

Addis Ababa University
Faculty of Language Studies
Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Post-Independence Disillusionment in *Petals of
Blood* and *Devil on the Cross*

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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. All sources used in writing the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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Signature: _____

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Abstract

*Owing to the growing political depravity that has become the norm in many new born African nations, post-colonial African novelists use their literary works to depict the socio-economic and political realities of the continent. Initially, African literature was a tool for celebrating the heroic achievements of African past; later it was used for anti-colonial struggle. Presently, it is being used as a veritable weapon for depicting the post-colonial disillusionment in African nations. Therefore, African literature is always chained to the experiences of the people of the continent. In this paper, an attempt is made to examine the discourse of post-independence disillusionment in *Petals of Blood* (1977) and *Devil on the Cross* (1982) as both novels depict an undistorted image of a post-colonial African state, Kenya, with all its complexity of problems. The study consists of four chapters: the introductory chapter provides general insights into the whole work by introducing why it became necessary to conduct the research and what it sets out to deal with. The second chapter focuses on a review of related literature in accordance with the thematic preoccupations of the author in the two selected novels. The third chapter is concerned with a critical analysis, in which an attempt has been made first to critically examine the two novels separately, and then conduct a comparative analysis as an attempt to show the pertinent issues in both novels. Accordingly, the study has found out that the aforementioned literary works deal with post-independence disillusionment: political corruption, social class stratification, gender inequality, resistance and liberation which are widely foregrounded in both novels. In the two selected novels the author teaches that the solution for the people's disillusionment with the tyrant political elites is to move against imperialism and its recent manifestation, neo-colonialism, and embrace socialism or communism as a natural way of life for the people of Kenya (Africa). The fourth chapter provides concluding remarks, and summary based on the findings of the study. To be more specific, the study deals with post-independence disillusionment, as experienced by the people of the referent country, and depicted in the texts under the study.*

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

Online sources indicate that although Africa has had a long and enduring tradition of poetry and drama, the novel is today, as almost everywhere else in the world, the dominant literary genre in the continent. Its privileged status as a literary genre may be attributed to European influence and its association with an imaginative consciousness grounded in literate modernity. (www.cambridge.org). In furtherance of this idea, Griffith (2000:1) states that in Africa fictional works were in existence from the 1990s onwards. He asserts that it would be impossible to attempt an overview of such a long period of writing, without drastically and arbitrarily limiting both the kinds of texts examined and the methodology by which they are selected and discussed. Many and various external patronages acted to develop Africa writing in English through its different historical phases.

The earliest forms of writing in English by black Africans were the narratives about the captured and transported by European slave-traders who thronged to the West African coast in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The master of these slaves were rarely concerned with the welfare of their charges, and in the plantation context of much slavery during the period the relationship of slave and master involved only the most limited association and the most cursory of language exchanges. In portraits of the time black slaves often shared the same role and the same iconography as domestic pets such as dogs and parrots. In the given context, the ability of the slaves to engage in such human activities as speech, writing, music-making and other artistic forms functioned prodigally. These transplanted and dislocated human beings, deprived of their individual, cultural context, their language and even their names were reconstituted as figures occupying a profoundly ambiguous expressive space.

Griffith (2000) maintains that following the slave narrative, there comes the development of nineteenth and early twentieth century histories, travel accounts, political writing and the beginning of fiction. This can be taken as a remarkable development in the history of African literature. If we take West Africa, for example, the period from the early

nineteenth century to the early twentieth century marks one of the strong interventions by European culture into West Africa. The writers and intellectuals they produced were to provide an inspiration and a model for the nationalist movements across Africa in the twentieth century.

African literary tradition is closely related to African history. There are three major historical episodes that mark the development of African literature. One of them is the painful experience of slave trade that has robbed the continent of its working and virile manpower. During the era of slavery, African literary artists wrote about the traumatic experience of Africans in European and American plantation farms. British and the other colonizing powers did not directly involve in the system of exploitation, rather they used African middle-men to capture and transfer virile young men from the continent. During the colonial period, African writers had to address the traumatic experience of African people under the exploitative rule of the colonizers. Even after independence the colonizers have continued to exploit the continent and its people using indirect means once again; people who used to work for the colonizers have continued serving the interests of their ex-masters in different ways. Black-skinned and white Africans have facilitated everything for the exploitation and persecution of the general mass to be possible. African writers have had to fight against such atrocities and prosecutions directed against the people of Africa in general and the people of their respective countries in particular. In the absence of a democratic culture or freedom of speech, the only way for the literary artists to protest against the systems or to disclose the atrocities committed in their respective countries to the rest of the world, is using literature and literary characters as a means.

African writers have produced different literary works in response to the socio-economic crisis the continent has experienced before and after independence. Many African writers have used literature as a peaceful weapon to struggle against any injustice directed to their respective country in particular and the people of Africa in general. One of those committed African writers is the famous East African novelist, Ngugi Wa Theiong'o. The focus of this paper will be on his views and concerns for the people of Kenya in

particular and Africans in general in his two novels, *Devil on the Cross* and *Petals of Blood*.

These two, as political novels, reveal the physical and spiritual subjugation the people of Kenya in particular and Africans in general have been subjected to, under the dictatorial rule of imperialism and neo-colonialism. This paper, therefore, tries to examine the thematic preoccupation of the writer in the two novels.

Be it colonial or post-colonial literature, its primary concern is to reflect the situation and events of the time. Concerning the close relationship of African literary works and politics, Melakneh (2005:76) states that since the inspiration of the novel has been the expression and assertion of African personality as such seeks recognition primarily through the political autonomy. Independence has contributed a lot for the development of African literature. The achievement of independence provoked the need for freedom in other fields of national endeavor including literature and arts. The Serraleaon and the Kampala Conferences held in 1963 and 1964 respectively were concerned with the definition of African literature and the need for its study in African universities. Before independence the need to examine the political, historical, and cultural issues of African identity was not a pressing issue. The thematic preoccupation of the post- independence African dramatists, range over a wide spectrum of issues. They include social relationships, family life, ethnic taboos, and corruption. As an international genre,

í .. postcolonial literature raises pressing issues such as gender, race, and class. Anne Clintock argues that to understand post colonialism one must first recognize that race, gender, and class are not distinct realms of experience, existing in splendid isolation from each other; nor can they be simply yoked together retrospectively like armatures of Logo. Rather they come into existence in a thorough relation to each otherí í . if in contradictory and conflicting ways. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/literature>)

Unlike some western writers who often deal with the aesthetic and cathartic functions of literature in their literary works, African literary artists are committed writers. Many authors who wrote during colonial and post colonial periods were not only literary artists but also political activists. Their works reflect their concerns regarding the political and social conditions of their respective countries. African writers shoulder a lot of responsibilities; they speak on behalf their people in times of oppression, and they are also responsible to educate them. African writers have been and are the spokesmen of their respective societies. In connection to this idea, Chinua Achebe ,as cited in Melakneh (2005:10) writes the following:

The worst thing that can happen to any people is the loss of their dignity and self-respect. The writer's duty is to help them, regain what they lost. There is a saying in Igbo that 'a man who can't tell where the rain began to beat him; cannot know where he dried his body'. The writer can tell the people where the rain began to beat them.

Therefore, African literary artists shoulder a big responsibility of educating their people. It will not benefit the people if the writers discuss only aesthetics in their literary works because the people of Africa have a lot of socio-economic and political issues worth discussing.

In addition to the issues raised above , E. Obiechina (1976:117) states that after independence a new African ÷ black whitesø assumed power and turned out to be even, more corrupt than the previous white rulers. This caused African writers to shift their preoccupation from recalling the past to the concern with the pressing problems of the present. It was even being said the preoccupation with past provided a cover for the post independence elites to act more irresponsibly and indulge in corruption. Hence, in the post ó independence period African writers have become busy in attacking the venal, corrupt, irresponsible, hypocritical, and visionless leaders of most post ó independent nations in Africa. In other words, as creative members of their society, their primary concern is to alert their respective community by recreating and interpreting the socio-political condition of the time. That is why African writers are often referred to as committed writers.

Post-independence governments in Africa were not able to fulfill the social, political and economic needs which were anticipated during the colonial era. The failure to meet those immediate desires resulted in crisis of legitimacy. That is, the citizens became disillusioned, fed-up-with the governments that could not provide the basic social and economic services. And the political system of those governments became a fertile land for corruption, nepotism, internal instability like ethnic conflict and civil war. ([http://exploring africa](http://exploringafrica.com)).

Africans have had to struggle recently to overthrow the brutal regimes of the colonizers. However, in spite of the success in overthrowing the colonial governments the national liberation failed to improve the lives of the majority which was promised during the struggle against colonialism. Thus independence failed to fulfill its promises and marked the beginning of increasing disillusionment as it became clear that for the majority of people nothing has changed than that of colonial domination and exploitation. The exploitation has continued in other way round. The newly emerged African governments are the continuations of the previous colonial regimes which are characterized by economic weakness, undemocratic practice, lack of respect for human rights and ethnic conflicts due to their divide-and-órule policy.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Christopher O'Reilly (2001:32) states that modern African writing counteracts the negative stereotypes of the colonial period. African writers have had to dismantle powerful myths about African inferiority and assert their distinctive African cultures. In the post-independence period the role of the writer has become more explicitly political, criticizing government corruption. More than in any other region, African writers have been imprisoned or had their work banned for speaking out against oppressive regimes.

Diana Dryborn (2000:1780) further explains that after World War II, independence appeared to have ended the humiliating and exploitative colonial domination that had lasted anywhere from decades to centuries in countries covering at least 85 percent of the earth's land surface. And yet freedom and self-rule _ for which the colonized had bitterly

struggled often at the cost of immense sacrifice_ were unexpectedly elusive. She adds that:

Decolonization neither effected emancipation and equality nor provided new wealth or peace. Instead suffering and misery continued nearly everywhere in an altered form, at the hands of different agencies. The local land lords kept on protecting the interests of their old masters in exchange for compensation. Thus the welfare of the general population saw little improvement; in fact, in recent years, it has worsened in many old colonies. The postcolonial deterioration that Basil Davidson recently called "the black man's burden" was a result of double process of colonization and decolonization, which were inextricably intermeshed. (2000:1780)

Due to lack of freedom of speech in most African countries, the people cannot openly criticize the oppressive rulers. Therefore, the African literary artist should always be there to speak on behalf of their people, being an artist and a political activist as well, reflecting the crisis in their country to the rest of the world. One of the most important writers from Africa, who has directly confronted the dictatorship of imperialism and neocolonialism in his literary works, is Ngugi Waheongoo.

Unlike his West African counterparts such as Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka, who believe in consolidating rather than altering in their literary works, Ngugi Waheongoo , is a revolutionary writer. Ngugi opposes greedy businessmen, corrupt politicians and foreign capitalists. His work critique the fundamental nature of post-independence nation state, as either a neocolonial mark or as hindrance to a wider and more effective, Pan-African or Pan-Negro vision for Africa. He is truly a revolutionary and fearless in confronting the brutal system. Let us see an extract from the speech he delivered in various instances as cited in Carotine Rooney (2000:27) "Fear not those who kill the flesh, but fear those who kill the spirit. They cannot kill my spirit even if they kill me as they have killed others they will not kill the determination of this country to remain free"

Since post-independence disillusionment as one of the major tenets of post colonial African literature has not been examined in the two novels, *Petals of Blood*(1977) and *Devil on the Cross*(1982), the researcher is motivated to critically examine the thematic

preoccupations of Ngugi in the two novels. Even though the physical setting of the stories in both literary works is the Republic of Kenya and its people, the experience of the people of Kenya under the neocolonial regimes may represent the experience of almost all African nations after post-independence. The study with reference to the two novels provides an insight into post-independence disillusionment; political corruption, social class stratification, gender inequality, and resistance and liberation as these are the major thematic preoccupations of the author in both novels. The author's vision for the establishment of a pan-African state and his preoccupation with the plight of African people in general and the people of Kenya in particular has also urged the writer of this paper to undertake a critical analysis of the two novels. To be more specific, the writer of this paper tries to examine post-independence pains and frustrations faced by the people of Kenya in particular and most African nations in general, under the rule of the neocolonial regimes as depicted in the two novels.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to identify the literary and social values of the aforementioned literary works. Under this general objective, this paper tries to examine the major thematic preoccupations of the writer in the two novels. Besides the appreciation of the thematic spirit, a critical analysis of the major post-colonial issues will be undertaken. Since the two novels, *Petals of Blood* and *Devil on the Cross*, are political satires aimed at provoking opposition and resistance among the people of Kenya, disclosing the socio-economic and political realities of the then government of Kenya, the writer of this paper believes that providing a brief account of the socio-economic realities helps to identify whose regime Ngugi is condemning in his two novels.

1.4. Significance of the study

It is the conviction of the researcher that critically examining the two literary works under study, based on the major preoccupations of the author, and the theoretical premises that will be discussed under the literature review section, will develop an insight into how the aforementioned works depict post-independence disillusionment as being experienced by the referent society of the two novels in particular and in the

new born African nations under the rule of neo-colonial leadership in general. The literary, social significance and aesthetic aspects of the novel will be also examined. Last but not least, the study may serve as a springboard for potential critics who would be interested in conducting further studies on the novels from any other literary dimension.

1.5. Scope of the study

The study will be limited to critical examination of the thematic issues in the two novels, *Petals of Blood* and *Devil on the Cross* in relation to the thematic spirit of the two novels. Owing to time and some other constraints, the researcher may not be able to explore all the issues mentioned in the novels. Rather, the critical analysis focuses on the major issues discussed in both works and the main literary characters having a great contribution in developing the thematic spirit of the two novels.

1.6. Methodology

Both literary and descriptive methods have been used in this study in order to critically examine the thematic spirit of the two works under the study. Since the work under the study relies on a theoretical framework on which it basis its analysis, gathering theoretical sources relevant to the work of art will be the first phase. Thus, a critical reading and examination of the sources available at various libraries and online sources will form an organized and unified body of data for the literature review. The primary data consists of the texts under the study. Then textual analysis pertinent to the study in question will be carried out through critical reading and a response to the major thematic issues which the present study addresses.

In critically examining the texts, comprehending what the texts are all about, identifying the major thematic preoccupations of the writer in both texts, and interpretation based on critical models of post-colonial studies, specifically, the notions of the comparative model, are the three steps the researcher will focus through critical reading and examination of the works under the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

As spokespersons of the respective societies they belong to in particular, and as the visionary of the continent in general, African literary artists do not raise the same issues in every historical period. That is to mean, the preoccupation of the writers varies from one historical period to the other as they focus on the socio- political realities of the continent. The experience of colonization and the challenges of the post ócolonial world have urged African literary artists to embark on a new chapter of writing in English, with a strong commitment to reflect the socio economic and political realities of the continent in the history of African literature. Therefore, under the following subtopics, the preoccupation of the literary artists in each historical period; especially, during the period termed as post óindependence disillusionment, the socio-historical background of the referent country of the two novels and a theoretical premises of the thematic issues, have been discussed in detail in an attempt to provide a good theoretical framework before critically examining the two works under the study.

2.1. The Socio- Political Setting

Since the referent society of the two novels is Kenya and its people, and the fact that the writer deals with socio- economic and political realities of the people of Kenya, the writer of this paper feels that it will be appropriate to provide a little background information about the referent society of the two novels, before moving onto the task of critical examination

As per the information obtained from the internet website, <http://www.kenyaembassy.com> Kenya, the referent country of the two novels under the study, has a very diverse population that includes three of Africa's major sociolinguistic groups: Bantu (67%), Nilotic (30%), and Cushitic (3%). Kenyans are deeply religious. About 80% of Kenyans are Christian, 10% Muslim, and 10% follow traditional African religions or other faiths. Most city residents retain links with their rural, extended families and leave the city periodically to help work on the family farm. About 75% of the work force is engaged in agriculture, mainly as subsistence farmers. The national motto of Kenya is *Harambee*,

meaning "pull together." In that spirit, volunteers in hundreds of communities build schools, clinics, and other facilities each year and collect funds to send students abroad.

Cushitic-speaking people from what is now Sudan and Ethiopia moved into the area that is now Kenya beginning around 2000 BC. Arab traders began frequenting the Kenya coast around the first century AD. Kenya's proximity to the Arabian Peninsula invited colonization, and Arab and Persian settlements sprouted along the coast by the eighth century. During the first millennium AD, Nilotic and Bantu peoples moved into the region, and the latter now comprise two thirds of Kenya's population. Swahili, a Bantu language with significant Arabic vocabulary, developed as a trade language for the region.

Arab dominance on the coast was interrupted for about 150 years following the arrival of the Portuguese in 1498. British exploration of East Africa in the mid-1800s eventually led to the establishment of Britain's East African Protectorate in 1895. The Protectorate promoted settlement of the fertile central highlands by Europeans, dispossessing the Kikuyu and others of their land. Some fertile and well watered parts of the Rift Valley inhabited by the Maasai and the western highlands inhabited by the Kalenjin were also handed over to European settlers. For other Kenyan communities, the British presence was slight, especially in the arid northern half of the country. The settlers were allowed a voice in government even before Kenya was officially made a British colony in 1920, but Africans were prohibited from direct political participation until 1944 when a few appointed (but not elected) African representatives were permitted to sit in the legislature.

From 1952 to 1959, Kenya was under a state of emergency arising from the "Mau Mau" insurgency against British colonial rule in general and its land policies in particular. This rebellion took place almost exclusively in the highlands of central Kenya among the Kikuyu people. Tens of thousands of Kikuyu died in the fighting or in the detention camps and restricted villages. British losses were about 650. During this period, African participation in the political process increased rapidly.

The first direct elections for Africans to the Legislative Council took place in 1957. Kenya became independent on December 12, 1963, and the next year joined the Commonwealth. Jomo Kenyatta, an ethnic Kikuyu and head of the Kenya African National Union (KANU), became Kenya's first President. The minority party, Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), representing a coalition of small ethnic groups that had feared dominance by larger ones, dissolved itself in 1964 and joined KANU.

A small but significant leftist opposition party, the Kenya People's Union (KPU), was formed in 1966, led by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, a former Vice President and Luo elder. The KPU was banned shortly thereafter, however, and its leader detained. KANU became Kenya's sole political party. At Kenyatta's death in August 1978, Vice President Daniel arap Moi, a Kalenjin from Rift Valley province, became interim President. By October of that year, Moi became President formally after he was elected head of KANU and designated its sole nominee for the presidential election.

2.1.1. The Rise of Kenyan Nationalism

Online sources indicate that the first African political *ProKenya* Vocations in Kenya against the colonial government began in 1921 by the Youth Kikuyu Association led by *Harry Thuku*. In preparation for efforts to gain free from the colonial rule, member of *Kikuyu, Embu Meru* and *Kamba* community took oath of unity and secrecy leading to the formation of *MauMau* movement. In 1952, the colonial government declared a state of emergency.

Jomokenyatta who was later to become the first president of Kenya and other freedom fighters were charged with organizing the *MauMau* movement. Kenyatta was arrested and sentenced for seven years imprisonment in Kapenguria. Local communities especially in the central highland were put in concentration camps. The camps were surrounded by barbed wire fence and deep trenches aimed at cutting communication ties with members of the *MauMau* group led by Dedan Kimathi. It is estimated that about 13,000 Kenyans and about 100 white settlers were killed by 1956.

2.1.2. Kenyan Independence and Post - Independence

In 1952 African members were elected to the Legislative Council through a direct election. 1959 marks the release of Kenyatta from detention in Kapenguria. Kenyatta continued with campaign for freedom while under house arrest. In 1960, the colonial government announced plans to transfer power to a democratically elected government. In 1962, the Lancaster constitution conference was held in London where the first Kenyan constitution was made. Kenya achieved internal self-government in June 1st 1963. Kenya was declared a Republic on December 12th 1963 with Jomo Kenyatta as the first president. Kenyatta died in 1978 and Daniel Arap Moi took over.

In 1982, the Kenyan constitution was amended declaring that the country is a one party state. By late and early 90s, campaign for multiparty system grew strong. (*wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*)

2.2. Critical Views on *Petals of Blood* and *Devil on the Cross*

Petals of Blood, largely deals with the scepticism of change after Kenya's liberation from the British Empire, questioning to what extent free Kenya merely emulates, and subsequently perpetuates the oppression found during its time as a colony. Other themes include the challenging of capitalism politics and the effects of modernization. Education, schools, and the Mau Mau rebellion are also used to unite the characters, who share a common history with one another. (*wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*)

Petals of Blood is the fourth novel written by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, who is more commonly known simply as Ngugi. The novel describes the inequality, hypocrisy, and betrayal of peasants and workers in post-independence Kenya. As with Ngugi's other works, many of the events depicted in the novel have their basis in historical and social fact. The work is a damning indictment of the corruption and greed of Kenya's political, economic, and social elite who, after the struggle for freedom from British rule, have not returned the wealth of the land to its people but rather perpetuate the social injustice and economic inequality that were a feature of colonial oppression. In addition to criticizing this neocolonialism, the novel is also a bitter critique of the economic system of

capitalism and its destructive, alienating effects on traditional Kenyan society. (<http://www.enotes.com/petals-blood/introduction>)

Ngugi writes *Devil on the Cross* with the intention to address the task of decolonizing the African mind. He has been pre-eminent amongst those recent African writers seeking actively to decolonize African cultures. His project involves a decisive shift of language regime, from the ex-colonial languages, as a principal means of expression. In connection to this idea, Griffiths (2000:213) states the following:

It is as such polemic as novel, and it is the first text in which Ngugi implemented his beliefs that the use of European language perpetuates the neo-colonialist domination of Africa by consolidating hegemonic cultural power, a case he has argued extensively in critical accounts over the last two decades. This is an extreme example of the degree to which modern African discourse, in both English and European languages, has been saturated with external references through both Christian and Islamic influences, a body of influences which remains largely unexplored. To struggle that contemporary indigenous language discourses do not include this appropriated bodies of reference would be grossly inaccurate, and Ngugi does not make that mistake. (2000:213)

Ngugi believes that one way to reject the culture of imperialism is to stop using their language. In *Decolonizing the Mind* (1986), he argues for literature which is firmly and clearly committed to political change, and like his later fiction and drama are grounded in his conviction that international capitalism and its attendant neo-colonialism are primarily cause of the poverty of the mass and corruption of values and culture in Kenya. Innes (2001:131).

His reasons for rejecting English and taking up Gikuyu are presented in the series of essays gathered in *Decolonizing the Mind*. He rejects the language of the colonizers as the most powerful vehicle through which the colonizers' power fascinated and held the soul prisoner. The bullet was the means of physical subjugation. Language was the means of spiritual subjugation (1986:9)

Kelly Wadson, on the other hand, gives the following comments concerning *Devil on the Cross*:

Ngugi's damning portrait of post-colonial Kenya. Written on toilet paper while its author was detained in prison, Devil on the Cross is a searing indictment of Kenyan Politics and Society. In many ways, Ngugi's goal was reminiscent of Marxist ideology, as the novel is ultimately meant to educate Kenya on the corruption of the government and the power of non-compliance within such a representative system. The central event in the novel is the 'Devil's Feast' a sort of conference in which Kenya's elite boast of their cutthroat achievements. (Journal of African Literature 2004:29)

In allegorical form; the Devil's Feast attests to the exploitation of peasants and workers by foreign business interests and greedy indigenous bourgeois.

2.2.1. Earlier Research Works

In his doctoral dissertation (2009), Fiseha Tesfu, has made a critical analysis of *Petals of Blood* (1977) based on the ideological perspectives of three historical periods: pre-colonial, Colonial and Post-colonial. The study demonstrates that in ideological studies, the link between the past and the present is essential in that it has its own role in shaping the ideology of the present. According to him, the study of ideology in the post-colonial period should necessarily involve other historical periods that serve as a backdrop to current ideological thinking. He has critically analyzed *Petals of Blood* from the ideological statements of the three periods.

At undergraduate degree level, there are two research studies: *Socialist Realism in Petals of Blood* by Berehe Tilaye and *The Politics of Protest in Petals of Blood* by Wondimu Seyum, but these researchers have not touched upon the major thematic issues depicted in the novel, and the studies are also limited in scope.

The writer of this paper, therefore, feels that this study is different from the previously mentioned works in that for one thing it is a comparative analysis. On the other hand, the study focuses on major thematic preoccupations of the writer in the period termed as Post- Independence Disillusionment as experienced by the people of Kenya and depicted

in the two novels under study, in the development of African literature. Thus, in this study an attempt has been made to address major issues that have not been touched upon by the previous research works.

2.2.2. Biography and Works of the Author

As per the information obtained from, *wikipedia- the free encyclopedia*, Ngugi, as he is generally referred to as one of Africa's most accomplished and well-known novelists, lecturers and social activists. Emerging out of the turbulent climate of African independence and post-independence in the 1950s and 1960s, his linguistic and political views are controversial. His works include the novels *Weep Not Child* (1964), *The River Between* (1963), *Grain of Wheat* (1967), *Petals of Blood* (1977), and *Devil on the Cross* (1982)

2.2.2.1. From James Ngugi to Ngugi wa Thiong'o

Ngugi named as James Ngugi was born in 1938 in British-ruled Kenya. He came of age during the Mau Mau war of independence (1952-1963), which led to the end of British colonial rule. The formation of modern Kenya is a major theme in his early works.

Ngugi attended mission-run schools and was a devout Christian, later rejecting the religion and changing his name, which he regarded as the sign of colonial influences to Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Soon after he declared that he would not write in English anymore, choosing to write only in Swahili and Gikuyu, the language of his ethnic group, the Kikuyus.

Ngugi earned his Bachelor's degree in Uganda at Makerere University College, and a Masters degree in Leeds, England. He returned to Kenya in 1967, becoming a lecturer in English literature at the University of Nairobi. (*wikipedia- the free encyclopedia*)

2.2.2.2. Politics and Persecution

Ngugi has been an outspoken critic of colonial rule, Christianity, and also the post-colonial abuses of Kenyan authorities. His decisions to reject English and write in Gikuyu, together with his political views, have at several times threatened his security. In 1977 the vice president of Kenya had Ngugi detained in prison for the publication of a

political play, entitled *Naga hika Ndeenda* (–ø I Will Marry When I Wantö). Ngugi was imprisoned for a year, without trial. Ngugi continued to voice criticism against the Moi regime, until when prompting his novel *Devil on the Cross* he learned of their plot to murder him upon his return. He was thus forced into exile in Britian (1982-1989) and then in the United States (1989-2000). (*wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*)

2.3. Thematic Trends of Development in African Literature

Adekunle Olowonmi (2008:1), as cited in *Journal of Pan African Studies*, states that African writers have a deepening susceptibility for social and political commitment as their texts depict socio-political events in their societies. He further explains that modern African literature arose to become part of the larger universal literary space; a weapon for re-establishing the cruelly denigrated African Personality; and an effective slingshot against colonialism. Ayo Kehinde (2004) has also confirmed the widely held view that African literature has always been chained to the experiences of the people of the continent over three historical phases:

Initially, African literature was a tool for celebrating the heroic grandeur of the African past; later it was used for anti-colonial struggle. Presently, it is being employed as a veritable weapon for depicting the post-independence disillusionment in Africa. (Journal of African Studies 2004:1)

Kehine further states that the contemporary African novel is a vast phenomenon. However, that magnitude is perhaps the least of the difficulties facing the critic in attempting to give a fair view of this ever- growing field. This is shown in a brief survey of major trends of development in the history of African literature:

2.3.1. Idealization of the Past (1911-1940)

In his doctoral dissertation, Melakneh (2009) states the following concerning the preoccupations of the writer in the above mentioned historical periods:

The first generation of African writers was generally intent upon re-writing the colonial history and sociology of Africa, with a view to addressing such issues such as how and why the continent was overrun by foreign rules,

what the consequences of the invasion were , whether pre-colonial African societies were characterized by savagery and thus needed the “ civilizing” guidance of colonial powers. African writers of this period contend that Africa had advanced systems of economic organization, quasi- democratic political arrangements and well developed cultural institutions.

This phase is characterized by a move against what is often termed as *the White Man's Burden* as a result of which the introduction of Western model curriculum intend to train civil service personnel for colonial bureaucracies replaced traditional initiation practices by tribal chiefs. (Melakneh 2009). In general, literary works produced during this time were devoted to the affirmation and validation of a unique and valuable African identity and the articulation of grievances and complaints against the entrenched order.

2.3.2. Protest against Colonialism (1950-1960s)

Melakneh (2009:74) states that contemporary African writing of all genres was inextricably rooted in the experience of colonial rule as the key tenet of imperialist ideology was to view indigenous cultures and peoples as possessing no values of their own worth perpetuating, thus rendering them prime candidates for the *“civilizing mission”* of Europeans. He further explains that once the cultural nationalist theme was dispensed with, African literature of the late fifties and early sixties began to expose the disastrous socio-economic and cultural impacts of colonialism on the African psyche. According to him, this phase marks the end of the search for roots or the promotion of cultural nationalism and the beginning of political satire. The first two generations of modern African writers thus aimed at establishing the validity of African culture and creating a new heroic myth of the ancestral past.

2.3.3. Post-Independence Disillusionment

Griffiths (2000:143) states that in the mid to late 1960s , a *“period of what has often been called ÷disillusion”* set in for a great deal of West African writing, reflecting the sense of dismay with which the writers confronted the corruption and division in the new post *“independence regimes.”* As has been mentioned in the preceding chapter, the role African writers play in their respective communities, and in the continent as well, is not

only that of a literary artist, but also a political activist. Some critics maintain that the writers' preoccupation only with the past, has given a chance for post-colonial leaders to behave irresponsibly, and exploit the people of the continent in collaboration with their western allies.

Chinua Achebe, for instance, lets the agenda for the texts of celebration and recovery in his first novel, *Things Fall Apart*. He also produced one of the earliest texts of post-independence self-criticism in his examination of corruption among the young Nigerian *been-toes* in *No Longer at Ease* (1960), and followed this with a strong condemnation of post-independence political culture in *A Man of the People* (1966), exemplifying how the work of a single writer may embrace different agendas at different times. (Obiechina 1976)

The people of Africa hoped that political independence would solve all social problems and create fuller life for everyone, but the reverse has happened in the continent. Instead of peace and stability, the continent is plunged into an endless period of political and economic crisis. The problem is exacerbated with the appointment of the new black power as leaders of the continent by assuming seats vacated by the colonialists. The lot of the common people did not improve. Labor exploitation, political chaos, military *coup de'tat* have become one of the prominent features of African governments.

Faced with the new realities of power and politics in Africa, the writers have had to reprise their role in society. The preoccupation with the past had to give place to concerns with the pressing problems of the present. Some writers now think their interest in the past was diversionary and wasted resources that could have been more fruitfully expended on the present. There is lack of vital relevance between the literary concerns of writers and the pattern of reality that have overwhelmed even the writers themselves in the majority of modern African states. The writer is the visionary of his people and he recognizes past and present not for the purpose of enshrinement but for the local creative glimpses and statement of the ideal future. (Ayo Kehide 2004)

Besides, Emanuel Obiechina (1976:121) states the following concerning post-independence disillusionment and the role of the writer:

From the 1940s, then the nationalist movements got underway in Africa, the people were brought to believe that political independence would usher in the millennium, solve all social problems, and create a fuller life for everyone. So much was promised and so little was to be realized, indeed was realizable, given the shortness of vision and the immensity of the difficulties, that disillusionment was bound to set in. From the late 1950s when formal independence was conceded by some of the imperialist powers.

The substitutes, black African leaders made extravagant promises to improve the lives of the general mass, but when it came to fulfillment of the promises, a gulf separated fulfillment from hope. Within a few years of independence the hopes collapsed and disillusionment set in. The new black elites could not bring about any change in the life of the ordinary people. The burden of life became heavier on the poor. The political machinery which was set up at independence broke down, and there were instabilities attended by coups and counter-coups with extensive violence. Between 1960 and 1968 alone, states Emanuel Obiechina (1976), there were twenty-five unconstitutional changes of government in Africa, of which eighteen were military coups and others were military-inspired. This is a clear indication that post-colonial African leaders are not performing their duties in accordance with the pledges they made by the time they sworn in as presidents.

Obiechina (1976:120), further states that the root cause for all socio-economic and political instabilities is the alienation of the intellectuals, especially writers and artists, from the politicians and bureaucratic class which run the post-independence political and economic machinery. It is even being said that preoccupation with the past provided a cover for the post-independence elites to carry on irresponsibly and corruptly. This view is strongly held by Wole Soyinka and formed the core of his paper presented at the *African Scandinavian Writers' Conference* in Stockholm in 1967 on the theme of "The Writers in Modern Africa". Here is part of the essay as cited in . Obiechina (1976:120):

In the movement towards chaos in Africa, the writer did not anticipate. The understanding language of the outside world, òbirth painsö, that near- fatal euphemism for death throes, absolved him from responsibility. He was content to turn his eyes backwards in time and prospect in archaic fields for forgotten gems which would dazzle and distract the present. But never in words, never truly into the present, never into the obvious symptoms of niggling, warning, predictable present from which alone say the salvation of ideas.

Wole Soyinka, as indicated in the same source, maintains that there is lack of vital relevance between the literary concerns of writers and the pattern of reality that has overwhelmed even the writers themselves in the majority of modern African states, later he accuses African writers of an inability to respond with vision to the disturbing and disastrous events which were taking place before them. He states the following as an awakening call to all writers in the continent:

The stage at which we find ourselves is the stage of disillusionment, and it is this which prompts an honest examination of what has been the failure of the African writer, as a writer. And this is not to say that, if the African writer had responded to the political moment of his society, he would not still be found with disillusionment. For the situation in Africa today is the same as in the rest of the world; it is not one of the tragedies which come out of isolated human failures, but the very collapse of humanity. Nevertheless, the African writer had done nothing to vindicate his existence, nothing to indicate that he is even aware that this awful collapse has taken place. For he has been generally without vision. (Obiechina 1976:121)

From the passage quoted above, one can conclude that African literary artists shall gear their literary works towards the current pressing problems of the peoples of the continent for the situation in Africa today is in the rest of the world. Simply, cursing the colonial system or discussing the continent's past, when there are a great deal of pressing issues worth discussing, does not benefit the people of the continent. Since the

writer is the visionary of the society, he/she should discuss in their literary works, the contemporary issues of their respective societies rather than talking about irrelevant issues. Some of the contemporary issues worth discussing in the socio-political and economic situations of the new born Africa states are corruption, misgovernance, the plight of women, imperialism, neo-colonialism, class-formation, resistance, opposition, liberation movements and so on.

At the *UNESCO* conference on "Colonialism and the Artist's Milieu", in Darassalam, Wole Soyinka, defines the task of the writer in the modern African Setting as follows:

The writer is the visionary of his people, he recognizes past and present not for the purpose of enshrinement but for the local creative glimpses and statement of the ideal future. He anticipates, he warns. It is not always enough for the writer to be involved in the direct political struggle of today, he often cannot help but envisage and seek to protect the future which is the declared aim of the contemporary struggle.

2.3.3.1. Political Corruption

Online sources indicate that political corruption in the post-colonial government of Kenya has had a history which spans the era of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi's KANU governments to the Mwai Kibaki's NARC government. In the Corruptions Perceptions Index 2005 Kenya is ranked 144th out of 159 countries for corruption. It is estimated, the average urban Kenyan pays 16 bribes per month. Before the year 1995, any discussion of corruption in Kenya remained muted, almost subversive. While many know the corruption was endemic and was rising at such a rate that it threatened to tear the entire socio-economic and political fabric of society apart, it was important particularly for those in official circles to openly discuss it. (*wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*)

As indicated in the same website, poor governance is the single most significant development challenges affecting Africa. Without progress in governance, all other reforms will have limited impact. Corruption, therefore, should be the central concern:

the widespread prevalence of corruption undermines efforts to improve governance yet improved governance is essential to reduce the scope for corruption.

2.3.3.2. Social Class Stratification

In class societies like Africa, culture, art and literature take on class character where literature is fully implicated as evince of a consciousness that seems to conserve society on behalf of privileged interests or in contrast , exude a revolutionary consciousness congruent with the objective interests of the oppressed class engaged in class struggle to change the status quo. (*Journal of Pan African Studies 2006:5*)

As is stated in *wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, class struggle is the active expression of a theoretical *class conflict* looked at from any kind of socialist perspective. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, leading ideologists of communism, wrote "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle". Marx's notion of class has nothing to do with *social class* in the sociological sense in terms of quantitative income or wealth. Instead, in an age of capitalism, Marx describes an economic class.

According to him, membership in a class is defined by one's relationship to the means of production, i.e., one's position in the social structure that characterizes capitalism. Marx talks mainly about two classes in the vast majority of the population, the proletariat and the bourgeois. He further states that the main struggle is between *labor* (the proletariat or workers), including anyone who earns their livelihood by selling their labor power and *capitalists* (the bourgeois and the capitalists), including anyone who gets their income not from labor as much as from the *surplus value* they appropriate from the workers who create wealth. The income of the capitalist, therefore, is based on the *exploitation* of the workers. The proletariats have little choice but to work for capital, since they typically have no independent way to survive.

What Marx tries to point out is that members of each of the two main classes have interests in common. These class or collective interests are in conflict with those of other class as a whole. This will in turn lead to conflict between individual members of different classes. He maintains that not all class struggle is a threat to capitalism, or even

to the authority of an individual capitalist. A narrow struggle for higher wages by a small sector of the working class (what is often called *õ economismö*) hardly threatens the *status quo*.

Class struggle becomes more important in the historical process as it becomes more general, as industries are organized rather than crafts, as workersø class consciousness rises, and as they are organized as political parties. Marx referred to this as the progress of the proletariat from being a class *õin itselfö* (a position in the social structure) to being one *õfor itselfö* (an active and conscious force that could change the world). He further explains that the conflict is central to the social structure of capitalism and cannot be abolished without replacing the system itself. If the conflict is not counteracted by the increasing political and economic organization by workers, it would inevitably cause an extreme polarization of the class, encouraging the *revolution* that would destroy capitalism itself.

Marx, finally remarks the revolution would lead to a socialist society in which the proletariat controls the state. Even after a revolution, the two classes would struggle, but eventually the struggle would recede and the class dissolves.

2.3.3.3. Resistance and Decolonization

One of the preoccupations of the post ócolonial African literary artists is outwardly opposition and resistance against the external forces and neo-colonialism, and inwardly against the governments and social process of the post-independence regimes, many of whom have been accused of acting simply as agents for those external forces. Griffith (2000:172) groups such texts into two main positions: Political texts which seek to oppose and expose corruption and injustice in modern African life since independence; and texts which directly address the influence of neo-colonial forces on the form of government and society in post- independence Africa. He further states that this is a shift away from a concern with the impact of colonization and historical past towards an examination of socio-economic and political problems characterized the writing from the late 1970s:

The writers who addressed these new issues were generally born a decade or so later than the first generation of writers. The shift of concern can be described in both regions (West and East) and in most of the genres, suggesting that the disillusionment with the post independence regimes it reflects was very widespread. The shift of theme and concern can be seen to affect the style of writing, too, as writers sought to find forms which appeal to a wider, mass audience, and involve them in the struggle against the corruption, inequalities and privileges of the new elite (Griffith 2000:172)

In the post independence Africa , since the focus of the writer has turned from criticizing the past into the pressing problems of the present, the literary works that are written within the mentioned period are often termed as *social realistic*; either a novel or any other literary genre for that matter. The literary works are specifically concerned with the life of the new post ócolonial underclass. Most of the texts, including the ones the researcher has selected to critically examine, depict the unimaginable gap in living standard between the few elites or government leaders and the down trodden , who are forced to live in highly miserable conditions, owing to inefficient economic policies and selfish behavior of the political elites. Their works are allegorical in that the literary personae and episodes in the literary works are symbolic representations of real people or events in the referent societies. (wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

The young generations of African writers embrace a more radical position, emphasizing that artists need to be in direct contact with the people and to reflect specific struggle at the lower level. The work of the writers is tied to an agenda which stressed the need for art to return to its traditional role of directly influencing the ethical and social decision-making process by addressing the ordinary people. It was not only depicting the socio-economic realities of the time that the writers are concerned with, they also attempt to decolonize the African mind. Some writers believe that one way to oppose the cultural influence of the imperialists is to stop using their language. In relation to this idea, Griffith (2000:211) states the following:

Ngugi wa Thiongø has been pre-eminent amongst those recent African writers seeking actively to decolonize African cultures. Nigugi's project involves a decisive shift of language regime from the ex-colonial languages to indigenous languages, as the principal means of expression. Other writers before and since, such as Anta Diop, Ayi Kwei Armah, Obi Wali, Obi Wali, Wole Soyinka and Tabarolo Liyong have also called for a return to African languages for writing. (2000:211)

Wole Soyinka and Ayi Kwei Armah have both at times called for the use of Ki-Swahili as an international lingua franca for Africa, unlike Ngugi, they do not wholly reject the use of English, and continued to write their own language works in that language. What makes Ngugi special is that he has acted by renouncing English in favor Gikuyu and Ki-Swahili, his mother tongue and the lingua franca of much East African countries respectively. His recent plays and novels have all been written in Gikuyu, which should preclude them from detailed study in a volume on English writing but since they have all been translated into English (some by the author himself), and since they have had a wide influence on the practice and criticism of English language writing across Africa (Griffith 2000). The recent Gikuyu ó language texts of Ngugi present one of the most determined attempts to resist the ongoing forces of neo-colonialism, and to construct an alternative decorating mode for fiction. They belong specifically to what has been called resistance literature that is literature dedicated to instructing the mass and calling for their participation in the struggle against opposition.

2.3.3.4. Politics of Liberation

A. Appadori, as cited in the *Journal of Pan African literature* defines politics as the science concerned with the state and of the conditions essential to its existence and development. In life we desire to think and act as we like; and at the same time, we cannot have our own way because we live in a society. There are always conflicts between our desires and those of others. Hans J. Morgenthau, on the other hand, sees politics asö the authoritative allocation of resources.ö Here politics is seen in terms of power which is also a means to an end and an end in itself. Power is also the ability to

influence others in one's interest. Power is therefore, a component of politics the ruling class uses effectively to maintain and sustain their hegemony.

From the foregoing, one can clearly observe that the way a society is organized; the operation of its machinery of power; how and by whom that power has been achieved, the class configuration and maintenance of power; and the ends to which the power is put are all issues in domain of politics. there could be two forms of politics: a politics that holds back the advance of humanity and the one that enhances it for the benefit and improvement of humanity. The latter politics is that of resistance against all forms of pressure and forces which stifle and inhibit the full realization and development of potentialities of human beings; thus , a politics that questions the status quo and the hegemony of the exploitative ruling class and frees the masses of the people in the process. (Journal of Pan African Studies 2006:2)

On the other hand, liberation is an arm or product of resistance, and according to Gustavo Gutierrez (as cited in *Journal of Pan African Studies*), it expresses the aspirations of the oppressed peoples and social classes emphasizing the conflict aspects of the economic, social, and political process which puts them at odds with wealthy nations and oppressed classes. Liberation is attained when the people are said to be truly free; when they control all the tools, instruments the means of their physical, economic, political, cultural and psychological being. Put differently, when the people control the means and context of their integrated survival and development they are considered liberated.

2.3.3.5. Gender Inequality

Traditional African culture clearly shows the different roles of men and women in the society. Ugo Daniels (2007), as cited in *wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, states that by today's standards, traditional African culture is not fair to women. It indicates that women's place is in the kitchen and man's place is in the hunting and fighting fields. He further states that women are victims of injustice in the traditional African society not

because of what they do them but because of what the society does not do to them. Previously, gender inequality was not rampant in the African traditional society. It is in fact less than today, currently both in Africa and elsewhere in the world; gender inequality seems to be blossoming. Injustice against women seems to be on the increase. (*wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*)

As the plight of women, under the neo-colonial leadership of Africa leaders is one of the major issues raised in both novels, it will be appropriate to give a little background information about the status of women after independence. Post-colonial feminists argue that the oppression relating to the colonial experience, particularly racial, class and ethnic oppression is the primary source of patriarchy; an ideology that advocates the dominance of men over women. Post-colonial feminists object to the portrayals of Western women as modern, educated, and empowered. (<http://wikipedia>)

On the other hand, Helen Afshar(1996), writes the following concerning post-colonial women:

Much of western feminists state theory has largely ignored the experience of third world women under the post-colonial state. Often the assumptions made are Western-centered but the theorizing takes a universalizing language. Similarly, some of the theories of the 'developmental state' (as opposed to theories of development in general) have developed in gender blind and sometimes orientalist ways, and ignore the particular relationship that women in the third world find themselves in the post-colonial state.

In general, post- colonial feminism emerged from the gendered history of colonialism in that women have been mistreated and considered as objects of male-gaze, not as someone capable of self-determined actions. Colonial powers often imposed Western norms on colonial regions. Post-colonial feminists today struggle to fight gender oppression within their own cultural modes of society rather than through those imposed by Western colonizers.

Anne, as cited in *wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, tries to bring a feminist voice to critical pedagogy. In doing so she explores how current debates about education contribute to the radical feminist thoughts. She suggests that the time is to come up with alternative sites of learning to guide the future of feminism. Rejecting women, according to her, is a crisis in contemporary politics and democracy. She further states that democracy is at stake- women are of the hardest hit by the neo-colonial assault on the public sphere.

Feminist literary criticism has a particular relevance in a post-colonial context. Though both colonialism and patriarchy have been closely entwined historically, an end to formal empire has not meant an end to oppression of women in the formal colonies. On a literary level, post-colonial feminists point to the ways in which women continue to be stereotyped and marginalized, ironically by post-colonial authors who might themselves claim to be challenging the culture of oppression. ([http: exploringafrica](http://exploringafrica))

In a nut shell, the new government committed itself to bring about greater equality, yet it is the government officials themselves who are far above the masses in education, income, social status and political power; hence the officials will be the first to suffer losses from any leveling reforms they may institute. This conflict of interest proved difficult but not impossible to resolve. When we see the above mentioned theoretical discussions with regards to the two novels, we can see Ngugi's concern and commitment to disclose the political anomalies in the new born Kenya. As a committed artist in the arena of African literature, he tries to liberate the people of Kenya from the exploitative and oppressive rule of imperialism and post independence African political elites. Therefore, under the following sections and subsections an attempt has been made to critically examine post independence disillusionment as depicted in the two literary works under the study. Specifically, political corruption, social class stratification, gender inequality, and politics of resistance and liberation which are the major thematic concerns of the author in both novels, have been critically examined. (*wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*)

Chapter Three: Critical Analysis of the two Novels

In this chapter, analytical reading and interpretation on Ngugi's novels, *Petals of Blood* (1977) and *Devil on the Cross* (1982) has been done. The critical analysis mainly deals with post independence disillusionment and political depravity with reference to the two novels. To be more specific, an attempt has been made first to critically examine the two novels separately, and then draw an analogy between them taking into account the most pertinent issues that the writer deals with in both works under study: political corruption, social class stratification, gender inequality, and politics of resistance and liberation are the major preoccupations of the writer in both works. So in the following subsections an attempt has been made to examine the discourse of post-independence disillusionment and the thematic preoccupations of the author in the two novels under study.

3.1. Synopsis of *Petals of Blood*

In *Petals of Blood* (1977), Ngugi teaches the people of Kenya in particular and all Africans under the rule of imperialism, and its recent manifestation, neo-colonialism that imperialism can never develop Kenya in particular and Africa in general. During the launching of the book, as cited in the *Journal of African Studies*, the author was asked as to what has urged him to write the novel, he said the following:

“Imperialism can never develop a country or people. This is what I was trying to show in Petals of Blood that imperialism can never develop us, Kenyans. In doing so , I was only trying to be faithful to what Kenyan workers and peasants have always realized as shown by their historical struggle since 1895”

The novel begins in the present with four major characters- Wanja, Abdulla , Munira and Karega in jail. Because they are suspected of burning to death, three African directors of the Theng'eta brewery ó Mzigo , Chui and Kimera. The whole story comes to life from Munira's notes in the cell while writing notes to satisfy the demands of the investigator police officer. Thus, from the present the story moves twelve years back to when Munira came to Ilmorog as a teacher in Ilmorog Primary School. The novel deals with neo-colonialism in all its manifestations: oppression, exploitation, social abuse and injustice.

The scene of most of the novel is the community of Ilmorog which grows from a traditional African village into a modern industrial complex.

3.1.1. Political Corruption in *Petals of Blood*

Petals of Blood is highly critical of the contemporary political system in Kenya; the novel deals with the issue of rampant corruption in the referent society. There are various instances in the novel that show the corruption of the government elites. An MP, for instance, is normally meant to speak on behalf of the people he represents in times of trouble or happiness, but in this novel we can see an MP, Nderi wa Riera, who nominally represents the constituency of Ilmorog, running after his own personal gains while the people whom he is supposed to represent, by the time they are in desperate need of his help, suffer from hunger and famine. Once elected by the people, he does not even turn his face towards Ilmorog; the once rich and prosperous town which used to feed its people and herds hit by a severe draught due to lack of rainfall. The people and the domestic animals die of hunger. When they have got nothing to do the hungry peasants decide to go to Nairobi, the capital, to report the situation to their representative in the parliament.

'We have come' said Njuguna, 'because we know you are our son. There is no house with a male child where the head of a he-goat shall not be eaten. For the last six months we have been waiting rains in Ilmorog. Our cattle and goats have started dying. We have eaten the last grains of maize from the last harvest season. So we put our heads together and said: we have a son whose mouth is close to the ears of our government. (P.180)

In principle, it is an MP who is supposed to go to the people of his constituency and find out their problem, but in this novel we can see people traveling miles and miles away from their area of residence to Nairobi, spending nights outside, in search of their MP. The delegation consists of women, elderly men, youngsters and children as well.

This can be a good testimony of the then political system in Kenya, where the people look for the government to solve their problems, not the government knowing the plight

of the people. Nderi, finds it hard to believe when the hungry peasants come to his office in Nairobi, he rather thinks as if someone is plotting to bring him down from his position. As an MP, he is supposed to work towards the development of Ilmorog ; equipping the town with social facilities such as school, healthcare centers, and infrastructure facilities as well. However, after being elected, he never returns to Ilmorog. The luxuries in Nairobi make him forget about his hometown and the people who vote for him as their representative.

In a country known to have followed a capitalistic system of democracy, Ilmorog, a town only a few kilometers away from the capital, remains without even proper schooling for a long time. Little children, who are old enough to start up schooling, remain shepherds as there is neither school nor teachers in Ilmorog. The school depicted in the referent society is Ilmorog Primary School. Teachers who are assigned to work in the school never want to stay as the school is devoid of teaching materials and no proper classrooms as well. We can also see in the novel that the road leading to Ilmorog is also badly damaged. The school itself was a four-roomed barrack with broken mud walls, a thin roof with gaping holes and more spider webs and the wings and heads of dead flies. Was it any wonder that teachers ran away at first glance? (p.5). therefore, what is the point in being an MP if one is not making any contribution towards the development of the people he represents.

We can see in the novel that when life becomes difficult, the people, especially young men and women, migrate to nearby cities and towns in search of work. Young men and women have left us the glittering metal has called them. They go, and the young women only return now and then to deposit the newborn with their grand mother already aged scratching this earth. (P.180). The worst of all that shows the weakness of Capitalistic Democracy, and the political set-up is the fact that the people do not even remember the name of their MP because the MP does not know anything about the people of his constituency nor do the people. Some could not even remember his name. They had heard of him during the last elections. He had visited the area to ask to be given votes. He had made several promises. He had even collected two shillings from each household in his constituency. (P.18). This indicates that The public officials, especially MPs, make a lot of pledges even collect some money from the poor peasants until they are

elected, but once they assume the power they usually don't get time to think about the people who elects them.

In the novel, Ngugi, also tries to show the difference between corrupt officials and committed citizens of his country, using Munira and his good works as an example. Munira, in spite of the fact that he is born to a wealthy father, he never wants to be his father's servant as he strongly opposes the system of imperialism. He expresses his willingness to work as a teacher in Ilmorog Primary school despite the fact that the school is devoid of material and personal needs for a teaching purpose. Being a teacher and a principal as well he builds up the school from the scratch. Mozigo, head of the education bureau for Ilmorog and other nearby districts, never wants to pay a visit to the school, but he earns his salary plus other personal benefits for being a manager and supervisor of the schools in the district, one of which is Ilmorog Primary school.

This can also be a good testimony of the political depravity in the referent country where public officials do not discharge their responsibilities in accordance with their obligation. When teachers refuse to work in the school due to lack of proper facilities, and students return to their villages, leaving school to help their parents as shepherds, Mozigo does not know anything about all this. This shows that after assuming a given post, the public officials never care to see the work being done at rural areas, they confine themselves in big cities and towns and their perception of work is limited to the office environment. When Munira first comes to Ilmorog to work as a teacher, the people cannot believe it; they think that he will go back like others after some time, but upon seeing his commitment and dedication to educate their children, they begin to love him. Actually, his life would have been better off if he wanted to manage his father's business, but he hates the path that brought his father into imperialism. They could see his readiness to stay in his eyes which could not carry restlessness: the others had always carried wanting-to-run away eyes once they had the slightest complaint they always went away in a hurry and never returned. (p.16). Hence, his willingness and commitment to stay and work with the forgotten people shows that there are some who would like to build their country in spite of widespread corruption and misgovernance in the country.

The other instance in the novel that shows the corruption of the government elites is the shameless deeds of the government; sending tax collectors even by the time Ilmorog is hit by a severe draught and people flee their homestead in search of food. Normally a tax is collected from people so that it can be used to fulfill basic facilities for the residents from whom the money is collected. But in this novel we can see hard-hearted tax collectors coming to collect money from hungry people. In the neo-colonialist system of governance, the officers feel that because their stomach is full, others may not become hungry. The officer began writing a tax receipt for Abdullaí (P.251). KCO-Kamewene Cultural Organization is the other means of collecting money from the poor, by using creating peace and harmony among the rich and the poor as a pretext. Anyone who comes to attend the meeting of the organization is expected to come up with twelve shillings and fifty cents. This is also an indication that the corrupt officials do not even hesitate to sell the peasant farmers alive if it fetches them money.

All such evil acts are orchestrated by African middle-men or the so called MPs and lower level public officials. Nderi wa Riera, the MP for Ilmorog, for instance, is the biggest share-holder of the Cultural Tourist Center, in which women young girls, were being recruited to satisfy any Watalie's physical whim. (p.334)- Consequently encouraging the spread of prostitution and women's economic dependence on men. The more promising, those who seemed to acquire an air of sophistication with a smattering of English and German were lured to Europe as slave whores from Africa .. this lucrative trade in black ivory was done with the knowledge of Nderi wa Riera, the Mp for the area (p335). The cultural tourist center is not only where Kenyan girls sell their body, but also a venue for the exploitation of Kenya's natural resources. Therefore, the imperialists, using modernization and commercialization as a pretext they disrupt the peaceful way of existence of the people and build hell for the people of Kenya. The life of the people would have been better off before the introduction of the spirit of modernization into the continent.

3.1.2. Social Class Stratification in *Petals of Blood*

In *Petals of Blood* (1977), Ngugi, presents the most comprehensive analysis to date of the evils perpetrated by the imperialists in the new born Kenyan society. One of the outcomes of imperialism and capitalist political system is the emergence of class society, in which we can clearly see the dominant holding the upper class and the dominated assuming lower positions in every aspect. The scene of most of the events of the novel is the community of Ilmorog that grows from a traditional African village into a modern industrial complex. We can understand from the story that Ilmorog is once a truly peasant community untouched by Western values. However, with the penetration of imperialism with its distorting influence and the intrusion of imperialist values the glory of the town begins to decline.

Ilmorog , the scene of the unfolding of this drama, had not always been a small cluster of mud huts lived in only by old men and women and children with occasional visits from wandering herds-men. It had had its days of glory: thriving villages with a huge population of sturdy peasants who had tamed nature's forests and, breaking the soil between their fingers, had brought forth every type of crop to nourish the sons and daughters of men. How they toiled together, clearing the wilderness, cultivation, planting: how they all fervently prayed for rain and deliverance..... (p120)

It is after the introduction of imperialistic ideology that the glory of the town begins to decline. As life becomes harder, the peasant farmers, especially the men flee their homestead in search of food. The construction of the railway line that is intended to make easy the exploitation of the country's resources, results in a great damage to the forest vegetation cover of the town, consequently causing draught and famine to the residents, and there happens a high class difference among the peasant population and the imperialists.

Public officials like Nderi, Mozigo and Chui, who are supposed to protect the general mass from capitalist exploitation, become agents of the imperialists themselves, and move in their development projects: roads, banks, factories, distilleries and housing

estates. These developments quickly destroy the fabric of traditional Ilmorog; the farm areas, on which the livelihood of the peasants depends, become a real estate construction site and industrial zone. Most peasants are forced to evacuate their homestead into far desert areas and some are forced to work as daily laborers in the newly built industries. The destruction of the mysterious spirit Mwathi, the spirit that keeps the Ilmorog society live in harmony for ages, by a giant bulldozer is a concrete example of the disgrace of a once proud community, by the ravaging forces of modernization. The helpless peasant communities lose their lands and other belongings to the Black imperialists and to their international principals.

Being unable to resist the oppressive forces of neo-colonialism, the New Ilmorog divides into class lines; there is the residential area of the farm managers, country council officials, the managers of Barclays, and African Economic Banks, and other servants of state and money power and this is called Cape Town, while New Jerusalem is reserved for the downtrodden. Prostitution, social inequalities, misery, uncertainty and inadequate housing becomes a common feature of life in the New Jerusalem.

3.1.3. The Plight of Women in *Petals of Blood*

The plight of women under the leadership of the neo-colonial system is the other major issue that has been widely discussed in both novels. After independence, the people expected that there may come a change and progress in the life of women, but we can see in these novels that women's life becoming miserable owing to irresponsible behavior of some bourgeois in the referent country.

In *Petals of Blood*, for example, we can see that when life in the rural areas gets harder, because of the system of imperialism, girls in particular and the peasant population in general flee their homestead in search of better life in the nearby towns and cities, where they will be used as sex-slaves by the local bourgeois and their capitalist masters. The bourgeois need the girls only until they conceive; once they get pregnant, they will look for another girl in substitution. This is to mean that women are considered not as creatures capable of self-determined actions, but as only objects of male gaze. So after

they get pregnant, the girls will have to go back to their parents to deposit children whose fathers are not known, and consequently adding additional problem on their parents who are already suffering from an abject poverty.

“Our young men and women have left us. The glittering metal has called them. They go, and the young women only return now and then to deposit the newborn with their grandmothers already aged with scratching this earth for a morsel of life. They say: there in the city there is room for only one..... our employers, they don't want babies about the tiny rooms in tiny yards.” (p.7)

So be it under the colonial regime or post-colonial, the life of women remains the same. Prostitution and sexual violence against women is still on the rise.

Kimera, one of the Black imperialists, feels that he can buy women with his money. He is the very person who spoils Wanja's childhood by deceiving her into believing that he would marry her and divorce his first wife on account of her love. But after she gets pregnant, he denies it that the baby is not his. Interrupting her education and leaving her parents, Wanja, migrates to a nearby city. After the rich man spoils her life, Wanja, happens to be a barmaid. Not only her but also other girls of her age become prostitutes in big towns after their life is darkened by the irresponsible bourgeois.

Some people even consider women, especially barmaids, a good for nothing beings. For them, a woman is just like a commodity they can purchase from the market. We can verify this fact as Wanja tells one of her unforgettable coincidences as a barmaid to Munira and Abdulla that a person tries to buy her with his money, but she declines. What ñ money, I asked him? Cider, cider he, shouted. I put on my most innocent face and put sugar and honey in my voice. You mean you wanted me last night?ö (p.77). therefore the dominance of the patriarchal ideology can be seen in the novel as almost all men consider themselves as superior.

“ We barmaids never settle in one place. Sometimes you are dismissed because you refused to sleep with your boss. Or your face may become too well known in one place. You want a new territory. Do you know, it is so funny that when you go to a new place the men treat you as if you were a virgin. They will out do one another to buy you beers. Each wants to be the first. (p.129)

After independence, the number of bars highly increases in the new born Kenya and prostitution becomes the only vacant position or a normal way of life for many girls who migrate into the towns being deceived by the bourgeois. By doing so Ngugi is trying to disclose the fact that women, who constitute almost half of the total population of the world, are in a very threatening life condition under the leadership of the Black-white imperialists in Kenya.

In the referent society in which the novel is written, the people believe that women can never be equal to men. They seemed to think that women deserved. Low pay and heavy work: women's real job, they argued amidst noises and laughter was to lie on their backs and open their legs to man's passage to the kingdom of leisure. (p.304). This shows that women's creative ability in science and technology and their contribution for the socio-economic development of one's country has been totally neglected under the imperialist system. They think that a woman deserves low pay and hard works; taking care of children, washing clothes, cooking food and so on. That is to mean, the realm of a woman, according to them, should be limited to the household environment. The fact, that denies women's potential and creative power for the development of our world as a whole.

Ngugi, also has a vision of a self-reliant women in Kenya. The unexpected airplane crash at Ilmorog that costs the life of Abdulla's donkey becomes the cause of Wanja's and Abdulla's progress in business- from a barmaid to a business girl. Upon seeing a crowd of people who flock into Ilmorog to watch the airplane, Wanja comes up with a business idea that if they start selling roasted meat and Thengetaa, they will become rich in a very

short period of time. As she expects, people begin coming to see the airplane from inside and outside of Ilmorog.

She had turned her energy and time after Karega had disappeared, into work She was seized the devil spirit of brewing and selling and counting and hatching out more plants for the progress of her trade/ business partnership with Abdulla. In time she employed three barmaids.....she also hired a band composed entirely of women from many Kenyan nationalities, and this brought more customers flocking to see for themselves. (p.270)

From this extract we can understand that the writer has a vision that if the system is changed, or if imperialism is eradicated from Africa, the life of the women will improve. It is the system that makes the women remain employed, and servants of men.

3.1.4. Politics of Liberation in *Petals of Blood*

In *Petals of Blood*, even though Ngugi later in the novel chooses Karega, the lawyer, Abdulla, and Munira to be the spokespersons of his socialist vision, the politics of resistance in the novel, begins, with Mukami, Munira's younger sister, who at a very early age when she is only a teenager, committed suicide in protest against imperialism, the system that advocates the drinking of human blood and the eating of human flesh. As a young rebellious girl, she critically observes how her own father, Brother Esekieli, exploits helpless peasants using religion as a camouflage in order to win the heart and mind of the peasants. She was of a lively, rebellious spirit (P.13)

Karega, is the other rebellious character depicted in the novel, whose revolutionary spirit develops from the time he is a student at Siriana. During the colonial period, he is known for provoking strike and violence among students at Siriana, opposing the system of schooling in line with the interest of the colonizers. Even after many years when he gets a job as an untrained teacher at Ilmorog, he tries to inculcate in the mind of the students the idea of freedom, the need to move against neo-colonialism.

I am going to tell you about the history of Mr. Blackman in three sentences. In the beginning he had the land and the mind and the soul together. On the second day they took the body away to barter it for silver coins. On the third day, seeing that he was not still fighting back, they brought priests and educators to bind his mind and soul so that these foreigners could more easily take his land and its produce. And now I shall ask you a question. What had Mr. Blackman done to attain the true kingdom of his earth? (p.236)

Ngugi is trying to teach us that religion is one way of incapacitating the African mind not to revolt against imperialism. Since most bourgeois use religious parables in the Christian faith, he educates the people of Africa that they shouldn't be submissive, as religion is the major tool both for the colonizers and neocolonial imperial agents to exploit the continent of its wealth.

Karega, believes that even little children should learn about the need to liberate their country from capitalism, but he faces strong resistance from the principal Munira, that the students should learn only facts not propaganda.

Liberation: no child is ever too young to think about this: it is the only way he can truly experience himself as he collects, breaks, collects, rejects, assimilates and cries to discover himself. We must teach our children to hate all those things to prevent them from loving and to love all those things that make it possible for them to love freely. (p.247)

In here we can see that the movement for liberation is a necessity, not an option for the people of Kenya in particular and Africans in general. When the author uses little children as an example, he is indirectly teaching everyone, including the grown ups and youngsters that they should unite to liberate their country from imperialism.

Using modernization and development as a pretext, the Black imperialists sell the land of the original inhabitants of Ilmorog to the white imperialists. In order to make the selling process seem legal, they sell the land in auction. They give the peasants a bank loan from

African Economic Bank and imported fertilizers, and if the farmers are unable to pay back the loan they sell their land in auction. Wanja's grand mother, Nyakinyua, a heroin and original resident of Ilmorog, who loses her husband during Mau Mau liberation movement, and who proves her strength when Ilmorog is hit by a severe draught by traveling on foot, loses her land in this system. At the beginning the land never needed a fertilizer nor the peasants wanted money. The imperialists simply come into the people using modernization and development as a pretext to exploit the peasants. We can see in the novel a voice of protest that some peasants cannot accept the system of robbery willingly; Nyakinyua, is one of them, with a strong determination to fight against imperialism, even at old age.

*Nyakinyua, the old woman, tried to fight back. She tramped from hut to hut calling upon the peasants of Ilmorog to get together and fight it out. They looked at and they shook their heads: whom would they fight now? The Government? The Banks? KCO? The Party? Nderi? Yes who should they really fight? But she tried to convince them that **all these were one and that she would fight them.** (p.276)*

Because of this incidence the old woman gets sick and dies after a few days, but before her death she confesses that she prefers to be buried on her own land even though it is auctioned for sale to the imperialists for what would her man say when he meets her on the other side..(p. 275).

We can understand from the story that the fight against imperialism should be indiscriminate; the people should protest against the government and other agents in the system as well. The author also teaches the people of Kenya using the characterization of the old woman, that it is time for all Kenyans to free their country or the land that has been systematically occupied by the imperialists. And in doing so he tries to show that liberating the country should be the work of each and every citizen of the country.

In Petals of Blood, the writer also teaches the people that in the struggle against imperialism, the unity of every citizen of the country is mandatory, and they should also take sides because it does not benefit a country if one oscillates here and there like a leaf

on water. So later in the novel, we can learn that being a mid-fielder in the liberation movement is not acceptable. Munira, in spite of the fact that he is born to a wealthy family, and his imperialist father wants him to work as the manager of his business, prefers to work towards the liberation of the poor. From his early age at Siriana Secondary School, he joins a student strike aimed at liberating Kenya from the oppressive rule of the colonizers. His willingness to teach in Ilmorog Primary, a school devoid of every necessary material for teaching, is a good testimony of his dedication to server his people.

Perhaps, by using Munira's characterization as a symbol, Ngugi, is trying to teach the sons and daughters of the bourgeois that they should also join in the struggle to liberate the country. At different times he proves his deep-rooted hatred towards the capitalistic democratic system, he is the very person who burns to death alive Chui, Kimera and Mozigo in Wanja's whorehouse, where the three use Wanja as their mistress coming turn by turn. The three are the well-known bloodsuckers in the new Ilmorog. Even after he is brought to trial, Munira, tries to teach his imperialist father about the need to fight against imperialism and its disciples, including his own father. You õmy fatherí í í í í í . One question, only one question I want to ask you. Do you remember that in 1952 you refused to take the Mau Mau oath for African Land and Freedom? (p.341)

õ And yet in 196_ , after independence, you took an oath to divide the Kenyan people and to protect the wealth in the hands of only few. What was the difference? Was an oath not an oath? Kneel down old man and ask the forgiveness of Christ. In the heaven, in the eyes of God, there are no poor, or rich, this or that tribe, and who have repented are all equal in His eyesí í ö (p341)

The imperialists, including Munira's father, use religion, specifically Christianity, as a major tool of weakening the moral initiative of the oppressed poor, not to protest against them. Even being in a court room Mnira teaches his father that the way his father has been exploiting the poor peasants is unfair and will not have acceptance in the kingdom of God.

By condemning the oppressive system, Ngugi, is indirectly telling the target audience that imperialism cannot develop Kenya (Africa), and that the people should follow socialism, a system in which the workers can reap the fruits of their labor without any parasite feeding on their blood. The author uses Karega, a young revolutionary man, who ends up in prison being suspected of the arson in which the three Black imperialists are burnt to death. At first he works as a head of the workers union of Thengeta Breweries, a factory jointly owned by the three and foreign entrepreneurs as well, but later realizing his commitment to serve the workers party, they elect him as the head of Ilmorog Workers Union.

Upon hearing his imprisonment a crowd of people including workers and peasants march to Ilmorog Police Station, demanding his release.

*“Please disband peacefully. Karega is here for routine questioning..... Disband yourself. Disband the tyranny of foreign companies and their local messengers!” **Out with foreign rule policed by colonized black skins! Out with exploitation of our sweet. (p.4)***

The workers express their heartfelt hatred against the politics of their country and their ambition not to work under the leadership of the oppressors. They demand that exploitation of their sweat shall come to an end now, and that they don't want colonized black leaders to rule their country. In short, Ngugi, tells the reader that imperialism, capitalism and landlords are earthworms. A system that bred hordes of round-bellied jiggers and bedbugs with parasitism and cannibalism as the highest goal in society. This system and its profiteering gods and its ministering angels had bounded his mother to her grave.ö (p.344). therefore, one can easily understand from the general discourse of the novel that imperialism cannot develop Kenya in particular and Africa in general, so it has to be fought consciously, consistently and resolutely by all the working people. Karega has a dream that one day the system that advocates the eating of human flesh and drinking of human blood will be abandoned from the face of the earth. öTomorrowí . tomorrowí í í í í í í .. he knew he was no longer alone.ö (p.345)

3.2. Synopsis of *Devil on the Cross*

In *Devil on the Cross* (1982), Ngugi uses biblical allusions in order to get across the central idea of the novel to the target audience; in the Christian religion, for instance, it is Jesus Christ who is known to have been crucified to save humanity from the kingdom of hell, but as can be understood from the title, it is *Devil*, that is crucified to create hell for the people on earth. The word, 'Devil' is symbolic representing the Western imperialists and the bourgeois, who exploit the people and the country's national resources.

The story begins with a strong emotive statement that gives us a clue to guess the overall message of the whole work. The writer has a firm stand that the people of Kenya in particular and all African nations in general shall embark on a relentless struggle against neo-colonialism, the last stage of imperialism; the system that advocates the drinking of human blood and the eating of human flesh. The 'Devil', who would lead us into the blindness of the heart and the deafness of the mind, shall be crucified, and care shall be taken that his acolytes do not lift him down from the cross to pursue the task of building hell for the people on earth... (p.2). The novel is one of the political satires ever written in the literary arena of African literature in protest against neo-colonialism. As can be seen from the inside cover page of the novel, the writer dedicates the book to all Kenyans struggling against the neo-colonial stage of imperialism. The novel was first written in Gikuyu, the writer's native language, in an attempt to reject the language of the ex-colonizers and decolonize the African mind, but later translated into English by the author himself.

Jacinta Warringa, is the central character in the story. The author uses the ups and downs she experiences in her life in order to get across the central idea of the novel to the target audience. Almost the whole story revolves around the traumatic life she is forced to lead because of the neo-colonial system since childhood. The writer chooses an omniscient narrator, Prophet of Justice (Gicaandi Player), to narrate the whole story, so the story comes to life as being narrated by him.

3.2.1. Political Corruption in *Devil on the Cross*

Devil on the Cross also exposes the plight of the masses and workers due to the corruption and wrong political set-up of the then government. In the novel, the central event is the *Devil's Feast*, in which the Western imperialists' watchdogs give a testimony of how they rob the country and its people of their resources and the fruits of their labor. In other words, the aim of the Feast is to find out which one of the imperialists is most skillful in the art and science of modern theft and robbery. Their discussion in the cave is not concerned with the development of Kenya; it is rather about the development of theft and robbery in the country. From the testimony that the bourgeois give, it is possible to conclude that the source of their economic prosperity lies, not on hard work but cunning; deceiving the mind of the poor. Let us see the testimony of *Gitutu wa Gataanguru*:

..... who has ever become rich through his salary alone? My father never brought his property out of his salary. Cunning did it. Cunning, be my guardian angel. as for these miserable villages shops with their stock of two matchboxes, two packets of cigarettes, tea bags that sell for twenty – five cents per bag, one sack of sugar and another of salt, a tin of cooking oil-whoever grew rich by owing them?(p.120)

In a country known to have pioneered the practice of democracy in Africa, how can there be such an evil act being practiced? In other words, the people cannot reap the fruits of their labor; hard-work becomes a foolish talk in the eyes of the imperialists and their African watchdogs. This shows that capitalistic democracy never benefits the mass, the party of workers and peasants. It is rather a way for few imperialists to prosper in their life. And that money was not be had by the labor of one's hands: it was to be had through the cunning of one's mind. Cunning was more profitable than hard work. (p.130)

The imperialists, themselves do not deny the fact that it is the system of governance or the corruption of the government elites, that provides them with a rich opportunity to accumulate wealth through theft and robbery. I had hardly a cent in my pocket. But

having watched the way the country was moving since the flag had been hoisted high in the sky, I was confident that for as long as I lived I would surely be able to survive.ö (p.103)

Corruption is depicted in the novel as the most lucrative means for MPs to rob the country and its people of the fruit of their labor. The bourgeois, as soon as they accumulate wealth through theft and robbery, their ambition is to become member of the parliament because they know from others' experience that being an MP is the easiest way to rob the country's wealth and the fruits of the people's labor. Leaving aside other means of accumulating wealth we can see in the novel that an MP, using the jurisdiction of his authority, can simply channel the money that comes by the name of the poor peasants into his personal treasury. Therefore, being a member of the parliament, during the then political set-up, is a very lucrative business.

*After I had picked a lot of fruit from the two trees that were watered by the people's thirst for education and their hunger for land, I began to look about me to see which fruit my contemporaries were plucking. I saw that as soon as people accumulated property, they all wanted to enter Parliament. **With my own eyes, I've seen someone sell his farm and auction his very beautiful wife in order to meet his election expenses. I paused to think: what's in this business? (p.114)***

The above excerpt is taken from the long testimony of Kihahu, one of the competitors in the Devil's Feast, who robs the people of Kenya once buying land from the poor and selling it back to the same peasants at an expensive price, and at other times building a fake school and cheat the people into believing that the school is upto a European standard, by using electrically operating mannequins which look like real European. So we can see in the novel that people, who used to rob the country, are still assuming positions as politicians. This shows that the political platform is also reserved for those imperialists with expertise knowledge in cheating and robbery.

On the other hand, a given democratic electoral competition, under the normal circumstance should be peaceful, but we can see in this novel murder, coercion,

intimidation and so on, becoming a means of weakening opposition parties. All these evil acts are committed by the election competitors, not with the intention to serve the country and its people, but rather to maximize one's personal gains

Then I employed a youth wing, whose task was to destroy the property of my opponents and to beat those who murmured complaints about me. I have five opponents. I took two of them aside and bought them aside for 50,000 shillings each. They both made public announcements that they were withdrawing in favor of Gatheeca, the hero. The third opponent refused to be bribed. One night he was kidnapped by two youth wingers and taken to Ruuwa-ini forest, where he was shown the barrel of a gun and told to choose between living and being elected. (p.115)

This is also a good testimony of the political depravity of the government. It shows that the electoral processes are not free, fair, and democratic; it is money that manipulates the whole system: those who possess it will get additional post and become prosperous and others, who do not have it, remain alienated from the arena of politics and governance. So the political platforms are also reserved for only the bourgeois who are financially capable of incapacitating their opponents in the electoral process.

In the novel, it is hinted out that it is the people's behavior that has given a chance for the imperialist and their watchdogs in Africa, to rob as much as they desire without fear of any resistance or opposition. Even the imperialists themselves believe that it is the people's passive nature that encourages them to engage more on theft and robbery. By doing so, Ngugi, communicates an important message to the people that this is the right time for the people to move against the system that robs the fruit of their labor.

That's why I'm very grateful to the masses of the Kenyan people. For their blindness, their ignorance, their inability to demand their rights are what enables us, the clan of man-eaters, to feed on their sweat without their asking us too many awkward questions. (p.117)

Ngugi is also indirectly teaching the general mass that capitalistic democratic system does not benefit them at all, and thus they should oppose it in any way possible.

The bourgeois and government officials are depicted as the imperialist watchdogs whose purpose is to guard foreign investments. The delegates from the seven industrialized countries come to attend the feast in order to choose seven disciples to be their representatives in Kenya. Thieves teach other thieves, robbers to teach other robbers, experts to teach other experts (118). As depicted in the novel, even the delegates from the seven industrialized countries believe that it is not hard work that contributes for the development of their country but theft and robbery. Today we believe in the democracy of theft and robbery, the democracy of drinking the blood and eating the flesh of our workers (88), and this is an indication that the political system is highly corrupted and has no worth for the development of Kenya.

3.2.2. Social Class Stratification in *Devil on the Cross*

Devil on the Cross also shows the class struggle between the poor and the rich, the exploited and the exploiters. It is an allegorical novel in that Ngugi shows the unbridgeable economic gap and living standard between the poor and the rich using symbolisms; the Matatu and the Cave have been used in the novel representing two opposing worlds. The Matatu represents the world of the underprivileged where freedom of speech is not guaranteed. Thus it represents the lower class striving to bring about freedom for the country as represented by characters like Wangari, Gatuaria, and Wariinga, and the cave in which the Devil's Feast is held, represents the Devil's domain, exclusively dominated by men of profit and women of leisure.

The scene of most of the events in *Devil on the Cross* is also the Community of Ilmorog and its environs. The neo-colonial system of exploitation causes the once graceful and respected peasants, lose their dignity, flee their homestead, and look for low-standard jobs that would sometimes threaten their very wellbeing. The unimaginable difference in living conditions between the imperialist watchdogs and the peasants and factory workers, makes the latter suffer severe identity crisis.

Wangari, a former freedom fighter during the Mau Mau liberation movement, and a respected farmer in her community, loses her plot of land as she cannot afford to repay a bank loan she gets from credit associations, faces a lot of mistreatment when she goes to Nairobi in search of a little work to feed her family. We can see in the novel that the women who should have been given the honor of a patriot treated as an outsider in a country for which she sacrifices her life, because of her poverty. Because she is not well dressed as the city dwellers, they suspect her of being a thief or as someone who comes to Nairobi to disturb the general tranquility.

' I begged him to let me clean up after his children. He said that he couldn't afford me that job either I was then pushed into a police vehicle and taken to a cell, or rather a lair for mosquitoes, lice , fleas and bedbugs ? I slept in that cell for three nights. I , Wangari who have never stolen so much as a single potato from anybody! I , Wangari, who offered my life for my country..... (p.43)

This is a clear indication of the difference in living condition between the peasants and the city dwellers. One way for the imperialists to uproot the peasants from their farm lands is giving them money in loan. The neo-colonial system benefits only a few business owners and corrupt government elites. The life of the general mass, especially the peasants becomes miserable.

Devil on the Cross shows the class to which each character belongs; Muturi, Wariinga and Gaturiria represent the peasant and workers, while Gituti , Kihahu , Muweriri, and other imperialist watchdogs represent the bourgeois.

We can see in the novel that greedy businessmen and their local allies steal from the meager property of the peasants tactfully, and resell it back to the peasants themselves. First they take the peasants land in monopoly and with that land as a guarantee; they take bank loans and buy another land. At the end of the day, the peasants who used to feed their family from the little harvest they get from the land become mere servant of the bourgeois. Privatization and commercialization are the other business ideologies that exacerbate the suffering of the mass under the neo-colonial system. The imperialists feel

that everything in the country shall be commercialized. They even have an evil idea in mind that the air that God endowed the human being with, to breathe for free, shall be commercialized. From the testimony of one of the Devilø at the cave one can understand that if they had the technology and know-how to trap air , and pack it in some sort of container, they would sell it to the poor peasants. By the same analogy, a peasant or daily laborer who cannot afford to buy packed air will have to die.

The other idea I'd like to follow up is how we, the top-grade tycoons, can trap the air in the sky , put it in tins an sell it to peasants and workers, just as water and charcoal are now sold to them. Imagine the profit we would reap if we were to sell the masses air to breath in tins or, better, if we could meter it! We could even import some air from abroad, imported air, which we could then sell to the people at special prices. (p.107)

Imperialism never benefits the poor; it makes the world a living hell for the poor peasants and workers. There is no way for the poor to live in peace in the capitalist economic system, as his house, land and other properties will soon be sold to the imperialists. The above mentioned quotation from the testimony of one of the Devilø, Gitutu, indicates that the poor either have to remain submissive and suffer the pain of exploitation or revolt against the imperialists, and free themselves. This is actually Ngugiø creative work aimed at teaching the people to fight the system of imperialism at any cost, before the imperialists trap the air they breathe and kill them all, or before they make the world worse than it is now.

The exploiters are tactful and very wise in their way of exploiting the innocent poor community depicted in the novel; they first use every possible means to increase hunger and thirst on the whole land, and they know that when the peasants are hungry, they will evacuate their land. This further asserts the fact that it is not only the peasantø belongings, but also their very existence on land is determined by the good will of few imperialists. This can be understood from the testimony Gitutu wa Gataanguru gives to the delegates from the seven industrialized countries as to how he plans to exploit the poor in the future.

The high class difference in terms of provision of residential areas that has been hinted at *Petals of Blood* as Cape Town and New Jerusalem also depicted in the same way in *Devil on the Cross*. The poor cannot live in the residential area of the rich even though they are from the same country, speak the same language, and share the same cultural background. Ilmorog, the scene of the story is divided into two when it comes to providing residential area to its inhabitants;

*The residential area is divided into two parts. The first is the Ilmorog Golden Heights residential area. In the past it used to be called Cape Town, but today it's known as Golden Heights or simply the Heights. The air there is good and clean..... The other part of the residential area is called New Jerusalem, Njeruca. That is the residential area for the workers, the unemployed. It is where the wretched of Keya live..... the walls and the roofs of the shanties are made of strips of strips of tins, old tarpaulins and polythene bags..... Sometimes I think of Njeruca as the **Hell described in the Christian Bible**..... (p.130)*

This also shows the weakness of the then political set-up that turns a blind eye and deaf ear when the life of the graceful peasant community transforms into misery. The peasants from whom the land is taken for the construction of industries and tourist resort centers remain daily laborers while those who deceive them into selling their land become business tycoons. In these two novels Ngugi tries to teach all Africans that measured in any parameter or under whatever circumstance, imperialism does not benefit Kenya (Africa). So no matter how difficult the journey may be, all Africans should reject the capitalist system, keep it away at a distance from being introduced to their country.

Over and above, some imperialists have an evil idea of buying human limbs like a vehicle's spare parts in order to stay alive in this world for ever. This can be seen from the testimony Nditika wa Nguuji given on the Devil's Feast that the limbs (body parts) of the poor to become a body spare part for the rich.

It was revealed to me that in this country we should have a factory for manufacturing human parts like mouths, bellies, and hearts and so on, spare parts for the human body. This could mean that a rich man who

*could afford them could have two or three mouths, two bellies, two hearts and so on..... this would mean that a really rich man would never die. There is another proverb: a rich man never dies. We could purchase immortality with our money and leave **death as the prerogative of the poor.** (p.180)*

They do not consider the poor as a creature endowed with the right to live in this world. For them the poor peasants farmers and workers are a toy with which they can play whatever game they like. They wish to live in this world for ever leaving death for the poor.

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

Devil on the Cross, also depicts the plight of women under the corrupt neo-colonial leadership of Kenya, after independence. The novel begins with the story of Jacinta Warringa, a lady who suffers a series of misfortunes, maltreatment and deprivation at the hands of some irresponsible men in the society. She is used, abused and abandoned by the rich old man of Ngorika whose child she is carrying. She tries to commit suicide on two occasions; once by jumping into a swimming pool and at other times sitting at a railway crossing so that the train would knock down on her. At both instances, the same person rescues her from death. It is after being in a state of long time misery and grievances that she decides to commit suicide, when the possible turns out to be impossible because of the system. What ða human being call himself in this world if he could not end his life when he felt that it was too much of a burden?ö (p. 152). The imperialists feel that they can buy everything including a woman with their money. The rich old man of Ngorika, whose son Warringa intends to marry unknowingly, is one of them who think that he can buy a second wife, a young one like commodities, while having his own old wife at home. Her suffering is caused by the rich old man who deceives her into believing that he is perfectly willing to marry her and divorce his first wife on account of her love.

In connection to this idea, Ngugi tells us that the dominance of patriarchal ideology in the capitalistic democratic system has intensified the plight of girls in the new born Kenya. Young girls and women who would have become doctors and engineers for their

country drop out of schooling and become either barmaids or the imperialists' sex slaves. We can learn from the story that Wariinga's parents pray that one day she becomes successful in her education, and free them from the chain of poverty. Luckily, she becomes quick at learning and is often top of her class. In fact, it is she who often coaches her cousins at mathematics, even those who are a class ahead. She feels that she is the queen of learning and her ambition is to study electrical, mechanical, or civil engineering. The ð word ÷engineerø is what made her heart beat whenever she shut her eyes and tried to look into the tomorrow of her life.ö (p.140). The writer is trying to disclose the existing reality related to the female gender in the then political set-up that girls, who could have contributed paramount for the development of Kenya are abused and their life is darkened by the imperialists, so even the women should collaborate in the fight against the system. The bourgeois give young school girls some money and make them interrupt their education.

*“Warringas life now changed. She felt as if a door had opened onto a Nakuru she never knew existed. Suddenly she saw the world brighten; she saw a brilliant light illuminating a road that. Wariinga heard words of love whispered by wonderfully smooth and perfumed voices; “ **Wariinga, my dear, how can you foolishly lie yourself to your books when sugary delicacies, and ripe, juicy fruits, many other wonders calculated to stir the heart and to warm the body are to be found everywhere in Kenya?**”*
(p.143)

So the little pocket money she is given by the rich old man deceives Wriinga; her dream of becoming an engineer becomes a nightmare after she happens to start a sexual affair with the rich old man. In *Devil on the Cross* Ngugi teaches that the Devil's or the imperialists do not want to have an affair with the girls once they get pregnant. Therefore, for the rich a woman is nothing more than a sex object, they do not care for the future generation nor the development of their country.

We can see in the novel that Wariinga gets out of the trouble she had with the help of her aunt. After having her baby, she is able to complete her secretarial studies, and once again a devil visits her as she goes from-office to office in search of job. In every office

she visits, she cannot find an employer who intends to recruit her based on her knowledge as a secretary. Upon seeing her they all intend to make her their mistress, not a secretary.

She enters another office. She finds there another Mr. Boss. The smiles are the same, the questions are the same, the rendezvous is the same- and the target is still Kereendi's thighs. The Modern Love Bar and Lodging has become the main employment for girl's and women's thighs are the tables on which contracts are signed..... modern problems are resolved with the aid of thighs . (p.19)

In the referent society this novel is written we can see that the selection criteria to recruit a given girl as a secretary is not the knowledge, it is rather her willingness to satisfy the sexual whim of the managers. Therefore, we can say that women get a job not based on their skills and knowledge, but for their willingness to be Mr. Boss's mistress. By doing so Ngugi tries to tell us about the corruption and moral decadence that becomes the norm in the new born Kenya after independence.

Her troubles with the bourgeois do not stop there. Her second misfortune comes from Boss Kihara, owner and manager of Champion Construction Company, where she secures a post as a secretary, after a long effort. Just as she begins to think that her life is changing for better, Mr. Boss Kihara whom she considers as a father and true servant of God raises the same question, wanting her to be his mistress, the issue she is sick of listening to. She later loses this job because she does not welcome Boss Kihara's attentions. We can see through the course of the story that her boyfriend, John Kinwana, whom she loves very much and considers as her future husband, decides to break up with her because he suspects her of having a secret affair with Boss Kihara. Moreover, she is thrown out of her one-room apartment for her inability to pay the rent which the landlord increases.

Yes ð Kihara was my boss. But what a boss! Today I'm also on the road looking for another job.ö (p.73). Once again, she happens to be without a job and as is true to anyone

under extreme pressure, helpless and embarrassed Wariinga, returns to her home town Ilmorog, where she happens to know Wangari and Muturi, the people who rouse her from mental slavery. Later in the story we learn that Wariinga becomes a revolutionary minded woman with a strong determination to fight against imperialism, the system that introduced misery and suffering into the peaceful people of Kenya.

Later in the story, we can also learn that Wariinga , becomes an automotive engineer after attending a Poly Technique school. Although there is a popular misconception in the referent country that certain jobs are restricted to men, Wariinga, proves her ability to work as equal to men.

*People love to denigrate the intelligence and intellectual capacity of our women by saying that the only jobs a woman can do are to cook, to make beds and to spread their legs in the market of love. **The Wariinga of today has rejected all that**, reasoning that because her thighs are hers, her brain is hers, her hands are hers, and her body is hers..... (p.218)*

In the patriarchal society this novel is written the people think that women are the sole properties of men, but in the story we can see Wariinga breaking these popular misconceptions. She has a strong stand that her body or soul will no longer be controlled by men. She feels that it is herself who have got control over her faculties. It is her own body that now dictates her how she will dress, and not her people's figures and taste. She did not want to bind herself to Gaturia or to anyone else with strings of gratitude for charity. Self-reliance was self-reliance. (p.219)

Ngugi uses the wedding ceremony of Wariinga and Gaturia and the bad coincidence that the groom happens to be the son of the rich old man of Nogorika, who had spoiled her childhood, as symbolic to convey the fact that one day the dominated, especially women will become dominant. This can be seen from Wariinga's action of shooting Ghitahay, her groom's father, an imperialist and his colleagues. So Ngugi has a vision of a liberated and self-reliant woman in the new born Kenya.

3.2.4. Politics of Liberation in *Devil on the Cross*

In *Devil on the Cross*, we can see the politics of resistance and liberation being much stronger. In both theme and setting, *Devil* begins where *Petals* stops. There are a lot of episodes in the novel that show resistance against imperialism in the novel, but the writer of this paper has attempted to focus only on the major issues discussed by the author in relation to the topic under discussion. We can see in the novel that when the opposition from inside becomes tense, the colonizers instead of governing the country themselves, hand over the responsibility to their loyal slaves, but still to supervise them as their master even being in abroad. However the loyal slaves, even though power is handed to them nominally cannot exercise their authorities independently; they speak the mind of their colonial masters and see things through the eyes of them as well. The slave-masters have a foolish mentality that the general mass will remain passive if they handover power to the black elites as their skin color is the same to the population. The patriotic guerillas and the masses of this country will now be deceived, because they are all black, as they are, and they will chant: "see, now our own black people hold the steering wheel. What were we fighting for if not this?" (p.45). Actually it is not change of persons that the continent requires, but a radical change of the whole system as it is the system, not the people, which is the root cause of the people's misery.

The imperialists use religion as a major tool to win the heart and mind of the poor people. They come to Africa having a "Christianizing" and "civilizing" mission as a pretext, but most of the missionaries own big farmlands and use the cheap labor of the loyal slaves. They often use religious parables to deceive the people into believing that everything they do is in conformity with the commandments written in the bible. For example, we can see in the novel, that when opposition and resistance from inside grows stronger, the colonizers delegate the loyal slaves to be their representatives, but all the loyal slaves do not obey the instruction given to them by their lord and master.

Then he gave them his property and goods to look after and even to increase and multiply. To one he gave capital amounting to 500,000 shillings, to another 200,000 shillings, and to another 100,000 shillings to

every servant according to how loyally, he had served his master,.....
(p.83)

Those who obey his demands are chosen and considered as if they are doing the work of God perfectly. But some loyal slaves, who are awakened from their slumber by the popular resistance against the system, refuse to operate in accordance with the instruction given to them by their lord and master. And you, lord and master member of the white race, I have discovered your tricks í í í í .. I have also discovered your real name imperialist, that is your real name and you are a cruel master. Why? Because you reap where you have not sowní ö (p. 85). This is an awakening call to all Kenyans that it is time to move against imperialism and neocolonialism. In other words, using the parable as an example, Ngugi teaches the people that they should not be deceived by religious doctrines, as religion is not being used to let them win the kingdom of God, it is rather a powerful tool for imperialists to exploit the continent without fear of any resistance.

For unto a man of property, more will be given, but from the poor man will be taken even the little one he has kept in reserve.ö (p.86). The imperialists believe that the world of the dominant and the dominated is normal and is also in line with the bible, so people shall willingly accept this fact of life. But as some of their loyal slaves refuse to obey their instructions, they begin to fear that socialist ideology, which is the biggest threat for their wellbeing, is taking root in Africa.

*No! You black people are incapable of planning and working out ways of cutting the ropes that you to your masters. You must therefore have been misled by communists. You must have got those dangerous thoughts from the party of the workers and peasants. **Yes, your mind is poisoned with communist notions.** (p.85)*

The imperialists do not get a good sleep when they hear about peasants or workers being organized into associations. It pleases them to see the national unity weakened, people divided into different factions, clans or ethnic lines. Both the colonizers and the bourgeois use religion as a means to keep the peasants and workers submissive. The workers cannot move against the oppressive systems as they fear that it would be against

the commandments of God. Hence the workers and the peasants know only the world of eater and the eaten, they are not aware of the existence of the third world; the world of freedom. Therefore, in this novel Ngugi tries to teach us that socialism is a natural way of life for Africans and so for a change to come in the life of the general mass, they should reject imperialism and stick to socialist development strategies.

One of the major issues raised in the novel is provoking protest and resistance against the forces of imperialism and neo-colonialism. The most important episode in the novel (as has been hinted at under subsection 3.2.2.), is the *Devil's Feast*, in which the local bourgeois and their foreign allies compete to choose as to who has robbed the most from the poor and the national wealth. Wangari, the former fighter during Mau Mau and Muturi, a laborer complaining about low wages, have been instrumental in depicting the voice of resistance. After critically observing what goes on in the cave where the imperialists gather, Wangari, decides to report the case to the local police station; that there are thieves gathering in the cave, thieves who steal from the masses and rob the whole nation, hoping that the police will be on her side. But the police instead, of arresting the imperialists, turn out to put her in jail. Probably if she had known that the government and the imperialists are one, she wouldn't have reported the case.

Muturi, also takes a strong determination to destroy the imperialists and their local watchdogs as they gather in the cave. He goes around Njeruka to awaken the workers and the unemployed. At this point in the novel we can understand from the conversation between Mwara and Muturi that in order for a change to come, the people shall break the silence: I ò Muturi do not believe that silence saves livesí .. if whenever we see theft and robbery, we shut our eyes or look the other way, doesn't this mean that we support the system of theft and robbery. **There is no difference between a thief and him who observes the act...** ò(P.158)

So the writer teaches that every citizen of the country should participate in the liberation movement, to free Kenya and Africa as well, from the exploitative, ruthless system of imperialism.

Muturi arrives at the cave accompanied by angry workers who are determined to eradicate imperialism from the face of the earth. From the drama of chasing away the imperialists, one can learn that the organized force of workers and peasants can defeat the dominant few imperialists whose power is only money and the support of the government politicians. The angry procession of workers and peasants depicted in the novel surely chases away the big-bellied imperialists and their African disciples from the cave. They are thieves and robbers of the workers labor and sweat. The threat from the imperialists' bodyguard and the government police force cannot stop the angry workers from chasing away the Devils.

*Come one and all,
And behold the wonderful sight
Of us chasing away the Devil
And all his disciples!
Come one and all!(p.201)*

Therefore, this further strengthens the fact that if united, the people of Kenya can turn up-side-down the system that only advocates the world of the eater and the world of the eaten, as a natural way of life for the people of Africa.

The yard was a chaos of running feet as the owners of the palaces and mansions in Ilmorog's Golden Heights were chased by the Njeruca shanty dwellers. But Wariinga was able to witness the wonderful spectacle of Gitutu wa Gataanguru and Nditika, trying to run away, like two spiders with eggs, while their buttocks were lashed by their pursuers with sticks. (p.207)

Ngugi has a vision that one day, perhaps in the near future, imperialism and its recent manifestation neo-colonialism will be overturned, and the workers' party will take over the power of the administration. As the story goes on, we can see at some point in the novel that the seats that the imperialists from the seven industrialized countries occupy in order to choose loyal disciples from, Kenya finally end up in being the main discussion

platform for the workers party. So the procession of angry workers and university students led by Muturi and the student leader, chase away the thieves and gets full control of the venue meant for the Devil's Feast. So, no matter how financially strong the imperialists are, they cannot defeat a united people.

Friends- or perhaps I should call you clansmen, for we who are gathered here now belong to the same clan: the clan of workers- I think all of us saw the incredible spectacle of those who have bellies that never bear children come to scorn us. Those bellies are not swollen by disease. They have been fattened by the fruit of our sweat and blood. Those bellies are barren and their owners and barren..... (p.208)

Ngugi's socialist vision is finally communicated by Wariing as an unknown voice tells her in her dream about the existence of a third world. As per the imperialists ideology there are only two worlds; the world of the poor and the world of the rich. And "there is a third world, a revolutionary world" (p.184). Using the dialogue between the voice and Wariinga in her dream, Ngugi transmits an important message to the people of Kenya (Africa) that they should not be midfielders in the struggle against imperialism. Voice: "you are neither hot nor cold. You said just now that there are two worlds." (P.184)

3.3. Pertinent Issues in Both Novels

To sum up, both novels have thematic intertextuality in that the author more or less deals with similar issues of post- independence disillusionment and political depravity of the referent society in which the two works are concerned with; political corruption, social class stratification, gender inequality and politics of resistance and liberation are the major issues widely foregrounded in both novels. The political set-up as depicted in both novels is in a highly turbulent situation whereby few bourgeois and corrupt politicians dominate the overall socio-economic situation and make the life of the general mass bitter.

The scene of most of the events in both stories is the community of Ilmorog which grows from a traditional African village into a modern industrial complex. After the

introduction of imperialism with its distorting influences such as 'modernization', 'privatization' and 'development' the glory of the once graceful town begins to decline sharply. The system displaces the once graceful peasant community from their land as the land is now needed for the construction of real estate and modern industries, from which only the Western imperialists and their African allies reap a lot of profit at the expense of mass suffering. It is depicted in both novels that after the imperialists deceive the peasant farmers and make them evacuate their land, there happens an unprecedented class stratification in terms of economy or access to national resources. In both novels, we can clearly see the new Ilmorog divide into class lines being unable to resist the exploitative and oppressive force of imperialism, and its recent manifestation neo-colonialism. In terms of providing housing for its residents, for example, there is a residential area of the farm managers, country council officials, and African Economic Banksí .. called Cape Town, while New Jerusalem is reserved for the downtrodden. Prostitution, social inequality, misery, uncertainty and inadequate housing become a common feature of life in the New Jerusalem. The neo-colonial system only benefits bourgeois, businessmen and corrupt government officials, the life of the general mass remains in deep misery.

Both novels show the class to which each character belongs; in *Petals of Blood*, Wanja, Abdulla, Karega and Munira represent the peasant and workers; Mozigo, Chui, Kimera and other imperialists represent the class of bourgeois. Whereas in *Devil on the Cross* Wariinga, Wangari, Muturi and Gatuari represent the class of workers and peasants while Gitutu, Kihahu and other imperialist watchdogs at the *Devil's Feast* represent the class of the exploiters.

Gender inequality is also the most prominent feature of the neo-colonial system as depicted in both novels, as both works depict the voice of a marginalized gender. The life of women in the new born Kenya, after independence shows no progress rather it seems as if it has gone from bad to worse; women like Wangari, the former freedom fighter during the Mau Mau, who should have been given the honor of a heroine are being treated as an outsider in a country for which they sacrifice their blood. We can also see in both novels, Wanja in *Petals of Blood* and Wariinga in *Devil on the Cross* being mistreated, abused and used by some irresponsible men in the society. They are often treated not as

some one capable of self-determined action, but as an inferior and frail creature not capable of doing works men can do. The rich businessmen deceive young school girls and the situation causes them drop out of schooling since there is a popular misconception in the new born Kenya that women are good enough only to satisfy men's sexual whim or do household activities. Therefore, in the new born Kenya after independence, as depicted in both novels no progress has been seen in the life of women.

On the other hand, politics of resistance and liberation is the most significant issue that the author deals with in both novels. The preoccupation of the author with this issue outweighs the others as his main concern is to free the people of Kenya from the oppressive and corrupt political system of imperialism and neo-colonialism. Ngugi writes the two novels with the intention to liberate the people of Kenya from the claws and shackles of imperialism, as they deal with neo-colonialism in all its virulent manifestations. In both novels we can see opposition and resistance from the part of the peasants and workers, university students and the workers party to eradicate the system that advocates the drinking of human blood and the eating of human flesh. Religion is also depicted in both literary works as being instrumental for the imperialists and their loyal slaves in Africa to win the heart and mind of the peasants and keep them submissive, and the author tries to teach the people that they should reject any religious doctrine, as religion is not being used to let them win the kingdom of God, it is rather an obscure weapon to facilitate theft and robbery. In general, imperialism is depicted in both novels as a living hell exacerbating the plight of the peasant farmers and the class of the workers.

Chapter Four: Summary and Conclusion

4.1. Summary

As a visionary of the continent in general and their respective country of birth in particular, African literary artists play a great role in educating the people. As the people of Africa have been experiencing prosecutions, suffering and oppression under different regimes during the pre-colonial, colonial, post colonial and now by neo-colonial Africa regimes, it is hard to find an art-for-art function of literature in Africa. Since it does not benefit the people if the writers simply deal with therapeutic and cathartic function of literature in their literary works, most African literary artists devote their writings to reflect on the pressing political and social problems of the people of the continent.

One of the heroes in the area of African literature, who is well-known for his condemnation of the local colonizers or the neo-colonial elites, is Ngugi wa Theiong'o. In the two novels under the study he exposes the ills of the society. Majority of the newly independent countries with a neo-colonial political set-up Africa today are characterized by high class stratification, poverty, privation, corruption, and an incalculable amount of human rights violation. Since most African nations have more-or-less similar experience of colonization, post-colonialism, and now neo-colonialism, the thematic issues that have been dealt with by Ngugi, can represent the reality in almost all African nations, as Africans have had more or less similar experience. As political novels, the two works are unambiguous in their support of the views of the proletariat and in their condemnation of bourgeois philosophy and practice, as manifested in international capitalism, and therefore reject neo-colonialism as a viable way of life for Africans. The novels affirm that the coming together of peasants and workers in united and collective manner against their exploiters will liberate them from the present state of bondage life of misery and poverty.

Political independence could not bring about freedom, equality, self-rule or sovereignty for the people of Africa, the process of decolonization has turned the suffering of African people from bad to worse. Misery and suffering have continued to happen every where in

the so called new born African nations. Decolonization neither brought about emancipation and equality nor provided new peace or wealth; instead, corruption, civil war, narrow nationalism, and religious extremism are becoming the day-to-day phenomenon in the newly born African nations. The new system, capitalistic democracy, only benefits few capitalists and their local allies; the fate of the general mass in countries ruled by the imperialist system is still highly questionable.

The corrupt behavior of African government elites is the main factor that has contributed a lot for the imperialist ideology to take root in Africa. Most African political leaders prefer to give priority to their personal benefits rather than serving the people; some even abuse the very people who have voted them to power. As has been depicted in both texts, most MPs in the continent forget about their constituencies once they assume a seat in the parliament. The luxury in big cities and towns usually blinds their mind; their eyes can only see from outside to inside, but they cannot see from inside out. For them the suffering of the mass is a source of pleasure. The political machinery is not made in such a way as to help the needy, but in a way to exploit the downtrodden, who are in desperate need of help. What is the point in being an MP if one is not able to help the people he/she represents?

One of the legacies of colonization is the use of African girls as sex slaves for both the Western imperialists and their local watchdogs. As has been depicted in both novels school girls, who would have become engineers and doctors for their respective countries are used, abused and exploited by the imperialists. Women are capable of discharging whatever responsibility assigned to them equal to their men counterparts, but in the neo-colonial system, we see women being considered as nothing more than satisfying the sexual whim of the imperialists. It is an undeniable fact that women have a tantamount contribution in the socio-economic and political development of their respective countries. In the novels this study deals with, for instance, we can see woman heroines actively participating in the just war to abandon imperialism and its acolytes from the face of the earth. Jacinta Warring and Wangari can be taken as role models to other Africa women who are still facing different kinds of prosecutions under imperial regimes. Warring's endeavor to do works, which are normally meant for men and her courage to fight against the statuesque to the extent of killing several disciples of

imperialists, makes her a living figure in African struggle against neo-colonialism, although the story is fictional.

Cunning is one of the most lucrative means for the imperialists and their African watchdogs to displace the peasants from their land, and make them daily laborers. This is done using the policy of privatization as a pretext. The government privatizes land and other properties which they think can fetch them a lot of profit, and this consequently incapacitates small business men and women. Wanja , a barmaid, who attains economic self-reliance after she engages on business ,leaving aside the life of bar, is forced back to the same life as her business is swallowed by big business men with the help of African corrupt officials. Thus small business owners are unable to sustain in the system that advocates big investment and privatization of land and other properties.

4.2. Conclusion

As it goes with the Marxist economic principle, "Whoever controls the economy, controls the social system", the two novels teach a good lesson, not only to the people of Kenya, but also to other African nations ruled by the system of neo-colonialism. In general, Ngugi, writes the two novels favoring the communist political ideology, according to which, all men are equal and should have equal access to the resources of their country, and people shall reap the fruits of their labor as wealth is not something gotten through cunning but hard work. It is also the conviction of the writer of this paper that the system of politics, in which few people exploit the general mass shall not be allowed to prevail on earth. If neo-colonialism is allowed to flourish in Africa, there happens an unbridgeable economic gap between and among the people. This will in turn exacerbate the suffering and misery of the general mass who are already in desperate economic situation.

Unlike the system of neo-colonialism whereby few people control the mass, in the workers party, the workers organize themselves in different associations, and each person has a responsibility to work towards the development of his/her association. So the writer tries to disclose the fact that when people are organized, they will have a strong sense of nationhood and always work towards the development of their country.

In the socialist system each person reaps the fruits of his labor, and there will be no parasites sucking on the workers' blood

To be more specific, the two novels are an awakening call for the people of Kenya, specifically to what Ngugi himself calls the *Uhuru Generation*, the generation that no longer resist the oppressive rule of the imperialists, to stand together and fight against imperialism and its recent manifestation, neo-colonialism. The author also teaches a good lesson that unity of the worker and peasants is mandatory for the just struggle against neo-colonialism to be realized, so everybody shall unite regardless of his/her ethnic background, religious inclination, educational level, and color of skin, in the struggle to overthrow the system that advocates only the world of the eater and the eaten. We can also learn from the two novels that the united force of workers and peasants can beat imperialists in spite of the fact that they are financially better off; with their money, the imperialists can deceive few people like the ones who serve as their watchdogs in Africa, but they cannot deceive the general mass. So African leaders who have already introduced the system of capitalistic democracy or those thinking of adopting the system into their country, shall wake up from their slumber as imperialist capitalism has no worth for the people of Africa. Therefore, all Africans should reject the system of eating human flesh and drinking human blood; communism is a natural way of life for the poor people of Africa.

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