men) in the struggle, Kihika, her fellow compatriot, made her comfortable. For example, he explained to her the struggle for freedom like Gandhi and he said as: "They sent Gandhi to prison, not once but many times. The stone-walls of prison could not hold him."(88). On account of this ambition, she fought at Kihika's side in the forest. She had gone through sadness, misery and fear in the struggle. In the end, fate left her miserable and she died in the battle. The following extract reveals her plight as follows:

'A sacrifice...and then was Njeri.'

'Who was she?'

'She was a friend, my friend. She often quarreled and fought with both men and other girls. Anyhow, not until she ran away to the forest to fight at Kihika's side. She was shot dead in a battle, soon after Kihika's death.'(138).

Mumbi as echoed in the novel represents the spirit and earth of Kenya. She is exploited, humiliated and ill-used by the colonizers. During the colonialism period, she had been beaten, suffered and abused by the colonialists.

Moreover, a sense of loneliness was pervasive in her life when her husband was in imprisonment. The novel also depicts her in different stages of life. Before the Movement began, she did not have enough food to eat. She lived in poverty in a bare hut. In the struggle, the colonizers intimidated her suspecting that her brother Kihika and her husband Gikonyo had already joined the forest. Many times, her husband has been also humiliated by the colonizers in front of her. This extract shows her fear for the colonizers when her husband was taken to detention:

One day the arm of the white man touched Mumbi's door. She had fearfully waited for the day, indeed had armed herself against its deadlines. But when the time came, she found herself powerless to save her man. She collected all her will and strength into a cry that went to the hearts of many present (103).

Mumbi's husband, Gikonyo, had been detained for six years related to the Mau Mau group. But, in his final return to Mumbi, he looks at a child on her back. When he asks whose child he is, she lets out the truth-Karanja's child. She sleeps with him because Karanja, who is working with the white man, has promised to her to release her husband. Gikonyo becomes nervous when he sees the child. He thought to smash the child on to the floor and to kill her with beatings. Mumbi was grasping for mercy. He thought "kill her and the child ...end all misery."(114). However, she is saved by the strength of the wall and this shows how much women like Mumbi are dehumanized by the crisis of the dominant ideology. It would have been better for him to discuss the difficulties with Mumbi before he had taken a measure. His masculine arrogance to her is described as: "Open the door. Open the door you who auction your bodies on the market. The door did not open. He gathered force and crushed into it again and again. Suddenly the wooden door gave away."(121)

As discussed above, Mumbi gets a child from Karanja and this happened when her husband, Gikonyo, was in detention. The story goes that Kihika is Mumbi's brother and Wanjiku's son. And, both Mumbi and her mother worried about a long period of time to know who really killed Kihika during the Movement. But, at the "drizzling day"(symbolizes confession), the two female characters realized that Karanja, for whom Mumbi carried a child and who betrayed his people (" a hyena in sheep's clothing") for the white men, was the cause for their man's death. They cried bitterly and Mumbi's despair which is caused by the politics of the dominant ideology is described as follows:

Another thing plagued Mumbi. Even in her grief, she could not forget what general R. had said. Karanja would be killed for his part in kihika's death. Should this be done in the name of her brother? Surely enough blood had already been shed: why add more guilt to the land? She woke up in the morning with the problem still unresolved (181).

One day around Wangari's village, Gikonyo's mother, the colonizers declared a curfew and its main intention was to capture the freedom fighters. The village was frightened by homeguards. During that day, the armed forces rushed back inside Wangari's hut to catch fighters though they could not get a hold. The soldiers built their camps all round her village to prevent any escapes and all the people around the village became prisoners. The armed forces avowed that no one was allowed to go out of his hut. In this situation, her store of food was finished and she was outlawed to go to the neighbor's house for eating. She became very hungry and Mumbi expresses Wangari's misery as:

I did not tell Wangari what had happened and she did not ask me any question, but at the height of her emaciated body, I felt guilty for having refused the bread. I thought she would die, we all die, and I wept silently (145).

Wairimu, Karanja's mother, has only one son and she is a poor woman. She advises Karanja to be a hard worker and she expects much from her son. However, as it is discussed earlier, he serves the colonizers instead of helping his mother. During the Emergency period, unlike other boys of the land, he was appointed as a homeguard and a chief. He betrayed his people working with the white man. For this reason, the mother is angry with him. She advises him "don't go against the people". Moreover, the mother fears for her son's life believing that the sons of the soil will take revenge against him when they come back from detention camps and from the forest. This extract shows the mother's wretchedness because of her son who stood for the dominant ideology:

Wairimu had expected much from her son. She looked up to him as the man who would take care of her in her old age. During the emergency, Wairimu disapproved of her son becoming a homeguard and a chief and said so. Although ashamed of his activities, she stuck by him, for, as she said, a child from your own womb is never thrown away (225-226).

White female characters, in addition to Kenyan native women, come into view in *A Grain of Wheat*. These women are represented in the novel as beneficiaries. Since they are favored by the dominant ideology, they have been represented as advantaged and privileged persons. They have their own cars, villas, beautiful houses with pet animals and they lead a luxurious life. These women are Mrs. Margery, Mrs. Dickinson and Dr. Lynd. Unlike most Kenyan women, all of them have jobs in the colonial official service. In the next section, each of the privileged representation of these female characters in connection with the dominant ideology is discussed.

Mrs. Margery is John Thompson's wife. Her husband comes to Kenya as a district officer for the colonial campaign. He spends most of his time in doing various security services and trainings for his associates. On the contrary,

his wife spends most of her time in her home. Sometimes, she goes to the National Theater of Kenya to see films. Otherwise, her daily routine is playing with her pet animals and keeping the gardens of flowers. The following extract reveals this reality:

Mrs. Margery Thompson had cultivated red roses, white roses, pink roses- roses of all shads. Now she emerged from this garden of color and came to the door. She was dressed in thin white trousers and a blouse that seemed suspended from her pointed breasts (36).

Mrs. Dickinson leads her life happily. Like many other Europeans in Kenya, she has a dog. The novel reveals that the amount of money spends for Mrs. Dickinson's dog and for her garden is more than the total wages of ten Kenyans. Moreover, she harassed the native people and her male servant. An African boy called Karanja is an employee of Mrs. Dickinson. She uses Karanja as her personal messenger and his service in her house is expressed as:

Mrs. Dickinson was the librarian.... An enthusiast for the east African safari, she always took part, co-driving with her boy friend, but she never once finished the course. Her missions were the ones Karanja hated most: often she sent him, for instance to the African quarters to buy meat for two dogs (36).

Dr. Lynd is a gray-haired woman with falling flesh on her cheeks and her eyes. She works in a plant research laboratory and often she is in a mood of ruthless for Africans. When her African staff members are against her tradition, particularly in her treatment of the dog, her heart is filled with anger and she degrades them of their color. Since her first dog dies, she buys and trains another dog. She scolds her houseboy for his petty errors in handling the dog. She worries about her pet animals and gardens. To a great extent, her life is privileged and the following extract reveals this actuality:

Dr. Lynd, a plant pathologist at the station cross the tarmac road....she held her dog by the collar with the left hand and pointed an accusing finger at Karanja.. 'I am ashamed of you, utterly ashamed of you,' Karanja looked at the ground; fear and anger were visible in his eyes.....Thompson was supposed to deal with staff_worker relations; and he had received a number of complaints about Dr Lynd's dog (41_43).

To sum up, in the struggle for independence, women scarified a lot and their life was challenging because of the imperialists' ideology. The recurring themes in the novel demonstrate Kenyan women's dehumanization, exploitation, violence and loneliness. Furthermore, the detention of women's husbands and sons away from their homes, the withholding of wages, loses of landownership and the deaths of women were careful records of the dominant ideology. As for the dominant ideology, *A Grain of Wheat* represents female characters in three types. First, Kenyan women are alienated from their land by the colonizers and this reality makes them poverty stricken and deceased. Second, they are represented as victim of colonizers' politics and the novel illustrates their mistreatment and anguish. What is more, white women instead of black women are flattered in the land of Kenya.

3.2.2 Female Characters as Cultural and Revolutionary Nationalists and Authorial Ideology

Writers reflect their own ideology in their literary works and this ideology is called authorial ideology. Since authorial ideology exists in a dominant ideology, an author can confirm or oppose the dominant ideology. Ngara(1985) states that all art is produced by the tension between social relations and he argues that political struggle and social change affect the content and form of work of art.

Ngũgĩ's in the light of his ideology has expressed Kenyan women's participation in the rebellion against foreign aggression and cultural revolution. In *The River Between*, all women strive for the ethos of their tradition and their struggle reveals that they are cultural nationalists. Similarly, in *A Grain of Wheat*, women have participated in the different movements to liberate Kenya from the imperialists and they are revolutionary nationalists. Even if the kinds of nationalistic roles they have played varied in the two novels, they are nationalists. In the next section, in consideration of Ngũgĩ's ideology, female characters' nationalistic roles be it cultural or revolutionary can be explored. The first part of the discussion is to show that female characters as cultural nationalists in *The River Between* and the next part of the section offers the representation of female characters as revolutionary nationalists in *A Grain of Wheat*.

3.2.2.1 Female Characters as Cultural Nationalists in *The River Between*

Ngũgĩ's ideology in *The River Between* is cultural nationalism. According to Gurr(1971), the term cultural nationalism refers to collective practices that inform the indigenous people to keep their traditions. It does not forward a fanatic ideology which always praises cultural dignity; rather, it takes the positive aspects of the foreign culture and it criticizes the harmful aspects of the indigenous culture. In other words, cultural nationalism is a kind of cultural adjustment between the foreign and the native culture.

The predominant strain in *The River Between* is the theme of cultural conflict. The title of the novel is a clue to its central theme. The novel discusses the aspect of Kikuyu culture and its conflict with the foreign culture. Ngũgĩ is concerned with promoting the good aspects of the society's culture and he also demands for the exclusion of the destructive culture of that society. He has voiced that a society should not take every white man's culture as negative. He implicitly conveys that unable to identify culture as

constructive and destructive makes a society victims. Besides, turning away from the usual treatment of colonialism impact, he informs the colonized people to take valuable features of the white man's culture.

As it has been manifested in the novel, Ngũgĩ's stance on circumcision is similar to the missionaries' view and his religious ideology is Christian. However, this does not mean that he is not a cultural nationalist. He reveals that the society should get rid of its ruthless traditions and it must re-articulate its positive cultures. Thus, his presentation of the issue of circumcision has clearly shown a kind of conciliation between the white man's and the traditionalists' culture. He supports a prohibition of circumcision in one side and he promotes its existence in other instance. He prefers to the survival of circumcision as a form of rite for social cohesion rather than as a physical operation. The aim of the novel is not to prop circumcision, for Ngũgĩ is contradictory against the practice. The author's representation of female characters in conflict with circumcision shows characters' conflict of cultural nationalism. Ngũgĩ's attitude towards circumcision is a kind of cultural adaptation and it is indicated in the following passage as:

Circumcision of women was not important as a physical operation. It was what it did inside a person. It could not be stopped overnight. Patience and, above all, education, was needed. If the white man's religion made you abandon a custom and then did not give you something else of equal value, you became lost (163).

Circumcision was important ritual to the tribe. It keeps the people together, bound the tribe. It was at the core of the social structure, and something that gave meaning to a man's life (79).

In relation to the preceding discussion, the major ideological conflict that has been observed in *The River Between* is caused by the issue of circumcision. Ngũgĩ's authorial voice of the practice as reflected in the novel lies in

traditional and Christian religion. Even among Christians, there are different outlooks on the practice of circumcision. In the Old Testament, as Ngũgĩ also implicitly comments that God tells Abraham and his descendants to be circumcised for the reason that the ones who cut off their sins would become His people and circumcision was the mark of God's covenant.

The concept of circumcision of the flesh in the Old Testament is equated to the baptism of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Unlike circumcision as a physical practice in the Old Testament, the New Testament says that any one who believes in Jesus has to be circumcised spiritually not physically to be free from sin. The apostle Paul expresses the importance of spiritual circumcision in Romans 2:29 as: "*Circumcision is that of the heart.*" (237). In a similar vein, Ngũgĩ describes all these religious points in the novel symbolically. In particular, he uses Waiyaki and Joshua as his mouth for this religious conflict. Waiyaki supports the existence of circumcision; whereas, Joshua opposes the practice.

Ngũgĩ in *The River Between* believes that circumcision is bad when it excises girls' clitoris and the tradition is worthy if it is used for social unity. He also condemns the tradition of circumcision in relation to Christianity; however, in *A Grain of Wheat*, using Kihika as his mouth, he describes that circumcision and religion do not have any tangible association. He states as: "It is just the white people say so. The Bible does not talk about circumcising women." (86). For this rationalization, he mentions 1 Corinthians 7:18,19 in the New Testament which says:

Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters (262).

Thus, Ngũgĩ's portrayal of female characters' cultural nationalistic roles is affected by religious conflicts. To achieve this religious faction, he uses symbols relevantly. The sleeping lions and the ridges Makuyu and Kameno represent the division of the society's religion. The river Honia has its own

symbolic value. Surprisingly, the water of the river symbolizes two aspects of religion that is Christianity (baptism) and circumcision. Its water connotes purity and cure (Christianity) and it is the valley of life (circumcision). He also comments the distortion of Christianity and traditionalism when they are applied by the laity and the overall effects of these conflicts have been also shown in the representation of female characters.

Ngũgĩ believes that cultural nationalism should not only focus on cultural nativism. His attitude for cultural nationalism as suggested in *The River Between* is a form of cultural negotiation. He is in favor of the white man's culture and concurrently he opposes the white's man imposition on the traditional culture. He is also disgraceful to the people culture. Therefore, Ngũgĩ's depiction of female characters has inclined to heal the conflicting ideologies within the two ridges. Similarly, his characters are in such ideological turmoil. Muthoni and Nyambura attempt to reconcile the two religious ideologies-Christianity and non-Christianity; however, their attempt is behind the time. In the novel, Ngũgĩ makes Muthoni and Nyambura as shadowy cultural nationalists because their objections to every part of the white man's cultures are misleading. Due to such religious bewilderment, Ngũgĩ describes these characters as having optimism at first and he describes them later as disillusioned.

As a writer, Ngũgĩ has echoed his Christian religious ideology in Muthoni's and Nyambura's representation. Like round characters' traits, Nyambura's behavior towards the practice of circumcision is flexible as revealed in the novel. For example, Nyambura resists the traditional religion in the beginning but she aspires to desert Christianity later. Her wish for abandoning Christianity makes her vain in her love affairs with Waiyaki. Her sister's death is also a tragedy for her and the author shows the disastrous effects of these competing ideologies. On the whole, he makes Nyambura and Muthoni abortive cultural nationalists. This might be on account of Ngũgĩ's Christian

religious ideology which is hostile for the practice of circumcision. Profoundly, he states in the novel as: "As Christians we are forbidden to carry on such practices."

By and large, Ngũgĩ does not declare overtly for a Christian religious convection or a thorough indigenization of the tradition. He calls for toleration of indigenous practices as essential to the integrity of the two ridges. Moreover, he condemns the shortcomings of the traditionalists and the missionaries. With regard to the eradication of circumcision, his authorial comment is stated as: "A people's traditions could not be swept away overnight."(162).He also condemns the missionaries for their inadequacy to value the society's tradition as: "A religion that took no count of people's way of life, a religion that did not recognize spots of beauty and truth in their way of life, was useless."(162).

To sum up, Ngũgĩ (in Ngara, 1985) argues that literature has social involvement and it has social character. He states that literature takes sides and it becomes an instrument for an author to oppose or support the dominant ideology. In this connection, Ngũgĩ, as reflected in *The River Between*, conveys readers that " Not all the ways of the white man are bad. Even his religion was not essentially bad. Some good, some truth shone through it. But the religion, the faith, needed washing."(162). Therefore, as to Ngũgĩ's ideology, the female characters would not have countered against the white man's culture entirely. Their cultural nationalism would have focused on conciliation. However, all the five female characters' cultural nationalistic roles in the novel are not triumphant because of the shortcoming of characters in synthesizing the traditional and the Christian faith.

3.2.2.2 Female Characters as Revolutionary Nationalists in *A Grain of Wheat*

A Grain of Wheat (1986) thematizes the struggle for independence and Ngũgĩ's ideology in *A Grain of Wheat* is a revolutionary nationalist. He highlights that "Everybody who takes the oath of unity to change things in Kenya is a Christ." (95). According to Ngara (1985), the term revolutionary nationalist refers to a feeling which drives a person to keep the national interests of his country above everything else. With regard to this point, Ngũgĩ (in Berger, 1989:3) says that although most national liberation movements start by refusing the culture of the colonizers, by renouncing the religion of the oppressing nation and class and the entire education system of the colonizer, nationalism should target more at the struggle for freedom. In essence, revolutionary nationalism places a deep emphasis on the achievement of freedom. In the novel, it has been confirmed that his authorial ideology is against the politics of the dominant ideology. In many instances in the novel, Ngũgĩ's ideology reflects the brutality of colonialism, the pain and the humiliation of Kenyan people. In the next section, female characters' nationalistic roles are explored with respect to Ngũgĩ's ideology revealed in the novel.

Wambui was an old woman. During the Emergency, she served her country successfully. She took message to the compatriots and she kept their secret. One day, she was caught by the police being suspected that a pistol was in her inside cloth and there was a weapon in her body. The policeman started to check from her breast and then moved to her armpits. She humbled the policeman to stop checking and she accomplished her patriotism successfully. The following extract reveals her nationalistic role as follows:

*'The children of these days,'
She began. 'Have you lost all shame? Just because the white
man tells you so, you would actually touch your own
mother's-the woman who gave you birth? All right, I'll left the
clothes and you can have a look at your mother (19).*

*Wambui was not very old, although she had lost most of her
teeth. During the emergency, she carried secrets from the
village to the forest and back to the villages and towns (181).*

Wambui believed in the power of women to influence events especially where men had failed to act. Opposing the least wages paid by the shoe factory, she organized labor strikes and the objective was to change conditions of wages. As a consequence of her propaganda, women started to talk with one another in their homes about the low wages. Many men, however, refused to participate in strikes as they became dependent on wages to pay taxes and their children school fees. In this situation, she with other women protested against British exploitation. With regard to women and the organization of work strikes, Ngũgĩ describes Wambui's nationalistic roles as follows:

*Women, she said, had brought their Mithuru and Miengu to
the platform. Let therefore such men, she jeered, come
forward, wear the women's skirts and aprons and give up
their trousers to the women. Men sat rigidly in their seats
and tried to laugh with the crowd to hide the inner
discomfort (180).*

In the above quote, women used their traditional ways of criticizing males' fright. They applied a traditional ritual course against Kikuyu men though the primary intent was to criticize European officials and state owners. Wambui humiliates the men to take women's dress, and give them their trousers and she degrades men as cowards. The above citation might appear on the surface as a traditional pattern of females' behavior. On the contrary, it is an effective means of introducing Kenyans men to fight against the capitalists.

A number of women participated in the Mau Mau revolution and their primary nationalism is for freedom and land. Ngũgĩ's authorial ideology in *A Grain of Wheat* shifts from a cultural nationalist to a revolutionary nationalist. Thus, he highlights the struggle of the oppressed women to free their land from the colonial rule. However, he has a bamboozled ideology for those women involved in the Mau Mau struggle because of his Christian religious ideology. He sketches some women characters' religion is similar to the religion of the dominant ideology; whereas, some women's religion is the traditionalists. The extract below shows women's conflicting nationalism and their cultural diplomacy spirit with the white man's ways of life:

Women dressed in Miengu and Mithuru, with beads around their necks ; women in flower patterned calicos that showed bare their left shoulders; women, in modern frocks; women, singing Christian hymn's mixed with traditional and Uhuro songs (216).

Ngũgĩ believes that nationalism as reflected in the novel should not object to all the white man's cultures. In relation to this, Caminero (1998:150) says "*A Grain of Wheat* suggests that the cultures of the third world have the strength to utilize and transform the culture of the first world." Besides, this attitude is reflected in women's political association in the novel as: "they mixed Christmas hymns with songs and dances only performed during initiation rites when girls are circumcised." (264). These female characters also participate in the nationalistic roles and in the *Uhuru* celebration, as the above quote shows, some women keep their traditions; while, some become adherents to the white man's religion. For example, Mumbi, Gikonyo's wife, seemed more fascinated with the Bible.

Ngũgĩ reveals that some women are not dedicated nationalists. They are represented in the novel as adulterous. He shows that women go to the forest either for fighting or for sexual gratification, or for dualistic purpose. Though they join the Mau Mau, they also love their private life and their

primary intent is to adopt themselves to the existing romantic affiliation to the men. Even if his authorial ideology is nationalism for liberation, he condemns both men and women of the Mau Mau believing that the group has segregations ("fell into groups") and insincerity among the members. He also views the female characters as people who try to advance the diversified interests of the forest fighters. This point can be shown as:

The women, as usual, were more colorfully dressed than men, in fashions that differed from ridge to ridge...Njeri and Wambuku, with a few other girls, came and joined the group. The political talk ended...It was quite and cool in Kinenie Forest. Again the men and women fell into groups and laughed and kissed, animating the wood(92-95).

Generally, Ngũgĩ's ideology in *A Grain of Wheat* is a revolutionary nationalist and he sketches the female characters in relation to this ideology. But, the way he designs those female characters are varied. Some female characters are revolutionary nationalists keeping their traditions whereas some accept the white man's religion though they fight against him. In relation to women's nationalism and their culture in *A Grain of Wheat*, Caminero(1998:148) states that "*A Grain of Wheat* represents the forgoing of Kenyan culture and part of this culture includes the integration and transformations of European culture." Overall, he through the portrayal of patriotic women like Wambui pays great tribute to the African women particularly in those dark days.

3.2.3 Female Characters as suppression and Aesthetic Ideology

The focus of aesthetic ideology is wide. It includes language style of an author and the manner in which he presents a story. It also consists of plot, story construction, flashback and other technical aspects of writing. In other words, its emphasis is on content and form employed by a writer. One of its

essential elements is reality. Reality is taken in at textual and historical levels. In the textual reality of the novel, aesthetic ideology helps to show whether characters' story is told truthfully or not. Concerning historical reality, the representation of characters as reflected in the novel are studied from the historical period which the novel depicts. Here, taking realism as a form of aesthetic ideology, the concern is to see whether characters are sufficiently expressed in the novel based on the social context of the novel or not. In the following section, an attempt will be made to check the portrayal of women as reflected in the novels and the realities of women in the period. The first part will examine female characters in *The River Between* and the next part will present female characters in *A Grain of Wheat*.

3.2.3.1 Female Characters as Suppression in *The River Between*

During the colonial period as indicated in *The River Between*, Kenyan missionaries planned a strategy to convert the native people into Christianity and those who accept their religion can be rewarded. However, according to Mire (2000), imperialists' claims of barbarism in circumcision are counterfeit. For this reason, the imperialists declare a ban on female circumcision to ensure their power. Concerning this, Mire(2000) expresses her critical reading of circumcision in literary works of Kenya and she says:

In the context of the colonial context, then, if the uncircumcised African female body came to represent an endorsement of the colonial regime, the circumcised female body came to represent a rejection of the colonial imposition. As a result, the colonial authority deployed sever disciplinary practices, including surveillance and imprisonment of young Kenyan girls and their mainly young male supporters (10).

This excerpt shows that there is a relation between circumcision and ideology in the politics of Kenya. Therefore, it is possible to deduce that *The*

River Between represents the split off political ideologies of traditional Kenyans and that of the missionaries and Ngũgĩ's depiction of circumcision has to do with politics in addition to culture. Aesthetically, the practice has political meanings as reflected in the novel. The village that condemns circumcision favors the white man's politics; whereas, the ridge that opposes the white man's faith defies the white man's politics. In view of that, there is a reality what is written in the novel and what Mire (2000) records about the setting of the novel. Such type of truthful representation of female characters can be taken as a form of aesthetic ideology.

In *The River Between*, converted Africans like Joshua, assists a female circumcision ban and the evangelized village as reflected in the novel also unanimously outrages against the practice of circumcision. By this opportunity, the people of the antagonistic ridge also express their fidelity to the colonial government and their political distance from the society. For the missionaries, as revealed in the novel, the ban becomes a test to the men's ability to control women and as a justification for colonial control. This fact is clearly seen in Joshua's family. In relation to the ban, unwise Africans following the missionaries take circumcision as a sense of religious kindness for their women. Mire (2000:10), however, explains this mystification as: "European missionary interests in female circumcision in Kenya had more to do with enforcing colonial rule than supporting for Kenyan women's human rights, bodily integrity and self autonomy."

Circumcision as reflected in *The River Between* is one aspect of the cultural heritage of the society. The practice is taken as an attainment of full adult status and the celebration of the symbolic separation of the women from the family. The practice implies social status and essence of full members of the community. It also serves as one of the main educational channels of the society particularly in the absence of any formal aspect of instruction. Women are taught different lessons. That is why the colonizers, believing that this gathering will be changed into political upheaval decided to

eliminate the practice of circumcision and they hurt the villages' girls. And, Ngũgĩ attributes political meaning to it aesthetically and he seems to reflect women's political plight as a cultural rite.

In general, colonialism by its very act of subjugation alienates the rights of the colonized people for the sake of domination. Ngũgĩ In *The River Between*, figures out the practice of circumcision and the missionaries' attempt to combat the practice. Though he is against the practice, his thorough depiction of circumcision in the novel gives political meanings to a reader. In this regard, he has voiced the bogus propaganda of the missionaries towards women. Moreover, he highlights that Kenyan females' bodies become a source for the white men sexual fantasies and sexual violence in addition to being a physical resource. This is also evidenced in the novel as: "Father said that at the mission there is that man _Livingstone and many women."(30). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that female characters as reflected in the novel are sufferers from the politics of the imperialists and this fact is expressed by the author aesthetically.

3.2.3.2 Female Characters as Suppression in *A Grain of Wheat*

Ngũgĩ in *A Grain of Wheat* has been acclaimed for the truthful representation of women in the forest struggle. The narration of the novel and the past records about those events are corresponding. With regard to the situation of women and Mau Mau group, Barnett and Njama(1966:62-102) argue that women are fighting each other for getting a husband in the forest. Moreover, as a result of the small number of women in the forest, males forcefully rape women for their sexual interest. In the manifesto of the Mau Mau struggle, it was written that "Women weaken our struggle". In the end, alternatives were given to them. They should camp separately or they should go to towns.

Ngũgĩ acquires the thematic value of the Mau Mau group in the forest ritual. Throughout the novel the author touches the deeds of this group by using the predominant symbol of 'forest ritual' which signifies Mau Mau'. In the following extract, Ngũgĩ tells literally about females' and males' situations in forest ritual and he views the gathering of these individuals and the romantic affinity among themselves. Though this explanation seems surface at a glance, symbolically it indicates the violence committed on women during the Mau Mau period revolution:

They just went there to meet one another, to talk, to gossip, to laugh...they normally went to dance in Kinenie Forest overlooking the Rift Valley. Guitar players occupied a place of honor in this community; beautiful girls surrounded them and paid tribute with their eyes....Often the dance ended in fights (71-72).

According to Barnett and Njama(1966),women in the Mau Mau revolution faces different problems. Marriage dissolution, sexual violence, agony of the war are some of the most pains women have undergone in the revolution. Similarly, in *A Grain of Wheat*, the marriage crises women face (Wangari's case), the agony they undertake in the State of Emergency (Wambuku's case), the sexual abuse by their counterparts (Mumbi's case) and the poverty they (Gitogo's mother,Mugo's mother and Mukami) face are all described. And,this evident for the true representation of female characters in the given historical period. Therefore, there is a correlation between the female characters' suffering reflected in *A Grain of Wheat* and the lives of females when the novel was written. It may be also argued that fiction reflects history and the novel deals with a historical account of Kenyan people during the Mau- Mau struggles. Even Ngũgĩ in the preamble section of the novel says "The situations and the problem are real-sometimes too painfully real for the peasants."

During the State of Emergency, according to Barnett and Njama (1966) rules were drafted to men to depart from their wives or sweethearts. Marriages were also to be publicly announced and registered. This rule was intended to reduce the possibilities of conflict among the soldiers and to resolve women's choice of a spouse in the forest. In the following extract, Ngũgĩ narrates the journey of the forest where the ritual takes place. People go there by train and love affairs starts at the train. At the arrival of the forest, however, the engagement that has been dreamt up in the journey becomes dissolved. The author using forest ritual as a symbol conveys the agony of women by their counterparts and the realities of women in the Mau Mau struggle as follows:

People did not go there, as it might be thought,.._they just went there to meet one another, to talk,to gossip, to laugh. Love affairs were often hatched there; many marriages with their attendant cry of woe or joy had their origin at the station platform...._the man took away your woman (72).

As reflected in Barnett and Njama (1966), those women who struggle for their freedom are betrayed by those dictators who have gained power in the newly independent Kenya. During the struggle they were sufferers for different types of domination. And, these scholars argue that the national liberation movement has not brought any change to women's life. The textual reality of *A Grain of Wheat* also represents women as victims of coercion after independence. With regard to this point, Caminero(1988:141) contends that "In *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngũgĩ wanted to make his readers see the dangers of betrayal and disillusionment within a newly librated Kenya." In the following extract, the word "hut" refers to Kenya and "dirt" is associated with the different awful practices committed in the independent Kenya. Aesthetically, the author's language illustrates Wambui's and other Kenyan women's fate of disillusionment after independence as follows:

Darkness was creeping into the hut. Wambui was lost in a solid consciousness of a terrible anti-climax to her activities in the fight for freedom. Perhaps we should not have tried

him, she muttered. Then she shook herself, trying to bring her thoughts to the present. I must light the fire .First I must sweep the room. How dirt can so quickly collect in a clean hut! But he did not rise to do anything (243).

In general, Ngũgĩ in *A Grain of Wheat*, unlike in *The River Between*, has used incoherent story line as a style. The novel follows non-chronological narration. It starts on the eve of Kenyan's independence and ends four days later. Though the days seem short, Ngũgĩ tells a whole sequence of events in the past. After he lets us know about female characters, he rambles to another point and readers encapsulate the truthful representation of women in complexity. Female characters are represented ideologically here and there which is challenging to arrive at for characters' judgment. Coming to the reality in the text, he also tells the realities of those women during that Mau-Mau period aesthetically and Ngũgĩ's portraiture of female characters' pain is realistic in relation to the historical documents that deal with women in Mau Mau.

3.2.4 Female Characters as Victims of Patriarchal Ideology and Gendered Ideology

Gendered ideology is not something that can be formed naturally and it is not something that a society has; rather, it is something the society develops. Sex is, however, a biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential. Commonly, it is automatically said Mr. and Mrs. and husband and wife, not wife and husband. A man by reason of gendered ideology is cited before woman. Moreover, women are considered as weak, passive, nurturing and impulsive. In short, gendered ideology is the set of beliefs that governs people's participation in the gender order (Richardson, Tylor, and Whittier, 2001).

Patriarchal ideology maintains male authority system in the economic, social and political structure. This ideology perpetuates men dictators and by in turn makes women subjugated. It lies on male dominance in family and extended kin networks. And, not only females acknowledge this ideology but men also agree to it for their benefits. Therefore, this section attempts to show how the female characters in the two novels have been socialized to accept the two ideologies. First, it sees patriarchal ideology then it moves to gendered ideology. Moreover, in this section, the divergent outcomes that the two ideologies brought on the portrayals of female characters are also analyzed.

3.2.4.1 Female Characters as Victims of Patriarchal and Gendered Ideologies in *The River Between*

Nyambura, in *The River Between*, has been denied the right to choose and to pursue her love affair because of her father's patriarchal ideology. She is eager to know what the other world outside her father's home looks like. However, at every point in her life, her father is a barrier. He warns her that a daughter of a Christian man can not marry a pagan. It would have been better if she had been given the right to choose her marriage partner freely. She falls in love with Wayaki; however, she retreats because of her father's ideology. Throughout the novel, she obeys what her father orders. The situation is illustrated as follows:

But he remembered that Nyambura had not agreed to marry him. Why did she refuse? Because she would not disobey a father? Yes. That was the word. Obedience. And because she was obedient he had lost her(138).

Nyambura still feared her father. She knew that if he saw her standing there he would be angry. She was often lonely. The death of Muthoni had deprived her of the only companion she had ever had (86).

Miriamu, Joshua's wife, is a victim of patriarchal ideology. She is mistreated by her husband. She is masked under the heavy burden of long-established mores and customs. In the following extract below, the obedient wife does her duty to Joshua and the use of the words "punishing, beating, obey" is probably to underscore the limitless authority of Joshua on Miriamu. For example, the husband punishes her in spite of her effort to please him. Moreover, she tells her daughters to be abided by their father. This situation is expressed as follows:

She knew him. Joshua was such a staunch man of God and such a firm believer in the Old Testament, that he would never refrain from punishing a sin, even if this meant beating his wife (35).

She was a peace-loving woman and she never liked unnecessary tension in the house. Her injunction to her children was always: 'Obey your father.' She did not say it belief, of a way of life 'Your father says this----' and she expected his children to do that, without fuss, without resentment (39).

The concept of mother in the novel is treated as a representation that is taking the burden of the family. It is like the common trend of mothering that is constructed through patriarchal ideology. For instance, the bond between Miramu and her daughters and the mother's nostalgically for the children are observed in the novel. She is represented as both the primary domestic workers and responsible takers of the family. Her role is always dependant on the patriarchal ideology of her husband. She is viewed as a dependent and a slave woman. When Muthoni disappears, she goes to search for her. However, the father warns his wife where does the daughter go away. This patriarchal ideology is illustrated as:

Miriamu went out. This is what it meant to be a mother .It meant bearing one's shoulders all the sins and misdeeds of the children. Even the husband always treats her for the children .She went about, looking all the huts where Muthoni was likely to be (41).

Miriamu becomes victims not only by her husband's patriarchal ideology but also by the Christian religious ideology which the husband injects mistakenly. Since her husband tells her that a Christian woman should be submissive, she is obedient and well behaved to him. She never reveals her true feelings for her husband and she always quite to him. Although she has born him two daughters, she fears him like a stranger and she always utters the word "obedience". In the following extract, the words "submissive", "not questioned" and "fear" suggest that she is highly victimized by patriarchal ideology in the name of Christianity:

She had learnt the value of Christian submission...Not that she questioned life. It had given her a man and in her own way she loved and cared for him. Her faith and belief in God were coupled with her fear of Joshua(39).

Kikuyu society as reflected in *The River Between* demonstrates a communal mode of life. No group accumulates for its sole benefit the surplus it has produced. Kinship is also a basic factor of social relations and all people are members of that kin's ideology. Since men are always the principal in the tribe, all members of the kinship prioritize men's issues before women's. Due to this patriarchal ideology in the society, women are expected to accept any decisions endorsed by men. They do not take part actively in decision making regarding political and economic matters.

As a gendered society, Kikuyu people, as it is expressed in *The River Between*, stereotypes females. This prejudiced ideology has become embedded in the minds of both men and women .The female characters also internalize the stereotypical assumptions and accept the status given to

them. For example, a mother who bears a son deserves to be honored by celebration. Daughters, on the other hand, are welcomed less enthusiastically. Several reasons are used by gendered ideology to justify females' inferiority vis-à-vis males. In the following extract below, Chege, the father, always regrets for having a single wife though his two wives had died some years ago. He also feels uneasy for having one son. Ngugi comments Chege's gendered ideology as: "only one wife, many daughters, only one son." Moreover, the extract apparently expresses hatred of births of daughters and the various injustices women are subjected to as a result of gendered ideology:

Chege, his father, was a well-known elder in Kameno. He had now only one wife, who had borne him many daughters but only one son. The other two wives had died during the great famine, without any children (8).

Most of the time a myth originates from the male oriented psyche and it expresses women's subordination. Gendered ideology in the form of myth enhances women's inferiority and humiliates their biological nature. Such ideology robs women's right to participate in higher functions of society. It brings on innumerable inequalities, discriminations and degradations. The gendered ideology that men are socially superior is sometimes caused by myth. Pregnancy in *The River Between* is taken as embarrassment to women and the following myth has an implied meaning that when women get pregnant, they are unable to manage their materials:

You don't know this! Long ago women used to rule this land and its men. They were harsh and men began to resent their hard hand. So when all the women were pregnant, men came together and overthrew them. Before this, women owned everything. The animal you saw was their goat. But because the women could not manage them, the goats ran away. They knew women to be weak. So why should they fear them?' (18).

The other gendered ideology concept that should be examined in the above myth is the word "weak". This word implies that women can not show resistance and they are always defeated whether they face physical or mental confrontation. The myth reveals that when women get pregnant, they are feeble and helpless to manage their animals and it is in such a kind of a Kikuyu myth that the gendered ideology "weakness is to women and strength is to men." is built up.

In conclusion, women as reflected in *The River Between* become victims because of patriarchal and gendered ideologies. They rely on males for their problems and they could not become self-reliant. Even though they are oppressed, they have not developed a counter ideology to overthrow the system. In the novel, they are featured as secondary characters as someone's wife, mother, daughter, or sister. And, instead of questioning different forms of subjugation which are caused by patriarchal and gendered ideology, they internalized these ideologies.

3.2.4.2 Female Characters as Victims of Patriarchal and Gendered Ideology in *A Grain of Wheat*

Revolution and patriotic movement in *A Grain of Wheat* have a great influence on patriarchal ideology. Women joined men in the battlefield against the white men. Women and men lived together. This arrangement increases the authority of men and it also endows them a patriarchal ideology.

The Patriarchal ideology that can be presumed in most African novels is observed in *A Grain of Wheat*. Violence against women, rapes, domestic violence, sexual harassment and implicit devaluation of women's contribution are practical. The liberation of women from traditional forms of oppressions is not part of an agenda for freedom fighters. In the revolution,

women's liberty was often disguised by the country's freedom. The following passage reveals this fact as:

The men organized themselves in groups according to the ridges of origin. Thabai was famous because men from there successfully fought other groups and took away their women...the man who beat you the pervious Sunday and took away your woman, was a friend.....but he knew later in the wood you would look for a chance to stay him and took away his women (72).

Woman offered their naked bodies to him, even some of the most respectable came to him by night. But Mumbi, his Mumbi, would not yield ,and he could never bring himself to force her (209).

Mumbi had found it difficult to tell her parents about the marriage crises she had with her husband, Gikonyo. She had never told her own mother or father about the tension. Her choice is to behave in this way because her husband is supported by the patriarchal ideology. She would have nowhere to go even if she wanted to go to her parent. If she went to her parents' home, they did not welcome her. The family did not encourage her to disobey her husband. Wanjiku, Mumbi's mother, had even ridiculed Mumbi's action to go to the family and Wanjiku acknowledges patriarchal ideology as:

The women of today surprise me. They can not take a slap, soft as a feather or the slightest breath, from a man. In our time, a woman could take blow and blow from her husband without a thought of running back to her parents (181).

Mumbi's main tasks are in the domestic sphere. She keeps the house, carries firewood and fetches water and does cooking. Her life is associated with domestic activities. Moreover, she is represented as a pleasure giving servant for her husband. The following extract reveals this fact:

Mumbi brought back the fire. She put the pot, full of water, on the fire, and sat again to watch her husband. She appeared expectant, a bird ready to fly at the first sign or word from the master (29).

In the above quote, the words "bird, fly and master" suggest the gendered ideology of the author. A bird is normally diminutive in size and it is taken as a symbol of beauty and weakness. In the extract above, Mumbi is described as "a bird ready to fly... from the master". This expression has many associations towards Mumbi. First, her image is as something that can be easily tamed by males and this quality may bring a negative implication that Mumbi can go to other men like Karanja easily. It may also suggest that Gikonyo assumes Mumbi as a prostitute. Moreover, she is described as a woman to satisfy her husband's need. A tamed bird is kept for food by a master. Similarly, Mumbi is kept for Gikonyo's sexual needs.

In *A Grain of Wheat* as the mythology goes, the transfer of power can be traced to men. Men's sexual power possesses and controls women. The implied assertion is women are exposed easily to love. The following myth below literally explains that in the past men did not have any property and all the resources were under the control of women. Men were employed to satisfy the needs of women. It also emphasizes women's foolishness and men's wisdom. It connotes that when women get pregnant, they have no power to resist men. As Adam placed the fault for disorder on Eve, this myth also attributes women's weakness to themselves. It also portrays women as weak and helpless. It is obvious that without pregnancy children can not come into this world and it needs pain and suffering to bear children. In spite of this fact, myth like this degrades the value of pregnancy as:

Men had no property, they were only there to serve the whims and needs of the women. Those were hard years.....they would sleep with all the women at once for didn't they know the heroines would return hungry for love and relaxation ?fate did the rest; women were pregnant; the takeover met with little resistance(11).

Polygamy can suggest that men can marry many wives at any time if they get it convenient and the practice is a threat is to women. It also suggests that men can have the right to have many sexual partners which this practice is forbidden to women. In Ngugi's *A Grain of Wheat*, a number of polygamous women are depicted. The implication of the tradition as reflected in the novel is a man can have a wide choice of picking a woman like an object. The author shows the different impacts of the practice on women. As reflected in the novel, polygamy brings economic ruin and it may lead women to death when they are kicked out by their husbands.

In the extract below, Karanja's father takes Wairimu, his mother, like a property to his home. He has four wives and when their power of attraction declines, he drives them away from his home. It is also expressed that before he has thrown away women, he finds another woman who is more beautiful. As a patriarchal ideology, all the women in Karanja's father house have accepted to be co-wives. Bride wealth, where by their labor could be transformed into male wealthily, is also taken as an element of their subsidy. The following extract shows that Karanja's father women are victims of patriarchal ideology:

She was the third of the four wives that Karanja's father had acquired by paying so much bride price in goats and cattle. He acquired them, yes and then left them to their own resources (224).

Wangari, Gikonyo's mother, is constantly beaten by her husband Waruhiu. He pushes her to leave the house. Finally, she goes out since she can not bear all the difficulties and beatings. As Ngũgĩ comments in the extract below, the husband is angry because his wife is cold-bloodedly. Her body is passive for sexual feeling and Waruhiu abandons her for this reason. He only regrets for the bride he pays to her. The poor sexual feeling that he gets from her is described as "not yield warmth". The phrase "not warmth" is used to

depict his sexual unresponsiveness to her. Over and above, "warmth and thighs" signify her major roles for his sexual appetites:

He got need brides and complained that the thighs of the first wife did not yield warmth any more. He beat her, hoping that this would drive her away. Wangari struck on. Eventually, Waruhiu ordered her to leave his home and cursed mother and son to life of ever wandering on God's earth (123).

From the development of the story in *A Grain of wheat*, it is possible to suggest that it is not easy for Wambuku and Njeri to express their romantic love for the compatriot kihika. This is because they live in the society affected by the gendered ideology that "women never ask men for love". Their inner feelings are seriously affected by his love and Ngũgĩ is also sympathetic to them. Both characters assume that if they ask him for love, other compatriots consider them as deviants. They express his heroic deed in the forest as "strong" but they express him "weak" for his ignorant of love. The author describes the two female characters' romantic uncertainties towards kihika as:

Don't you love him? Njeri asked.

'I do-I did-I kept myself from other men for his sake. At night I only thought of him. I wanted him. I could have saved him. He was a man, Njeri, strong, sure, but also weak, weak like a little child.'(102).

Ngũgĩ, in the closing of *A Grain of Wheat*, has conveyed that Kenya's future and development will depend on Mumbi's pregnancy. In this case, she will give birth to a better life of Kenyans and she raises children eventually. Such a depiction of a woman shows the influence of gendered ideology. That is, a woman becomes first a mother and this means the decisive goal of every woman is being a mother. Women are and will always be mothers first before

anything else and such a fate confines women to the common and ordinary ways of life. This situation is expressed as:

He watched her until she disappeared at the door. Then he sank back to bed. "I will change the woman figure. I shall carve a woman big-big with child"(247).

In the above quote, Gikonyo's decision to carve and to present a wedding gift to Mumbi is a symbol of future life and productivity of Kenya's fertility. Kenya is portrayed as a pregnant mother, a mother who will give birth to life and will bear fruit in the end. Monotonously, the relation between Gikonyo and Mumbi in the end is "big-big with a child" which is a widespread ideology in African novels that women first get pregnant.

Indeed, Mumbi has been represented as supporter of her husband, a good housekeeper and the guardian of the village. She will provide children and care for them. To show this mother's role, her name is also described both in *The River Between* and in *A Grain of Wheat*. Mumbi is described as the creator of the tribe in *The River Between* as: "for a people roots were in their traditions going back to the past, the very beginning, Gikuyu and Mumbi."(162).She is also expressed in *A Grain of Wheat* as: "God of Isaac and Jacob and Abraham, who also created Gikuyu and Mumbi, and gave us, your children, this land of Kenya."(218).There is nothing wrong that she is to be a wife and a mother. What is missing, however, is recognition of the diversity of roles she played in the society. She is represented considerably as a wife, serving her husband and creating the nation.

In general, women in *A Grain of Wheat* are part of a dominated class within patriarchal and gendered ideology. The literary representations of female characters in the novel have revealed special conditions that women face. In the novel, the influences of the two ideologies on female characters are tremendous which also facilitate their poverty. These ideologies alienate female characters from the economic sources and put them at a

disadvantage in competing with men for social participation. They make them victims of domestic work and dependent on men. Even, mother-daughter and sister- sister ties enhance total male oriented patriarchal ideology. In general, from the above discussion, it can be conclude that despite Ngũgĩ depicts strong women figures like Wambuku and Wambui in the fight against the colonizers, most of his female characters are also affected by gendered and patriarchal ideologies.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this research is to see the link between ideology and the literary representation of female characters in Ngũgĩ's two novels-*The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat*. In doing so, ideology is narrowly defined as a system of beliefs by which people explain, account for and justify their behavior and interpret and evaluate that of others. It is also defined as a body of ideas and false values used to keep people under control. In the umbrella of this terminology, other types of ideologies like dominant, authorial and aesthetics are specifically defined from a Marxist's view. Similarly, as to African feminist ideology, gendered and patriarchal ideologies are discussed in the study.

In combination with ideologies, literary representation theories are discussed. Representation can be defined as act, state or fact of representing or being represented. It contains the represented individuals that are characters, the person who represents the characters and the manner of representation as direct or indirect. Furthermore, it also appears in the form of misrepresentations. When these components are examined, they are related to different ideologies. Therefore, by drawing a link between ideologies and representation theories, the study has attempted to answer the representation of female characters from dominant, authorial, aesthetic, patriarchal and gendered ideological points of view.

In the dominant ideology, female characters in *The River Between* and native Kenyan women in *A Grain of Wheat* are sufferers. But, white women in *A Grain of Wheat* are beneficiaries. In these two novels, the dominant ideologies refer to the imperialists' politics, culture, religion, art and other aspects of life.

All the five female characters in *The River Between* are sufferers in the dominant ideology. Muthoni is a girl who suffers from the conflict of the religious ideologies of Christianity and traditionalism and she died of circumcision. Her sister, Nyambura is also perplexed by the two religious factions and her love with Waiyaki ends in failure due to the difference between their families' religions. Miriamu, the mother of the two daughters, cries for the circumstances of her children and she encounters pain and misery for the daughters' deviation from the norms of the society. Waiyaki's mother is also a victim of the dominant ideology. She is irritated because her son attempts to marry the uncircumcised Nyambura. Finally, Muthoni's aunt is portrayed as a conformist woman who contemplates the white man's medication center as a deliberate poisoning institution. As a result, she resists taking Muthoni to the missionaries' hospital in her circumcision nuisance.

Female characters in *A Grain of Wheat* also suffer from the dominant ideology of the period. The novel presents the death of different female characters. For example, Wambuku and Njeri died in the fight against the colonizers. Gitogo's mother, Mugo's mother, Mukami died of poor as their strips of land are taken by the white capitalists. Woman like Mumbi, Wangari and Wairimu go through the social, political and economic calamities of the period. On the contrary, white female characters like Dr. Lynd, Mrs. Margery and Mrs. Dickinson are represented as political and economic privileged women.

Ngũgĩ's authorial ideology reveals that female characters in the two novels are nationalists. In *The River Between*, female characters have tried to safeguard their culture. Similarly, in *A Grain of Wheat*, native Kenyan women struggle for the freedom of the land. His authorial ideology in *The River Between* is cultural nationalism and in *A Grain of Wheat* it is revolutionary. His ideology in this respect, however, varies from characters to characters.

In *The River Between*, all the five female characters are represented to justify the value of circumcision. Their belief in the significance of the practice is strong. However, Ngũgĩ's authorial voice condemns the physical oppression of the tradition and he creates the female characters having a cultural transformation and negotiation attitude. Similarly, in *A Grain of Wheat*, female characters have been shown in revolutionary roles. For instance, Wambui, one of the icons of women, organizes a strike against the colonizers and she is also represented as a patriot.

Relating to aesthetic ideology, Ngũgĩ's illustration of the female characters in the two novels reflects the realities of women in the period. The predominant issue in *The River Between* is circumcision and Ngũgĩ emphasizes the actuality of women in the epoch aesthetically. Circumcision as reflected in the novel is used for ruling. The colonialists use the tradition for divide and rule purpose. The village that outrages against the practice is favored by the white men; whereas, the village that opposes the exclusion of the ritual will get retribution. Therefore, women become the political targets of the imperialists and they suffer a lot. A girl who tries to be circumcised is damned by the colonizers. Likewise, in *A Grain of Wheat*, the realities of women during the Mau Mau revolution and their actualities after independence have been reflected. The historical account of the epoch shows that women are raped, suffered, subjugated, disillusioned and killed. Ngũgĩ also mirrors these facts in the novel.

In relation to the gendered and patriarchal ideologies, the representation of female characters in the two novels confirms that they are victims. In *The River Between*, female characters like Miriamu, Nyambura and the aunt are represented as male dependent, victim of traditional norms, downtrodden and dominated. Similarly, female characters like Wairimu, Wangari and Mumbi in *A Grain of Wheat* are subjugated by the different gendered and patriarchal ideologies. Ngũgĩ in the two novels used myth and symbolism to

convey the gendered and the patriarchal ideologies of the society and he implicates that women are victims of these ideologies.

In conclusion, in Ngũgĩ's two novels-*The River Between* and *A Grain of Wheat*, the representation of female characters has been examined from ideological questions and the study has confirmed that the representation of female characters in the two novels is affected by different ideologies. Thus, the present researcher would like to recommend other researchers to study the literary representation of characters in any works of art from various ideological dimensions.

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name BALEW DEMISSIE KEBEDE

Signature  Balew Demissie

Place Addis Ababa University, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

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