



**NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES – DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

EXPLORING POSTMODERN ELEMENTS IN NGŪGĨ WA THIONG'O'S *WIZARD OF THE CROW*

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**THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
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OCTOBER 2021

DECLARATION

I, Ndilimeke Laolange Iyaloo Nanhapo, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis, entitled: **Exploring Postmodern Elements in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *Wizard of the Crow***, is my own original work, and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university or other higher educational institution for the award of a degree.


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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved son Haitange-Omwene Revive Andreas Simaneka. I love you!

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an exploration of Postmodern elements in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006). The study employed a content analysis approach whereby the novel was studied in depth in order to extract themes relating to postmodernism and align them with the type of leadership in Kenya. This is a qualitative desktop study, and the analysis was informed on the grounds of postmodernism theoretical framework. This theory assisted in examining the relationship between the Kenyan elite in the new government as they exploit and mistreat their own people for the benefit of few individuals as well as the emancipation of the masses from exploitation, oppression and discrimination from their own people. The postmodernism theory assisted in analysing how the masses are trying to defend and free themselves against their exploiters, the ruling elite. An example is how Nyawira mobilises her fellow women and the masses to boycott all government projects that are only benefiting the ruling elites leaving the rest of the population to suffer.

The findings of the study revealed that the most persistent concern of Ngugi's literary work is the exploitation of the masses as a result of colonial structures and policies that are generated by the ruling elite as an imitation of the modern world from the West. In this novel, Ngugi used a postmodern style of writing such as creating grotesque bodies and characters as well as magic realism to show that there is a link between exploitation and violations of the rights of the masses in Kenya. The study further revealed that there is a continuous struggle for justice and freedom from the ruling elite by the masses and it can be concluded that the Kenyan people are aware of the evil deeds and acts of their leaders and they are planning a revolution to liberate themselves from the hands of the elite. The study recommends that literary texts of this nature written in other countries need to be unpacked as what Ngugi expresses through his style of writing about Kenyan leaders is not only happening in Kenya, but it is also witnessed in the leadership of several African countries as well. Fiction in other genres such as poetry and drama that carries the same message need to be brought to attention as well in order to bring the plight of the masses to light as the possible solutions to political and socio-economic woes not only in Kenya, but also elsewhere in the world.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter aims at introducing the study which is aimed at exploring postmodern elements in the novel *Wizard of the Crow* by Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Wa Thiong'o has written many novels and the researcher opted to focus on *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) as it stands as a vintage representation of both modern and postmodern elements, especially in African governance systems which is the major focus of this study. This chapter also highlighted issues such as: the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study and lastly, definition of technical terms.

1.2 Background of the study

Several postmodern writers have been at the forefront in addressing the question of the use of the language of postmodern literature (Lyotard 1984). This has been made more urgent in the dawn of modernity with the emergence of global languages through the introduction of modernism in Africa and various parts of the world. One cannot speak of Postmodernism without referring to modernism as these are two interrelated concepts. Therefore, one can say that Postmodernism came as a result of modernism. Postmodern writers have a big role to play in producing art that is reflective of the modern voices and the most effective means of achieving this is through the production of postmodern art in writing and languages that are sometimes regarded as marginalised because of modernism. Thus, postmodernism was used as a great tool in the analysis of this study.

This study was generated via the lens of a Postmodernism theory, cited from Carter (2012) that postmodernists are once interested in dismantling of Western culture distraction and delay, which will help in the exposition that dominates Western culture and expose white mythologies that are made to exploit, dominate, colonise, alienate as well as exclude the black communities. Therefore, this study explored postmodern elements in the novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) by Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Postmodernism was used as a lens to examine the use of grotesque, the significance of magic realism in the novel and explore the effectiveness of grand narrative while examining important issues such as colonialism as it is represented in the novel.

The novel *Wizard of the Crow* was fictionally set in a city called the Free Republic of Aburiria and it is governed by an autocratic leader called the Ruler. The government under the leadership of the Ruler has little or no idea about leadership, proper governing as well as best ways of maintaining power as those that are serving under the leadership of the Ruler are only there to campaign and compete for high positions as it is the gateway for them to accumulate wealth in an easy way. The citizens were merely perceived as a nuisance and irrelevant, except when they are needed as a source of acquiring cash. The Ruler is described as a typical self-obsessed African tyrant who ordered the use brute force when necessary. His main aim was to get the Global Bank to help him fund his self-proclaimed project called 'Marching to Heaven' which is described to be a huge structure in a form of a latest Tower of Babel which will supersede all the other structures built in the world. However, this was not the best way of using resources in a developing country whereby the majority of the citizens were suffering, but a proper monument to the selfish ruler.

Therefore, given this background of the novel, the researcher has seen the Postmodernism theory fit to analyse the novel to obtain a clear understanding of and a rich insight into what was happening in Kenya. Further, one can link this to many African Governments today.

1.3 Statement of the problem

This study explored and analysed how Ngugi sensitises his readers about the consequences of injustices perpetuated by the ruling elite in Kenya which is a problem. The problem is analysed using postmodern literary theory in order to give a richer understanding of the novel and what it represents. The study investigated, explored and examined how Ngugi used postmodernism elements in order to lay out the concerns and perspectives about the plight of the masses in Kenyan society as depicted in this novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006).

Downgrading and subordinate leadership in African societies has been a concern to those who believe in fairness and equal wealth distribution like Ngugi. This has given a rise on the concerns of leadership to the masses thus they started writing in different approaches such as Post-colonialism, Post-communism which they used as a tactics for African leadership emancipation. However, these strategies have not always yielded the best results on the types of leaders Africa have and what Africans need to do to change the status quo. Regarding the issue stated above, there is therefore a need to redirect attention to a postmodern approach to confront these issue into a more detailed context. In this text, Ngugi used

grotesque, narrative and magic as a postmodern language and style as major weapons to disseminate Postmodernism message.

A postmodern analysis of *Wizard of the Crow* has been done and studied by several scholars such as Macharia (2007) where he stated in his article that “*Wizard of the Crow* utilises the resource of magical realism to enhance its interrogation of Post-independence leadership in Africa through the fictive Free State of Aburiria”(p.4) and Krishnamurthy (2016) where she states that it is a good idea to analyse *Wizard of the Crow* through postmodern lens to interrogate the theme of leadership and the notion of power on the techniques of exaggeration and pastiche as explored in the novel as post-modern elements. In this study, I have extended this analysis by including elements which were not widely examined and explored. Given this background, it is through the use of grand narrative, magical realism as well as grotesque body representation that Ngugi used in his compilation of this book as a backbone to highlight the sufferings and plights of Kenyan people. This has affected many African countries which included Kenya where this fictional novel was set in the city of Aburiria and many African countries are still battling with social ills that emerged as a result of postmodernism, which is a problem.

The issue of corruption and its effects on the communities as well as societies that are involved and had been affected has been explored on different literary aspects but Ngugi’s use of post-modern elements has not been widely explored and analysed to the core in order to find amicable solution to those affected by its mandates. Therefore, this gap in deep postmodern analysis has triggered the researcher to use *Wizard of the Crow* as a tool to vividly look at this study and bring to light the results of Postmodernism. The researcher believed it highlights issues of leadership that are affecting most African communities and therefore, she opted to explore these issues through a Postmodernism frame in order to gain a greater understanding into the way these concerns are depicted in the novel *Wizard of the Crow*. This is a complex novel of about 800 pages that give an account of social issues such as bad leadership that is affecting most African communities including Kenya where this novel was set.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was: to investigate postmodern elements in *Wizard of the Crow* by Ngugi wa Thiong’o.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To investigate the effectiveness of grand narrative;
- To explore the significance of magic realism; and
- To examine the use of grotesque in the novel.

1.5 The significance of the research

The study is based on an African novel that is written by one of the African writers that criticised issues such as colonialism that Africa has fallen victim to, and in the process disowned its ideologies, norms and values. This research will help Africans to debate social and economic disparities that the African continent suffered from colonialism that was and is still imposed upon Africans by the colonisers. The novel highlighted crucial issues that are synonymous within African leaders that are contributing to the downfall and development of the African continent. This study will help in achieving a greater understanding on issues of leadership and to find ways to curb this type of indirect autocratic leadership amongst many African leaders that contributed to this, which also include Namibia. Through analysing this novel, Ngugi's concerns and perspectives about the social and political situation in his country are made known to his audience, especially in Kenya and elsewhere. This study will also bring new ideas into the Postmodernism school of thoughts from an African perspective.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The study focused only on one novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) which means the findings of the study will be limited to one novel which is written by one author. It is likely that some important information on Postmodernism in the other novels that were not selected might have been left out. On the other hand, the study is based on literary fiction and is content-analysed. This means that the data collected depend mainly on the views of Ngugi in his selected novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) as the main source of information for the study. Due to the nature of the study, other means of data collection such as questionnaires and interviews were not used in order to offer a wider range of information, thus, the study only used materials that were only available and accessible to the researcher. Therefore, the materials which were not accessible to the researcher remained unconsidered.

1.7 Definition of technical terms

Postmodernism= a late 20th-century movement characterised by broad scepticism, subjectivism, or relativism; a general suspicion of reason; and an acute sensitivity to the role of ideology in asserting and maintaining political and economic power.

Grotesque= focuses on the human body, and all the ways that it can be distorted or exaggerated: its aim is to simultaneously elicit empathy and disgust.

Realism= realism is a technique; it also denotes a particular kind of subject matter, especially the representation of middle-class life.

Grand narratives = a range of views developed to critique ideological forms of knowledge. It is known in the form of storytelling.

Magical realism= the fusion of real and the fantastic. It is an art of the supernatural and natural.

1.8 Ethical considerations

The researcher upheld academic honesty and integrity and was guided by the policies and procedure of the Namibia University of Science and Technology. All information and material were treated with respect as well as sensitivity and they were only used for the purpose of research/ this study.

1.9 Layout of chapters

Chapter 1 provided the introduction of the study whereby the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, definition of technical terms and ethical considerations are highlighted and presented. Chapter 2 provided the reviewed literature as well as the gap presented through reviewing the literature for this study. Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical framework whereby the postmodernism theory and its concepts are thoroughly highlighted. Chapter 4 gave an outline of the research methodology while chapter 5 presents the findings of the study. Lastly, chapter 6 focuses on recommendations for future research and concludes the study.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the study and its orientation. It also presented the problem statement, objectives of the study and highlighted the relevance of the study as well as the limitations of the study. The chapter also laid down the organisation of the study. The next chapter provides the literature review that the researcher did for this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the related literature that presents the study of the novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o in order to show how this selected text has been previously studied. The main aim of this chapter is to review some of the research work that is done in postmodernism as well as other related work done on this text and how this study can contribute new knowledge by providing a connection with existing knowledge of the similar kind. The literature review is directed by the research themes and the research that is already done can provide useful information that can be used for future reference as well as playing a role in revealing the gaps in the research that is already done. The literature review in this study will highlight the economic, political and social issues that have been haunting Kenya since independence emerged as a result of Postmodernism, and how Ngugi put an emphasis on the escape from such issues through his literary writings. The literature is reviewed according to the research themes of the study which are: to investigate the effectiveness of grand narrative, explore the significance of magic realism as well as examine the use of grotesque in the novel as postmodern elements.

2.2 Various analysis on some of Ngugi’s writing in relation to *Wizard of the Crow*

This section will provide some insights from *Wizard of the Crow* in relation to some of Ngugi’s writings and how they align with activities and themes in *Wizard of the Crow*.

“Over the course of Ngũgĩ’s literary career, allegory increasingly stands in as a positive act of compensation where other forms of dissent are unavailable for various historical reasons” (Uskalis, 1996, p. 85). In continuing to rely on the grotesque in his production of satirical allegories of political resistance, *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) follows in the footsteps of Ngũgĩ’s earlier novels. However, his most ambitious work to date, Ngũgĩ widens the scope of his counter-hegemonic perspective concerning political action. *Wizard of the Crow* and *Matigari* (1986) are the only two of Ngũgĩ’s novels that took place in a fictional country. Although both Aburiria and the ‘imaginary country’ in *Matigari* effectively function as allegorical mirrors for Kenya, this particular ambiguity in the setting of *Wizard of the Crow* allows Ngũgĩ to think authenticity beyond the context of a specific nation-state. For Moylan (1986), the critical utopia signals a shift in historical understanding following “the movement from monopoly to transnational modern via postmodern culture as well as from democratic to bureaucratic management and participation” (p.43).

This is an indication that these types of shifts are highly relevant to *Wizard of the Crow* as the proletarian workers' collective gives way to a global humanist movement, an alliance not just of the Kenyan peasants, workers, and students like those who storm the Devil's Feast in *Devil on the Cross (1980)* or call across the river of time and space to Mūriūki in *Matigari*, but a transcontinental movement that resists or demand a voice in the process of the very changes Moylan describes as resuscitating the utopian project. Thus *Wizard of the Crow* incorporates these relevant utopian dissociative features that make it structurally and politically allegorical and also futuristic without conforming to the obsession with the sovereign individual common to Western anti-utopias. What differentiates *Wizard of the Crow* from Ngūgĩ's earlier writings is the manner by which his populism has moved from the nationalist to the global scale, broadening his earlier, more provincial and representations of resistance.

Allegory is one of the most device that Ngugi used in most of his writings in order to show, explore and symbolically represent romantic relationships that are happening in the wider society. One of the most prominent features of Ngugi's way of writing is the way he portrays women protagonists in romantic relationships, which is an indication of an allegorical troupe which is seen as an important subject in most of Ngugi's works. Ngugi's female archetypes have a quite similarity in such a way that they become sites for competition on the desired notion and this is why Ogude (1999) stated that, "Ngugi's earlier texts and the way he portrays women owes something to a long standing iconography of women in nationalist literature which internally organise and mobilise women to stand as a central metaphor for the nation" (p.109). This is an indication that Ngugi's representation of women protagonists in his work stands as a fulfilment for primary sites for traditional modernity.

Ogude (1999) also continued to highlight that, Ngugi portrays women as representatives as well as carriers of tradition and nationalism in both his earlier and latest texts. Ngugi mobilises women as metaphors of a class war which later remained an important ideology in his novels he had written at the latter stage. The women protagonists became an important index in Ngugi's writings thus they strive against exploitation and gender inequality perpetrated towards them and thus they see it as a cause of degradation towards their value and vital contribution to the society. Ngūgĩ's writings highly portrays impossibilities of romantic relationships between the rich and poor, the elite and the working class and on the other hand, there are those relationships that gives the working class the opportunity of being in harmony with the interests of the marginalised group in the society. This can be witnessed in the affairs of Wanja– Kimeria (*Petals of Blood 1977*), Wariinga– Gatuiria (*Devil on the Cross 1980*), and Matigari–

Guthera (*Matigari 1986*), Kaniuru- Nyawira (*Wizard of the Crow 2006*) as they are represented as different kinds of romantic tropes.

The mentioned above relationships all consists of similar features whereby in each case there is a situation in which the rich and well off elite attempts to take advantage of poor women and an example can be seen from *Wizard of the Crow* wherein the Ruler lures young girls to his bedroom and sleep with them in the process and nobody should say anything.

As cited by MacDonald (2016) from Nicholls (2016) "*Wizard of the Crow* constitutes an unprecedented advance in its advocacy of women's issues and concerns; seeing perhaps the novel's most courageous move as the frank and mature allusions to the debilitating illness of HIV/AIDS that has swept the African continent" (p.181). The novel's advocacy of safe sex is certainly laudable, as taken from the context of the story from *The River Between (1965)* of women losing their power from pregnancy, Nyawira's insistence that Kamiti wear a condom during sex also seems inextricable from the control of reproductive rights as a necessary part of women's ability to challenge patriarchy. At the same time, the motif of the Ruler's pregnancy as the major factor undermining his power taken in tandem with Nyawira's need to avoid becoming a mother in order to pursue her revolutionary identity shows how there are significant aspects of female sexuality and reproduction that remain problematic in Ngugi's writing.

Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow* novel combines criticism, satire as well as a serious political commentary and this is why Sithole (2014) argued that the manner in which violence is presented in *Wizard of the Crow* is in the space and time that assumes metaphoric forms and the concern is that the real and the unreal are the ways in which one can understand what fuels such type of violence. It is in Aburiria where the representation of power and its performativity take place and the way in which power dramatises itself is by means of violence. It is in the post colony whereby the main aim of power and its logic of operation breaks is to discipline and punish. This can be witnessed when Ngugi states that "the Ruler's state house has a special chamber which he describes as a museum whereby every morning, the Ruler first bath in the preserved blood of his enemies and then he would enter and walk about quietly looking at the different exhibits of human bones one by one. The Ruler would then stop at the door and with mocking gestures of triumphant contempt, at the dark holes and grinning teeth where once eyes and mouths had been". (Ngugi,2006, p.11).

In conclusion, this section highlighted issues dictated in Ngugi's writings as a result of gaining power at the expense of the masses and oppress those they perceive powerless for their self-gratification. The next section will look at Ngugi as a dictator novel writer.

2.3 Ngugi as a dictator novel writer

Ngugi has always been positioned as a radical in terms of his views on colonisation and post-colonisation which impact critically on the cultural, political and economic realisation of independence and progress of his country Kenya as well as Africa as a whole. Sicherman (1990) chronicles Ngugi's life from an activist angle. In *Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o The Making of a Rebel*, she clearly suggests a political angle to Ngugi's life, recalling milestones such as his 1977 arrest and detention without trial and self-imposed exile since 1982. She also draws on the political significance of various dates, themes and events in the publication of his works as well as the decision in 1967 to reject his Christian name James to symbolise his rejection of his Christian background.

Equally important to note is that in 1986, Ngugi who had mainly written in English, made the decision to completely bid farewell to English and only write in Kikuyu, his mother tongue. He considered English a "cultural bomb" (ibid) that ridiculously perpetrated colonial interests. Though he began writing in Kikuyu, his mother tongue in 1977 although Ngugi continued to have his texts being published in English until 1986. In his novel *Homecoming* (1972), Ngugi protested against church, culture and politics as quoted "The Christian church is the religious ally of colonialism complicit in its inherent contradictions as the European settler robbed people of their soul, the African body and soul battered for thirsty piece of silver and the promise of an European heaven" (p.32).

In support with the above mentioned literature, Ndigirigi (2007) added that "Ngugi's fear was that, once the English edition of his writings was published, the identity of the Gikuyu original would be secondary. He even feared that, with the availability of the novel in English, even the Gikuyu reading elite (the only people who could afford to buy the book) might be tempted to read the translation and consign the original to their display cases" (p.56). However, reading the English translation of the novel a few years after encountering the first two parts of the Gĩkũyũ original, it is now apparent that more was at issue here than the politics of language. Wizard of the Crow had to be first written in Gĩkũyũ so that the "vernacular" would open up oral resources unavailable in English because issues of orality and language are powerfully intertwined in the novel.

Colson (2011) highlighted that, the impact of *Wizard of the Crow* does not only lie in its sharp satirisation of the ruling elite in the fictional republic of Aburiria, but the novel also represents a significant formal development in Ngũgĩ's fiction and, more generally, in the genre of the dictator novel. As quoted from Colson, "In this novel the dictator, the Ruler, attempts to maintain his power by limiting the freedom of the people and by exercising his authority over time to rule eternally. The novel develops its potent critique of the mechanisms of authoritarian rule not only from the novel's content, but more particularly from its form, a form that privileges pluralism and progress, in stark contrast to the Ruler's aims" (p.18).

Moreover, Gititi (1991) described the novel *Matigari* "as an arena where ideologies battle for hegemony seems an apt description for *Wizard of the Crow* as well. However, *Wizard of the Crow* is less concerned with acquiring hegemony for a particular ideology, like much of Ngũgĩ's earlier work. Instead, it seeks to misplace the contest for hegemony and give privileges as a sort of anti-hegemony present in and exemplified by the novel's form" (p. 234). However, I am convinced that *Wizard of the Crow* is more fully situated within the larger, transnational genre of the dictator novel that is after acquiring power for his own benefit while improvising the masses under his colonial rule.

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon (2008) narrates the ways in which the black subject, due to the disastrous psychological effects of colonialism, comes to internalise an inferiority complex. Blackness becomes abjection and alienating experience, while whiteness is the lens through which the black subject apprehends meaning. With support to this, it is quoted from Fanon that "whiteness comes to shape the black subject's perception of himself and the white man; he thus suffers from conflicted and warped notions of identity. In place of self- or black pride, he is stricken with self-contempt. The black skin becomes a "corporeal malediction" (p.84).

Fanon (2008) further supported the above quote when he stated that, the black man develops a pathological orientation to whiteness, which causes him to manifest self-hate for anything associated with blackness, and this is the condition that Tajirika, in Ngũgĩ's text, finds himself in. In this instance, money makes him regard blackness as a lack and associate whiteness with power. Therefore, he remains unfulfilled; despite the wealth he has accumulated. Blackness fills him with affective insecurity and distorts his identity. His conversation with Sikiokuu aptly illustrates it. When queried by the Minister of State, Tajirika says that "he longed for the power of whiteness because it would distinguish him from all other blacks" (*Wizard* p.349). It is only whiteness that can validate his self-image and yet, as Fanon

explains, whiteness is an illusion, a fiction that is used to colonise the mind of a black person into believing that white is superior than black.

Likewise, the Ruler's life in *Wizard of the Crow* reflects the crisis in black identity. Ngũgĩ portrays him as infected with white ideology that causes him to associate whiteness with glory. For example, when his wife Rachel reprimands him for taking advantage of young girls, likening him to the proverbial aging white man, the Ruler takes offense at being regarded as "aging" but we are told that he is pleased with the "white man comparison" (p.6).

These are some of the issue that the researcher will investigate and how Postmodernism contributed to their existence in the novel and the next section will look at how the type of leadership in Africa is represented in the novel.

2.4 *Wizard of the Crow* as representation of African leadership

Most African countries have suffered from one form of dictatorship or the other since their independence from the West. Spencer (2012) asserts that dictators have regrettably been among some of the few things that Africa has been molding and manufacturing since independence. However, this should not be seen as a way to exempt African leaders from blame. Spencer (2012) further argues that, a large part of the blame for Africa's low development must be shouldered by the Africans themselves, especially by their leaders, for their greediness, unimaginable plans to develop their countries, and inability as well as unwillingness to come up with democratic links with the oppressed and dispossessed.

These vested interests of African leaders and neo-colonial overlords have produced fertile material for Africa's writers and that's why commenting on the role of the literary artist in national transformation, Ngũgĩ, in Sander, Lindfors & Cintron (2006) said "literature is indeed a powerful weapon and that we should use it thoroughly and consciously as a weapon of struggle against the forces of national and class oppression, exploitation as well as the entire system of imperialisms in the world today" (p.28).

This an indication that, Ngũgĩ has in *Wizard of the Crow* painted a picture of the nature of leadership in Kenya under Arap Moi's government. However, there are dozens of African states and governments which includes Nigeria that fit into the model. Ngũgĩ has detected and tugged on this common loose tread of poor leadership, sycopathy and imperialism that characterised most African post-colonial nations. Poor

leadership is especially noted in the areas of repression of freedom, women and ethnic minorities, violence, deaf ear to the affliction of the downtrodden, corruption and misplaced priorities.

Okolo (2009) once added that, wa Thiong'o's fictional world acts almost as an imaginary restitution of his views of events that are taking place in the real political and social life of Africans. The uprising of unconstitutional and mediocre people who succeed best in corrupt atmospheres of oppressive regimes whereby African political life is seen as a serious backlog to politics including the public sphere in general. However, there is truth that the Ruler is seen as a fictional creation, but in reality, he could probably be more than a human being in real life. Given these excuses, *Wizard of the Crow* is still keeping its value as a representation of an attempt to take over and explore some concerns that are seen as pressing drawbacks that are underlying in Africa today.

2.5 Style and language use in *Wizard of the Crow*

Studies (2016) stated that, language and style are used to send across their messages. These messages are not conveyed as stark history or mere article, but are presented in an imaginative and entertaining stories, wrapped up in weighty symbolism whereby the distinguishing feature of literature is imagination but this is not confined to that of fantasy or to the characters' creation and episodes that never existed in reality. This is supported by Chapman (1983) when he stated that "The linguistic utterance which involves imagination has a quality beyond the use of words to convey referential meaning" (p. 54). Thus, the work of literature may offer information and it will have beneficial content but it is the use of language in its most imaginative way that distinguishes literature from other forms of writing. A literary artist chooses and manipulates language with greater complexity than the average language user can or wishes to exercise.

It is thus this imaginative use of language for entertainment and social criticism that carves out a niche for Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow* as style and language are interlaced and language is being referred as to the vehicle of style. All literary artists have peculiar style with which they address realities of their time and this is made possible only through language. Fowler, Mercer & Bateson (1971) explains that the novelist's medium is language, whatever he does as a novelist, he does in and through language and that the language used in literature is an embellishing device, working to define other elements in fiction. Various elements of literature such as content, theme, point of view, tone, plot and characterisation are realised

and given form through the medium of language. Traditionally, style is associated with manner of expression rather than matter or content of discussion, it is a way of writing or a mode of expression.

The major aspects of style in *Wizard of the Crow* are the skillful use of linguistic parallelism, hyperbole, symbolism, parody, irony, among others, to make its message crystal. The use of parallel structures from the scene where one of the businessmen in search of magical powers visits the *Wizard of the Crow* (Kamiti) is remarkable: "But believe me, sir, Wizard, my enemies are many, they are everywhere, they are ruthless, and they want what I want.... I want you to add firmness to my hands, smoothness to my tongue, and power to my eyes.... I want to mesmerise his eyes with mine, soften his heart with my tongue, and seal the deal of friendship with a warm handshake. At the same time, I want you to take away all powers of persuasion from my competitors. Make their hands limp and wet with sweat so that when they shake those of Chairman Titus, they will only piss him off; roughen their tongues so that when they roll them out to sing his praises, they will produce rasping noises worse than the screeching of metal on metal; cause their eyes to run with filth so that when they try to make his captive to their wishes they will only disgust and repel him" (*Wizard of the Crow* p.149-150). This is an indication that, in Ngugi's *Wizard of the Crow*, language is intricately used and designed to achieve stylistic effect. The style of the novel heightens its value as a satire on brutal, venial, iron-fisted exercise of power. It also helps it realise its interpersonal, ideational and textual functions as a literary masterpiece.

When Ngugi decided to rather write in Gĩkũyũ as a mean to enhance and put value on African languages by switching from English to Gĩkũyũ, Fox (2003) expressed that Ngugi endeavored to write himself back to the center he believes has been abandoned or suppressed: the peasant/worker base of Kenyan society, upon which he places the burden of his hopes for a free and democratic nation in place of the neocolonial oligarchy presently in power. As recently as his 1999 Ashby Lecture at Cambridge University, Ngugi declared, "I now regard Europhonism as the most dangerous intellectual system for the development of Africa" (Wa Thiong'o, 2000, p. 8). This is viewed to be too apocalyptic as it seems to denounce the degree of the African personality because of whatever language they opted to write or express themselves.

Ngugi also insisted that having turned to Gikuyu as his creative language is because he cannot go back though it is not Africanness or even Kenyanness that is lost by writing in English; it is Gikuyuness, a much more particular identity. Writing in his mother tongue has the effect of connecting him to his culture in ways that English could not, enabling him to be home away from home. On the other hand, the fact that

many African authors have had to go into exile has made their use of 'colonial' languages even more important, insofar as this has enabled them to have a global reach to read their texts.

2.6 Grand narratives as an influence of postmodernism

This section will provide a definition and discussion of postmodernism, the role of grand narrative and an examination of what critics from different perspectives say about grand narrative in the text taken up for this study.

In critical theory, and particularly postmodernism, a grand narrative which is also being referred to as meta-narrative is an absolute way of comprehensive explanation of historical experience and knowledge. Stephens and McCallum (2013) stated that, a grand narrative "refers to a global and totalising narrative schemas of the culture which takes over and explains further on knowledge and experience" (p.53). This means that, the postmodern society has turned the issue of prominent progress unable to sustain and this is why Sade (2012) stressed that post modernity takes over the death of grand narrative which includes the death of reason, enlightenment, universalisms normality and law, truth and meaning which in brief refers to the death of almost everything that the Western cultures represents and that modernity has claimed in particular.

As Livingston (2012) argued, postmodernism which is a branch derived from modernism consists of forms of life that are determined by the introduced technology of information made possible by the formalisation of language. Therefore, the formal structures of these modernity related elements have been practiced in the actual Organisation of contemporary politics such as through communications and computational technologies that determines today's social, political as well as economic institutions that gives modes of action around the globe. This caused postmodernists to claim that all these stipulations are not based on reality but they are rather mere illusions created by a play of signifiers brought by the development of information technology that is speeding up so rapidly, thus losing temporal coherence for real life experience.

As we have looked at the insight of what grand narratives entails on postmodernism, the next section will look at how grand narratives influence the livelihood of the people.

2.7 Grand narratives influence on the livelihood of the people

Narratives as a mechanism is no more omnipresent than some of its favorite targets, and a grand narrative of the postmodern condition as stipulated by Lyotard (1984) is as precious as a grand narrative of freedom, speculation or progress.

Howley & Hartnett (1997) stated that a community college in Columbia is subjected to a curriculum which is supposed to be a collection of different ideas than any work of an individual and this seem to exemplify the narrative form which Lyotard speaks about. The community legitimates its most important meanings and this is an issue because a community that speaks through a curriculum cannot be able to represent the larger society which is both too diverse and too impersonal to produce a coherent narrative. This implies that many communities which may include institutions of higher learning as it has been implied attempts to reflect and serve the larger society are not properly communities regardless of what they may claim. An institution cleaves to its own customs and lore, marks its members and courts the loyal oppositions. It might also be shaped by the community's elites and guarded conscientiously from both external and internal attacks.

According to Lyotard (1984) he describes that narratives determine criteria of competence and illustrate how they are to be applied. In differentiating the narrative form from scientific abstraction, Lyotard approaches narrative as a way of "consuming the past" and as a way of forgetting. His insights about knowledge in its postmodern condition have particular significance for the period of high modernism that prompted self-conscious attention to what might constitute a general education curriculum.

There are also approaches that stress that human identity has a fundamental narrative structure and thus people have authority over their identities through the stories they continually create for themselves according to Kenyon & Randal (2001). The importance and willingness for one to have a desire to continue living even when their narrative story about their life is not a favorable has also been supported by Bruner (1999) when he stated that, it is tantamount for one to live a truthful life that contributes the solutions of their real life experiences rather than having a life narrative that is generalised to everyone or taken from unreliable sources of information.

2.8 Grand narratives and governance

Elias & Jephcott (1994) stated that, “the critiques of the grand meta-narratives were essentially correct, but they had the unfortunate effect of throwing the baby out with the bathwater”. This quote by Elias and Jephcott is an indication that metanarratives were evidently premature and their knowledge is limited in such a way that what is happening in a certain community of people is totally different to what is happening to the same people that are based somewhere in the universe.

Postmodernism is derived from modernism and this is why modernity has long been under attack and eminent scholars such as Heidegger, Derrida, Lyotard and Foucault have engaged in intense critiques involving the dominance of ideology, the use of language and the role of reason in modernity according to Di Piramo (2011). Thus, the necessity for grand narratives has been heavily criticised by revolutionaries through political approaches in order to escape the grand narrative and individualism as it is characterised by Western thoughts. This is why Elias & Jephcott (1994) also lamented that It is scarcely surprising that societies that spearheaded global integration constructed accounts of world history that celebrated their unparalleled achievements have been challenged to end their cultural and racial superiority thus bringing an end to their overseas empires. Only then could western thought also recognise and acknowledge the contribution of other people to civilisation and human development and get rid of the norm of suppressing other people’s opinions.

However, one will not speak of metanarratives without acknowledging media and the role it plays in exposing the inequalities done especially by those in power and entrusted to lead others, thus taking only their own thoughts wrist ignoring and not putting other people’s ideas into considerations. This is why Peter and Witschge (2015) stated that the media acts as a watchdog for the society as they monitor and holds actors that are in power accountable for their actions and it is the media that brings the misdeeds of government representatives and commercial businesses to light. This highlights that media and journalism contributes a great deal to dealing and combating unfair practices of metanarratives.

Levinger (2018) added that, the present era of ‘truth decay’, it is extremely difficult to disconnect facts from truth as governments and political movements around the world take part in spreading propaganda campaigns while the majority of artificial intelligence and other technologies has caused us to reach to an extent of a new world of digital manipulation for creating audio and video recordings that are virtually difficult to distinguish from reality. This is why Edwards & Livingston (2018) lamented that experts have

developed methods of assessing the reality of digital evidence but misinformation participants are aware of these methods too and they may get rid of the trust necessary for democracy to function effectively. Grand narratives contribute a great deal to the governance of a state, thus *Wizard of the Crow* stands as a practical example of this scenario. In the next section, we will look at magic realism and its significance to the contribution of this study by using *Wizard of the Crow* as a window to foresee this objective.

2.9 Magic realism

According to Rogers (2002) magical realism is a kind of realism that is different from the realism that most of our cultures experience. Magical realism is always serious and it does not seek distractions from unpleasant realities as it always tries to carry the reality of one or several worldviews that actually exist or have existed.

It is argued that magic realism obtains more prominence in the late twentieth century than any other literary mode according to De La Campa (1999). Magical realism gives out a special gateway to catchup the literary roles of postmodernism as a result of the ways it is able to overturn or cleave established conclusive codes that represents not only literature but also history. Magical realism can also be connected to an unsuspectedly rich history of related literary forms throughout the world and it is also seen as a study which can provide new links to earlier periods and different narrative modes. D'haen (1995) supported the idea by adding that magic realism brings resistance within postmodernism and that it constitutes "an artistic and cultural practice voicing aesthetic needs and social revindication" (p. 201).

It is stated by Asayesh & Arargüç (2017) that magical realism, feminism, and postcolonialism, under the discussion of postmodernism, were shown to have similar characteristics. What can be seen in all three literary studies is the struggle for the equalisation of issues that Western philosophies have favored through creating binary oppositions. As such, many groups enjoy privileged positions that favor the real over the magical, men over women, and white over colored. Postmodernism appeared after World War II and with its emphasis on polyvocality, it has attempted to end the monopoly of the elite white Western male. Tannen (2014) states that "postmodernism and feminist epistemologies are wrestling with similar questions of postcolonialism and poststructuralism, including: who said it, for what purpose was it said, in what historical period was it spoken, and to advance what theory?" (p.33). It is stated that, while these questions may look alike, in postmodernism the focus is not mainly on women's position in connection

with the patriarchal symbolic order but is instead on the principles by which assertions of knowledge are justified.

Likewise, Ann (2004) states that the majority of the critics of magical realism know the world to be run and controlled chiefly by male and white Western elites. She argues that the critics of magical realism often state their “understanding of the concept in terms of cultural conflict between the dominant ruling classes and those who have been denied power” (p.61). This is an indication that, critics of magical realism which includes Ngugi have tried to show this genre of literature as a postcolonial, postmodern, or Latin American phenomenon and they have illustrated how magical realism includes all of these dimensions in their texts whereby *Wizard of the Crow* is no exception.

2.10 Significance of magic realism use in postmodern writing

Magical Realism is a much-studied phenomenon throughout world literature that speaks to postmodern society in surprising ways. Although often showcased as an exclusively Latin American literary technique, it is, in fact, found in the literature of many countries, and has developed and changed as new generations of writers have molded it to their fictions and it is a complex designation that can be identified by a number of elements or literary techniques. However, Clark (2007) stated that, magical realism which is also called magic realism sometimes integrates elements of fantasy, or an imagined world into a life-like or realistic text. This means that, in magical realism, the term ‘real’ describes those life-like human experiences that authors identify in their writing.

Clark (2007) further added that, it is notable that postmodern expression emphasises on the softening of boundaries as it rediscovers and redefines the shape of artistic production, making magical realism part of the larger postmodern discourse. This is why the process of writing magical realism texts proceeds from the bottom up, not the top down. This is to weave the real and magical elements together to make an integrative and inseparable whole. Magical realist authors discern moments when the text opens itself to the possibility of the magical. In the truest sense, the magical finds root in the real and as a result of this process of opening up to the magical, the text transgresses the traditionally agreed upon boundaries or limits between categorised texts which are essentially real, or realistic, and those that are fantasy.

Gibbs, Chinweizu, Jemie, Madubuike and Wade (1986) stated that “African novels contain elements which seem like fairy tales to Western readers, but they are taken as reality by African audiences” (p.32). Obiechina (1993) also agreed that modern African novels command a different interpretation and must

be read through an African-tinted epistemology. However, Sulvan (2006) added that, the same cannot be said with some of Ngugi's texts such as *Matigari* because the text is being read as an extended parable of the struggle for rights in a postcolonial, corrupt Kenya and the novel consciously mimics the oral styles of the folktale and epic. Nevertheless, magic realist writers like Ngugi themselves recognise their affinity with modernism.

In conclusion, this section presented the role of magic realism in postmodern writing, the next section will highlight the use of magic realism and satire in *Wizard of the Crow*.

2.11 Significance of grotesque use in Ngugi's writing

Grotesque can be said as to be a phenomenon that shows genetic, periodic and theoretical categories and its significance as an art device is that, it gives writers an opportunity to expose, highlight and conceal their personal and individual comprehensions in return of the challenges their generation faces.

According to Schevill (1977), grotesque as concept dates back to the end of the 15th century as a way of re-discovering of ancient Roman decorative art that were rattled with fantastic mixtures of humans and plants images. Thus grotesque had been connected to exaggerations of physical appearances and in such a way, it has been seen as a derogatory way of overstepping a classical ideal of regularity over the centuries.

The way Ngugi uses allegory to represent his characters and their roles in his narratives gives a way to his characters to have a pre-dominant way of action. According to Ogude (1997), Ngugi's characters are always easy to identify and their roles that they play. Thus, Ngugi deploys the grotesque and tend to use the characters and their names as the main mode of characterisation. The grotesque mode is traditionally recognised as a special and effective way of assailing middle-class norms and values, thus, Ngugi uses a specific type of signifier of a major social type in his narratives. An example to this can be given from *Devil on the Cross* where the use of grotesque is pre-dominant and that is why Ngugi uses it as an instrument of social satire mostly in his depiction of his local comprador bourgeoisie that he presents in order to draw attention by using grotesque mode to depict his characters. In Ngugi's texts, grotesque characters are represented by their bodily deficiencies of deformation as this offers him of figuring the qualities that characterises either local compradors or the ruling elite of the post-colonial state in Africa. Thus, the use of grotesque mode draws the attention of the readers to the body as a site upon which stereotypical character construction takes place.

Krishnamurthy (2016) further articulated that, grotesque is one of the unique postmodern elements which Ngugi used in *Wizard of the Crow* in order to illuminate his art of writing. She also added that Ngugi used this style of writing in order to paint a picture on the types of leaders Africa has and through the presentation of grotesque characters in his novel (s), Ngugi shows how desperate and power hungry African leaders are and that they are willing to do anything in order to gain power. This can be witnessed by the way the ministers in Aburiria went on risking their bodies and by changing their physical appearance to the satisfaction of the Ruler with an aim of getting the privileged to resources and power.

Devil on the Cross (1980) is one of the texts that Ngugi portrays his practical use of grotesque and this is why Madurai (2019) support this by stating that grotesque image describes the Devil's readiness to cheat, bribe and his love for lust and wealth. His excess physical feature, two mouths show that he is ready to fill his mouths with wealth and his desire for power. It also conveys that he is not easily satisfied and this exposes the power matrix which is the source of corruption in the society.

Power mongers are not satisfied by the wealth that they have and that is why the image of the big sagged belly, another deformed feature of the Devil serves as a big pot to store the stolen treasure of food that it loots from people. The master of ceremonies is Ilmorog branch's chairman of the Organisation of Modern Theft and Robbery demonstrates the grotesque image illustrated by the author in the novel to portray corruption vigorously. His deformed physical appearance stands for his job of robbery. That is why he is described that he "had a well-fed body: his cheeks were round, like two melons; his eyes were big and red, like two plums and his neck was huge, like a stem of a baobab tree. His stomach was only slightly than his neck". (p. 87).

In addition, Ngugi's fourth novel, *Petals of Blood*, consists of various instances of comic grotesque realism. Berger (1989) admittedly expressed that "some of these instances consists a critical realism or even a Zola-like naturalism, as a way by Ngugi to show the seemingly grotesque life of the Kenyan peasants in opposition to the bourgeois' life of the ruling elite" (p.90). On the other hand, Ngugi uses comic grotesque for political purposes in order to show the relationship between the Kenyan masses and the land that has been defrauded from them and also to make rich objects of laughter and to present graphically how the rich elite and their counterparts allies have purposely alienated themselves from the land thus became objects of laughter as their authorities were undermined. Ngugi describes this grotesque life of the

workers and peasants in Kenya through his four major characters namely: Karega, Abdulla, Wanja as well as Munira whereby some of them are able to comprehend and understand that they are being exploited.

2.12 The use of grotesques in *Wizard of the Crow*

Bakhtin (1968) articulated that “the grotesque comprises of various rhetorical, figurative, and stylistic elements. He added that, the significance of grotesque is mainly to present contradictory in connection with the double fullness of life. This involves the process of destruction and negation which is referred to as the (death of the old) which is included as an essential phase of in separation from affirmation from the birth of something new and better” (p.267). Walczuk (2012) described grotesque “as a way to mark co-presence of opposites, such as the old-new, top-bottom, abuse-praise, negative-positive, birth-death, high-low, and human nonhuman” (p.128) which will be explored in this study.

Kayser (1963) expressed that “grotesque mode in art and literature tends to be visible in societies and eras that are marked by strife, radical change or disorientation (p.11). He also described that radical changes in much of Africa have unsettled, if not disoriented, the lives of many citizens, even up to this moment. The ensuing disorientation or, more precisely, condition of alienation, in the postcolonial nation is what Ngugi wa Thiong’o explores in *Wizard of the Crow*. Ngugi’s commitment to exposing power abuse has continued to shine forth in his body of writing. Like his fellow writers, he makes use of grotesque aesthetics to portray a world that is upside down, already subject to dissolution and estrangement. Replete as it is with grotesque imagery, *Wizard* dramatises an African reality that oscillates between the familiar and the fantastic, the humorous and the horrible, defying definition and meaning.

Umezurike (2018) addressed that, repressive machine is portrayed in grotesque detail in *Wizard of the Crow* and we see instances of state power embodied in one single man: the fictional but archetypal Ruler. Drawing on various conceptualisations of the grotesque, he examined the ways in which Ngũgĩ uses this narrative strategy to undermine state power, while illuminating the deformations symptomatic of the neo-colonial nation. Ngũgĩ employs parody, exaggeration, degradation, scatological imagery and other grotesque elements to achieve this aim.

Furthermore, Ngũgĩ advances a call for organised resistance against regimes of violence and domination, as the subversive actions of his young protagonists, Nyawira and Kamiti, as demonstrated in the text. I

argue that Ngũgĩ, beyond his periodic presentations of power, uses the grotesque to also undermine Euro American ideologies. In doing so, he affects a critique of the neo-colonial mindset of the political elite.

Harpham (1962) comments that, “one of the most frequent ways for an artist to use the grotesque is through the creation of grotesque characters” (p.465). Ngũgĩ appropriates this aesthetic to show how neo-colonialism enunciates and enacts white ideology through the political elite, a group that lends itself to grotesque characterisation. The Ruler and his ministers, all grotesque characters, underwrite the carnivalesque world of the grotesque through their actions and bodies. Ngũgĩ’s grotesque expresses the alienation people suffer in such a morbid society, while focusing unblinkingly on the white ideology that frames the vision of the neo-colonial state.

Although the state may deploy its repressive machine to engineer a regime of violence and domination so that citizens are rendered impotent and incapable of challenging authoritarian power, Ngũgĩ demonstrates the limits of such repression. In *Wizard of the Crow*, he articulates strong nationalist feelings, counter-narratives of power and ideology, and poetics of resistance, therefore offering readers a new outlook on Africa, charged with revolutionary potentials. This type of outlook reiterates his commitment towards decolonising the African mind, as a way of giving Africans a sense of pride and belonging to their identity. This will be one of the issues that this study will explore as a result of Postmodernism.

“It is this feast that Ngugi erects the monstrous image of capitalism as a fetish. The worshippers of the fetish gather to preach before it, the fiction of its perfection” (Mbembe, 1992, p. 21). These lamentations are witnessed in *Wizard of the Crow* as every speaker takes turns on stage to demonstrate their testimonies that the post colonies have been turn in a mode of self-gratification and corruption which is an absurd show of fools, buffoons and clowns having feasts of modern robbery and theft.

Mbembe (1992) further added that the feast becomes the language of the privileged through which power speaks, acts and manifest in most of Ngugi’s novels which *Wizard of the Crow* is no exception. This is why Ngugi describes the foreign leaders that were send to Aburiria as delegation of thieves and robbers and called them that “they came to drink the blood of their people and to eat their flesh as the imperial powers have done to Africans over centuries” (Ngugi, 1987, p.89) in *Devil on the Cross*. This signifies greet and power, and that the actual idiom of this display as well as its Organisation and its symbolism focused on

the appearance of the body: specifically, the belly, the mouth and the phallus as witnessed in *Wizard of the Crow* and other texts written by Ngugi. Ngugi's way of displaying the images of thievery in his writings mostly shows the forms of deformity and foregrounds the grotesque image of the body in which the mouth and belly is portrayed out.

2.13 Research gap (s)

The contribution of Postmodernism and its elements to the outcomes and events in this novel (*Wizard of the Crow*) has not been fully researched and analysed in comparison to other issues such as Colonialism, Postcolonialism, Hegemony and Identity that have been widely addressed in this same novel. Literature has shown that Postmodernism sources to this type of study (novel) are very limited, especially on the use of grotesque. However, an article titled "The leader as a dealer in hope: An examination of the theme of leadership in *Wizard of the Crow* by Ngugi wa Thiong'o" (2016) by Krishnamurthy as well as "Mirroring the Subtext" by Macharia (2007) has touched on the use of grotesque and narrative in *Wizard of the Crow* thus, the researcher would like to explore in more details since the articles only introduced the topic. I therefore aim at contributing more to the knowledge and application of a Postmodern perspective through this study.

2.14 Conclusion

This chapter provided a review of related literature presented based on the objectives of the study which are more concerned with issues of grand narrative, magic realism, grotesque as well as issues that contributes to the body of knowledge of this study. All sections that deals with various themes of the study were defined, discussed and approached from different scholars' angles and perspectives. The literature review Enlightened that, *Wizard of the Crow* is a novel that touches a lot of sensitive perspectives such as the type of governance strategies that touches a lot of Africans and thus people need to be well informed about these perspectives as they affect them directly or indirectly.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

A theoretical framework influences the way knowledge is studied and interpreted. Every empirical study rests on a theoretical framework and in the field of literary studies, any research model should also be based on a conscientious framework. Broadly speaking, one may tentatively refer to a theoretical framework as a contribution to any field of theoretical assumptions and approaches to which the scope and subject of one's study can be linked, defined and the data can be interpreted.

Therefore, in literary studies, it is ethical to combine and complement theoretical frameworks with one another in order to bring about successive approaches to literature and culture for better results. For instance, postmodernism which is the main figure and lens of this study had been coined from aspects of modernism.

3.2 Postmodernism theory

According to Woods (1999), postmodernism can be described as term that is merged to the studies of other related philosophies such as linguistic theory, semiology and modernism which are associated with philosophers such as Martin Heidegger. Webster (2016) dictionary described postmodernism as a way of relating to being in connection movements that are part of or related to modernism that are characterised by traditional materials and forms such as architecture or self-reference and absurdity like literature.

Demand (2016) described Postmodernism as a way that is used to undermine Western metaphysics and to distract the central arguments that took over ancient as well as modern Western ideas such as language, identity, origin, voice and mind that are therefore used as ways of dispersal of uncertainties and disagreements that are caused by westernisation. Other philosophers claims that Postmodernism also appeared to be combined with the philosophy of nihilism, disassembly, meaninglessness and disorder. This study will use Postmodernism as a theoretical framework to base the findings and generate answers to the stipulated research questions based on the issues mentioned as contents of Postmodernism.

3.3 Pioneers of Postmodernism

Pioneers of Postmodern theory are such as: Friedrich Nietzsche, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard and Jean-François Lyotard.

Jean-François Lyotard (1924-1998), in his book "Postmodern Condition ", Lyotard (1984) argues that one cannot claim to be telling the truth as the truth depends on the type of language that is used for that specific content, thus stipulating a different type of context for understanding. According to Carter (2012) Derrida is also one of the prominent philosophers of Postmodernism whose interest is to get rid of Western culture and its distractive ways as well as expose its dominant Western institutions that fuels white mythology as being superior thus giving them ways to dominate, exploit thus leading to colonialism, alienation and exclusion.

Elaati (2016) also added that, Michel Foucault, one of the pioneers of Postmodernism, explored the concept of discourse, power and strength as he brought up an idea that the speeches are strongly connected to their institutions and scientific knowledge. Foucault believes that knowledge goes hand in hand with the constitution of speech which is linked to specific rules that are agreed upon by the community, in order to constitute the real power. He believes that there is a close link between power and knowledge.

3.4 Aims/ Tenets of Postmodernism

Berlin (1992) highlighted the following as to be one of the main focus areas of Postmodernism.

- Postmodernism is a movement aimed at letting people free from the world of illusions and myths and freeing it from being dominated by issues of mythology.
- Philosophies of Postmodernism are also working to undermine the central arguments of Western thought, and revisit the constants, and so by undermining, questioning, dispersion, audit and demolition with a goal of building new values.
- Postmodernism aims at fighting the culture of elite status, cases: Margin and popular culture, and then criticised Orientalist discourses which had had a colonial character by disassembly, criticism and analysis.
- Postmodernism also denounced to the concepts of repressive and authority of power.
- According to philosophy, it is said that the main aim of Postmodernism is to reinterpret the question- what knowledge is believed to be and what can be treated as knowledge. Postmodernists do not believe any objective existence of reality, truth, value, reason and so forth.

3.5 Grand narratives in postmodernism theory

Macharia (2007) stated that, *Postmodernism* is best defined as a set of social and historical attitudes. Modernity is more focused on rationality, order and intrusion of grand narratives. This is why Samuel (1990) emphasised that, one might argue that the breakup of one set of narratives leaves space for other narratives to come to pass and that today as in the past they are likely to exist in response to contemporary perceptions and experience. This is an indication that grand narratives can be compared to the way the historians attribute their subject matters in treating nations or classes as they were living sentient beings with a mind and will of their own without considering the feelings of others.

Grand narratives that adds to the development of society and politics over a long period of time collapsed in the twentieth century according to Linklater (2009). However, grand narratives that have been revived improved the relationship between communities and enterprises and many have highlighted how people have been forced to live together in longer ways of interconnection. This is an indication that grand narratives play an important role in promoting higher levels of emotional identification between people in regards to their needs and interests. The collapse of grand narratives has been witnessed, which is an indication that all interconnected approaches that involves human history from a period of ignorance to reason, from domination to freedom as well as from barbarism to civilisation has been the main aim of reminiscing grand narratives in order to benefit everyone which has not been practiced in the existence of grand narratives.

Beer (2000) elucidates that Lyotard imagines and sees grand narratives implicitly as masculine. He also imagines their death which is described to be (the grandest narrative of all) and his announcement of the death of grand narratives pleased so many people. Lyotard put an emphasis on the two types of narratives that are functioning in order to produce political legitimation via the process of expansion. He stated that, while one narrative works on drawing the expansion backwards towards the origin, the other narrative will be aiming at extending the expansion forward, towards the end. It is thus concluded that, one of these narrations shapes the mythic narratives that are indispensable to traditional communities, while the other shapes the narratives of emancipation which are referred to as metanarratives in *The Postmodern Condition* (1984). This is actually why it is said that Lyotard did a good job by lifting the yoke of imperial categories such as truth, human nature, history, tradition and suggesting how as well as what it seems to be like a natural narrative that is culturally generated.

3.6 Application of the theory

As this theory focuses on what transpired amongst people as a result of modernism, the theory explored, evaluated and critique the depth of postmodern elements such as illusions, culture, the representation of power and authority, the representation of truth and reality etc. The researcher also looked at how the postmodern elements identified in the novel contributed to the state of our current situation in the postmodern world we find ourselves today and how does what happened in the novel can be applicable to our current moments in terms of knowledge, culture and governance especially in our African countries and elsewhere. As Ngugi's text is an example of capitalism and tribalism as it highlights the challenges faced in Africa to forge its own identity, accepting the effects of imperialism as the truth while striving to create their historical African culture in their independent and developing society, the researcher will use the theory in line with how the leader of *Aburiria* as described in the novel misuses his power to gain control over others to his own benefit.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the postmodernism theoretical framework which will be applied and guide this study. The chapter also discussed and identified the major tenets of the Postmodernism theory which will help the researcher in the critique of postmodern elements in the selected text. The next chapter will discuss the methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research method used in this study. It has been stated by Mertens (2005) that a research methodology is a systematic investigation or inquiry whereby data is collected, analysed and interpreted in some way in an effort to understand, describe, predict or control an educational or psychological phenomenon. Thus, a research method is seen as to provide a framework to guide a researcher in order to be able to define phases, cycles, evaluative criteria and roles; it also allows freedom of method within this guiding framework.

4.2 Research design

According to Akhtar (2016), a research design is the conceptual blueprint within which research is conducted, and it is considered as the structure of research. This means that, a research design is actually referred to as the “glue” that holds together all the elements of a research project. In brief, it is a proposed plan of the research work.

A research design stipulates that, one needs to prepare a plan of action that stands as a guide of collection as well as analysis of the data. A research design is not aligned to a certain technique of data collection or any specific type of data. Therefore, it is advised that through the process of designing research, it is equitable that one recognise the type of evidence that is needed in order to answer the research questions in a reasonable manner.

A research design is necessary because it contributes to the smooth movement of the other research procedures, and it is through this process that it creates a vivid professional research as possible yielding into maximum information for the research project/study. On the other hand, the research design helps the researcher to organise and fashion his ideas in a shape equivalent for him/her to look for gaps in his body of work.

4.3 Qualitative research approach

This study has used a Qualitative research approach which is described by Van Manen (1990) as a method of observation to collect non-numerical data. Qualitative research approach focuses on the concepts,

meanings, definitions, characteristics as well as a description of things and it does not count or measures the characters that are involved. Qualitative research focuses more on understanding the phenomenon that is under review and it does not merely pay attention on the reader, researcher or the participants that are being studied or reviewed.

However, Holloway (2005) stated that, qualitative researchers mainly begin with research questions that focuses on how one can acquire an understanding of social behavior by studying the participants' subjective ways of social life. Another aim of qualitative research is to take over social events from the perspective of the participants that are being studied and also to give an insider's view of social life. Therefore, the researcher has used this approach to explore the social life of participants represented in the novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) in order to get an understanding of the situations surrounding the Kenyan people at that time. Lastly, one should bear in mind that the main objective of qualitative research paradigm is to find out the meanings and look out on the ways in which way they are made, negotiated or interpreted.

4.4 Phenomenological research design

This study used a phenomenological research design which is described by Creswell & Poth (2017) as a study that describes the meaning of a certain group of individuals in concern with their lived experiences or a certain concept or phenomenon. The main aim of phenomenology to group individual experiences and link it to a phenomenon which is a universal description of the essence being studied.

Van Manen (1990) added that, qualitative researchers identify a phenomenon "as an object of human experience" (p. 163). This human experience can be some phenomena which is linked to insomnia, grief, anger etc. It is then the duty of the researcher to collect data from individuals or persons who have gone through that certain experience or phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) added that this description consists of 'what' they have experienced or 'how' they have experienced it. To link the phenomenological to this study "Postmodern element in *Wizard of the Crow*", the researcher examined the experience of issues such as corrosive rage, political strife and everyday challenges that people of Aburiria encountered and how it affected them and their livelihood (Kenyans).

According to Giorgi (1997), in a phenomenological research, the aim of the researcher is to give an account or describe the phenomenon thoroughly in details as possible and remain truthful to its facts. Welman

and Kruger (1999) also added that the phenomenologists are mostly interested in understanding the social as well as psychological setups/phenomena from the point of view of people that are involved. This is an indication that, phenomenological research should focus its ways on how ordinary members of the society live and carry on with their daily lives. Thus, *Wizard of the Crow* is aligned to this phenomenon.

4.5 Text selection criteria

The study focused on Ngugi's English novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006), which was written after Kenya's independence. There are some of Ngugi's works written after independence, but the researcher has only opted for the novel which relate to the topic in question. This novel is fictionally set in Kenya and it contains the theme of Postmodernism and its influence on the socio-economic and political structures in postcolonial Kenya. There are some of Ngugi's novels that speak about the same topic which the researcher did not consider because they are written in the language (Gikuyu) that the researcher does not understand.

The selection and consignment criteria of the novel was content driven in relation to the various forms of repression in Kenya, which Ngugi (1982) refers to the suffering of the masses at the hands of the new ruling elite as a form of corruption by a power-hungry and autocratic government of contemporary Kenya that raises controversies in the Kenyan community. The researcher opted for *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) through the Postmodern lenses in order to explore how these types of suffering dominated Kenya and how it affected the Kenyan community at large.

Moreover, this study was done as a desktop study as an in-depth reading of selected texts took place as well as a collection of related data in order to determine the outcome of this study. No field work was carried out such as the use of questionnaires or conducting interviews in the literary analysis of the selected text. The researcher entirely read and analysed different types of sources available in order to draw conclusions as well as answering the research objectives. The primary source that was used in this study was *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) novel as well as additional insightful secondary sources from various literary critiques and other scholarly published journals.

4.6 Procedure

This study followed a qualitative content analysis procedure and data was collected by critically analysing the chosen novel. According to Atkinson (2017), a qualitative content analysis is a method that is used by

researchers to discover meanings embodied within a text and the focus of such research is mostly in line with the meanings that are underlying. In other ways, a quantitative content analysis focuses mainly on what is in a text.

As *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) was the only primary source of this study, a collection of other secondary sources also formed up part of this study as they presented related themes to this research. The researcher has opted for content analysis as the subject under study cannot be mathematically organised/quantified thus no statistical data presentation was given in this study.

4.7 Data analysis

Holloway (2005) added that, qualitative research uses methods of inquiry that formulates texts instead of numbers. Textual data includes transcripts which could be either for interviews, conversations, case histories or diary entries. The significance of textual data is that, it allows participants to express their own thoughts and their beliefs in their own terms. In order for the research objectives to be achieved, the researcher applied a content analysis approach which McKee (2003) described as a process of gathering information concerning the text that will help in gaining an original insight on their roles within the society and their communities.

Qualitative content analysis focuses on the development of meaning and they are led by an ontological view that texts perform an important role in the social construction of reality. Thus, this study was based on a qualitative content analysis research in which Ngugi's novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) was analysed. There was no fieldwork carried out, but only literary analysis of the imaginative fiction that was done. Works of other literary critics from journals, the internet, and other publications were also referenced with an aim to build the information that was used to interpret the study.

4.8 Research ethics

According to Creswell (2008), research ethics refers to doing what is morally and legally right in the conducting of research. This research was based on fictional works whose characters are of imaginative formation and it does not need the involvement of human participants. The research was done using written materials that are already available in the public domain which the researcher is considering not to be against the authors. Since that the research was based on fictional work whose characters are imaginatively created, the researcher made sure to be objective and not be biased when referring to real

people, events, places or organisations. The researcher also acknowledged all sources that were used to avoid plagiarism. Lastly, the researcher was responsible for the seeking of the ethical clearance permission from the Namibian University of Science and Technology Research Ethics Committee.

4.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher set out the research method followed in this study, which is a qualitative, desktop content analysis of selected and related works. *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) is the primary source of data and other sources cited in this study were used as secondary sources in which the research was based. This study was approached using the Postmodernism paradigm. It was through the Postmodern lens that the researcher explored how people were imperialised and how the issues of power and control were highlighted in the novel.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a Postmodernism analysis and discussion of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006). The chapter draws and connects an insight from the literature review chapter of this study and focuses/ relies on qualitative research methods as it was discussed and shown in the previous chapter. As the researcher identified themes pedestalled on specific aspects that emerged from the literature review, these themes were employed to meet this study's objectives which were to:

- To investigate the effectiveness of grand narrative;
- To explore the significance of magic realism; and
- To examine the use of grotesque in the novel.

First and foremost, the researcher will give a brief overview of the novel, and then proceed to address the postmodern elements in relation to the use and presence of grand narratives in the novel and then move to how magic realism is used as a postmodern element to expose the events stated in the novel and lastly examine how grotesque is used to paint a picture on the events stated in the novel.

Wizard of the Crow gives a reminder to the reader about the similarities between the two ideologies of capitalism and communism that are used as an expression of modernity as they were put into practice across the world in concern with their imperialist motives as well as their inability to encourage solidarity and their practices of viewing individuals as units of Labour. Aburiria's Ruler stands as a representation of a postcolonial African dictator as he shares the same ways of exploiting his own people with a wide range of communist and anti-communist rulers such as Pinochet, Stalin and Idi Amin Dada.

Dalleo (2012) supported this idea when he added that, *Wizard of the Crow* indicates a postcolonial teaching style that is in favor of ambivalence, a challenge for patriarchy as well as offers a new questioning treachery ways that are similar to colonial, neocolonial and anticolonial pedagogy. The central conflict in *Wizard of the Crow* is between the Ruler's regime and those who oppose it as it is figured explicitly as a discursive struggle. The proliferation of truths, rumors, gossip, and propaganda that carries the story forward reflects the Ruler's desire to position himself as the "sole voice of the people, and his attempts to wipe out those he labels terrorists who call themselves the Movement for the Voice of the People"

(p.24). This shows the level of colonialism that the Ruler is imposing upon his own people in order to fit into the world of modernism.

5.2 An overview of the novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006)

In this novel *Wizard of the Crow*, wa Thiong'o has blended satire and polemic in the way he depicted African nations at cross roads in regards with the aftermath under the white rule. The novel set in the Free Republic of Aburiria is presented in an allegorical form as a modern-day folktale, fraught with magic, tricksters as well as daring escapes in a form of disguised lovers. The ruler of this fictional African country has been in power and has ruled his people with an iron fist since independence. He is both the ruler and the lord of everyone and nobody dares question the exercise of his despotic powers. Within the period of his governance, the country is in such economic, social and political devastation that the majority of the masses are starving. But in the midst of the poverty and unemployment, he decides to build a testimony to his legacy, the world's tallest building, a massive skyscraper, christened Marching to Heaven, a perfect replica of the Tower of Babel that is mentioned in the bible. This represents the height of his quest for personal glorification at the expense of the wellbeing of the citizenry.

The word 'wizard' is an English word which is used to represent financial wizardly as well as the science of the occult unlike the word 'sorcerer' which is associated with witchcraft. However, this word 'wizard' is cautiously used to refer to both Kamiti as well as the practice of witchcraft and the word is thus vividly linked to Kamiti who is from Kenya but he had originated from India. From the beginning of the novel, it is said that Kamiti had walked to Eldares to look for job opportunities but he later ended up becoming a beggar who ended up spending most of his time at the front gate of the presidential palace since that he could not find a job and he later became sorcerer/witchdoctor in the suburbs of Santalucia. Ngugi uses the word 'sorcery' in order to emphasise the economic aspects of ritual practices in the post-colonial time and this is what Tonda (2020) refers to as the modern logic of sovereign while Bayart (1993) designated it as the belly politics of the colony.

Of all the characters in the novel, Kamiti is the main character who played the role of being the city's wizard. Kamiti did not have any knowledge in cursing rituals or witchcraft, neither did he received any training in traditional village councils. Thus, it was so surprising to see Kamiti, an Indian origin becoming so famous as an African Sorcerer, a job he never applied for. The novel itself has introduced sorcery as a game make-believed when the two beggars who were in fact Kamiti and Nyawira took on their heels with

the police and the incident ended up famous and taken seriously by the policeman Arigaigai Gathere who launched the urban legend of the *Wizard of the Crow* when he chased him in the prairie of Santalucia and he disappeared into thin air.

Lastly, the Ruler is one of the main evil characters within the novel and this can be witnessed by multiple narrations from people in Aburiria or voices from the ruling elite. The Ruler's way of governing and politics simply follows one principle of law which is his greed for power and wealth. Moreover, the country had been declared as a one-party state by the Ruler and on the other hand, he shows to be in favor and highly ambivalent to the dominant USA way of ruling. This is clearly shown in the novel that both capitalist and communist system are uncannily similar.

5.3 Grand Narrative in *Wizard of the Crow* (2006)

Grand narrative is a master idea that adds meaning, experience and knowledge to a society's legitimation, thus this section will explore the grand narrative in the novel as an important aspect of a postmodern analysis in this study.

5.3.1 Marching to Heaven as a depiction of grand narrative in *Wizard of the Crow* (2006)

Marching to heaven represents narrative knowledge which is seen as knowledge in a form of storytelling as it was emphasised by Lyotard (1979). Lyotard also added that in tribal times, knowledge of this type was formed as a result of myths and legends. He further added that, the narrative does not only explain but it also legitimates the knowledge at the same time thus when this knowledge is aligned to the social relations of their own society, these myths acted and worked as a legitimation of power relations that are already existing as well as their customs amongst people of that specific community. By viewing this from the postmodern perspective, one can say that narrative has become part of a social theory.

Wizard of the Crow is one of Ngugi's epic novels that touches on African political satire and it being written in more than 700 pages in Ngugi's own words, it is written in such a way that it represents/narrates the African continent in the twentieth century, the time whereby the Ruler of the fictional country Aburiria announced that he will launch the tallest building on earth to be called 'Marching to Heaven' and it is the same time Kamiti started to fend for a job which he didn't get until he later found himself waking up on a heap of rubbish just to find himself possessed by magical powers.

Aburiria in Ngugi's imagination is seen as a representation of several African leaderships. The Aburirian leader, who is only known by the name the 'Ruler' and his gang of unscrupulous ministers also leads through the example of their president the Ruler thus exercising a blend of brutality and showmanship for their own benefits. In Aburiria, corruption is rife and on its peak, the economy is on its knees with the building of the enormous 'Marching to Heaven' was meant to promote the Ruler's popularity. In the globalisation era, all the people that have defended Africa's well-being in the past such as churches are now unified and lead by the Global Bank whom the Aburirian government depends for financing their project. Thus, one can say that, the Ruler's making all efforts in order to get funding for his 'Marching to Heaven' project which will be the tallest building in the universe represents the arc of the novel's narrative.

Narrative beliefs had been witnessed in this novel when Tajirika lost his speech and he could no more utter words and Kamiti the 'Wizard' diagnosed it as a disease called "white ache" which means yearning to become or be European. This means that Tajirika believed that being a white man will make him more powerful, desirable, respected and offer him a better recognition in the society. He felt that the privileges given to a white person are better off than the ones offered to a black man. Later on, the same illness afflicted the Ruler, though with a different cause. This incident is aligned to the masses in Aburiria as they seemed to experience the same silent powers as they could not openly disclose their dissatisfaction over the Ruler's decisions, thus the Movement of the Voice of the People came to light in order to give the protestors their voices back.

However, Ngugi has turned the power of storytelling into a weapon against autocratic leadership and he had used the themes of speech and silence to carry the message of narrative across in this novel and his theme of storytelling is integrated within politics that are at the heart of this massive novel. *Wizard of the Crow* is an allegorical novel that represents Kenya as well as other African nations' autocratic and dictatorship type of governance.

In this novel, Ngugi emphasises and shows us how political arenas are being run in Aburiria on a daily basis and through all these happenings, storytelling is the key that is being used to bring the type of leadership in Aburiria. *Wizard of the Crow* book is referred to as a breakthrough as Ngugi drills deep down into the heart of how politics operates, starting with how the Ruler orders his cabinet ministers to do his will only. storytelling represents the techniques and ways that are used by politicians in Aburiria as they keep on

fabricating stories that eventually become the new realities that the people of Aburiria must live by. Purposefully, the Ruler creates realities with an iron hand as he orders people to live according to his wishes and businessman ended up arranging dubious deals in order for them to get tenders in Marching to Heaven project. It is through stories that they had to reach their goals and thus one can conclude that the fabrication of stories in this novel remains central.

This can be witnessed when Ngugi expressed that the Ruler take delights in ordering his two principal ministers Machocali and Sikiokuu to do his will. The ministers know perfectly well that the only price that they will pay one they fall out of their Ruler's favor is nothing but death. Even when the two ministers are incompetent, inexperienced and completely unable to carry out the tasks they are given by the Ruler, when they fail to do their duties, they fall back on their only resource they have which is their tongues.

Earlier in the novel, the Ruler convinces his cabinet in order for them to decide the best way to persuade the Western in order for them to grant them the funds they need to make Marching to Heaven a reality. Rumors about work related of the construction project around Aburiria spread like a wild fire and people flocked to Tajirika's office thus forming long ques all over the country and this made the Ruler to become worried with a fear that it may create a bad impression about him and his country. The Ruler looked angrily at Machokali for an answer, Machokali knowing that if he does not come up with a favorable answer and a quick explanation, then he will be a dead meat. Rather than him mentioning that people of Aburiria are hungry for jobs thus they formed long ques in search of employment that his government failed to provide for his own people, Machokali came up with an idea to tell the Global Bank that the lines are indeed formed as support for the project and he knows that the Ruler likes it when he uses people to cover up his evil tracks.

Turner (1974) stated that, metaphor and reality have been mediated in such a way that they can constitute the co activities alone. Bayart (2009) highlighted that "reality is mostly stranger than fiction and an interesting metaphor constitutes for both the real and the unreal" (p.235). This is witnessed when the governors of the Global Bank declined the loan to fund the Marching to Heaven project and the Ruler decided to write a letter and take up the challenge and come up with arguments that will make the governors of the Global Bank change their minds.

In the process, the Ruler planned to rehearse his oral arguments. “rumor have been stated that the Ruler talked nonstop for seven nights and days, seven hours, seven minutes and seven seconds. By then the ministers had clapped so hard that they later felt drowsy and numb and they could only utter whispers of *more, give us more, couldn't agree with the Mighty One More*. Some could barely complete a sentence, then a word, then a syllable. When they became too tired to stand, they started kneeling down before the Ruler, until the whole scene looked like an assembly in prayer before the eyes of the Lord” (p.496). But soon they found that even holding their bodies erect while on their knees was equally tiring whereby even the Ruler’s biographer had eventually rested his head on one side of the book and continued scrawling notes for the book of life.

Moreover, it is narratively shown that the intersection of time and space in the novel regularly employs the strategy of embodiment. The Ruler narratively remarks that his name and “Aburiria” should be used interchangeably: “Substitute the word Ruler for the country, as I am the Country” (p.513), he explains, demarcating in this way the boundaries of the country as only that space that is embodied by a single human life. Because “after the ruler, there is no future” (p.749).

5.3.2 Other aspects of grand narrative in the novel

In *Wizard of the Crow*, the mockery of the nation is achieved through ever expanding of the layers of satire and naming which is exemplified by ministers who bear physically exaggerated characteristics and resemble cartoon caricatures. This is an indication that, Ngugi’s writings and representation of characters in his texts gives a direction that that the West and global capital are involved in the dilemmas of African leadership which Ngugi refers to as the notion of ‘corrupt African leadership’. This is why McLaren (2008) further added that, in *Wizard of the Crow*, wa Thiong’o employs various strategies to enrich his Orature techniques by using multiple narrative voices. The dominant narrative voice resembles that of the author and relates the tale of the ruler with biting irony, mockery and sarcasm.

Another aspect of storytelling as a form of grand narrative is noted by the rumor-mongers of Aburiria (especially constable Arigaigai Gatherere) who continued to spreads stories about the mysterious and occult powers of the Wizard, thus, Arigaigai would always find himself surrounded by a crowd of people wanting to hear about the *Wizard of the Crow*. This resulted in people calling him by his initials A.G and some listeners named hi “the attorney of storytelling”. The recurrent “True, *Haki ya Mungu*” which means

'righteous of God' through Arigaigai Gather's confabulations became a catch phrase to ensure the manifestation and dissemination of rumors about the Wizard and his wizardly magic power.

Arigaigai's narratives leaves the hopeless Aburirians with a good hope as "no matter how intolerable things seemed, a change for the better was always possible. For if a mere mortal like *Wizard of the Crow* could change himself into any form of being, nothing could resist the human will to change" (p.96). Arigaigai Gather continued to stress that "And when I talk of him changing himself into anything, I am not passing on hearsay. True, *Haki ya Mungu*. I talk of what I saw with my own eyes" (p.96).

Ironically, the story of the Wizard's rise to notoriety is delivered through the voice of the policeman, constable Arigaigai Gather, A.G, as he is referred to. The policeman respects the power of the Wizard and the interplay between the central narrator's voice and that of A.G. offers alternative contexts for perceiving the *Wizard of the Crow*. This can be witnessed when the Wizard have been drunk at a bar but through A.G. voice the Wizard was not drunk with alcohol, "he was simply overwhelmed by a vision of all the evils he saw before the land; his throwing up on the grass by the roadside was his way of saying that the land needed cleansing" (p.597-598). In his narrative, Arigaigai is short on details about the episode and when he was pressed by some listeners in the crowd on what was the *Wizard of the Crow* doing in a cheap bar that serves poison, he answered them that even Jesus and Muhammed dwelled among the poor.

The different versions of the *Wizard of the Crow* were also narrated when he was reported missing from America without trace. It was an issue to explain why, despite the posters of the *Wizard of the Crow* all over the country, he could not be found. Where in Aburiria, they asked, could the man have hidden himself so as to elude the Ruler's ubiquitous eyes, ears, noses, legs and hands. The concern in knowing and deciding if there is any truth to any of the rumors being said is the fact that, the main source of most of these narratives was Arigaigai himself. Even when the stories are not the same, Arigaigai would swear that all of them were true. Also, when Tajirika was beaten and captured by a group of women that eventually continued to hunt him down and warn him of never to beat his wife again, Sikiokuu emphasised that they were not real human beings but rather "shadows created by the wizard" (p.526).

Mr. Walking stick, a wanderer from bar to bar, after he had heard Kamiti tell how he had once floated in the sky while his body reposed on a dumpsite, he got a shock of his life when the apparition he had tried to avoid had found him. Stricken with terror, he ran for seven days and nights without resting until he

reached his destination, the Santalucia headquarters of the Soldiers of Christ. He collapsed at the feet of the Christian soldiers and it took them a while to understand what he was trying to tell them. "I am one of the three garbage collectors that Satan once ambushed at a dumpsite in the prairie a couple of years ago and I am now here to bear witness that I have seen with my very own eyes the very Satan who appeared before us at the dump site in the prairie. I am here to say that I have converted and that I need the support of Jesus thus I want to be baptised and become a soldier of Christ" (p.596).

This is an indication that, through the narratives that people were told about, they believed that Satan really exist and that he can appear in a physical form anywhere any time. Kamiti's deeds throughout the poem made him to be labeled as to take up the form of Satan and that he is able to change himself into different forms. When they heard that he was taken to the state house, the soldiers of Christ "were adamant as ever: to arrest Satan, drag him through the streets of Eldares and then put him on trial" (p.597).

Another form of grand narrative is witnessed by the narratives of the existence of the Devil by the 'Soldiers of Christ' which is a group of young men and women with crosses and a banner on which was written the words "SOLDIERS OF CHRIST". The three garbage collectors started telling their stories of physically endangering their lives with the Devil and they were trembling as they told their tale of how they had found a dead body and were about to bury it in the dumpsite when it came to life, or rather rose from the dead and started to chase them around the vehicle, trying to ensnare them and threatening to put them into the huge bag he carried and take them home to his evil angels in Devil Land. The garbage collectors could not recall how they managed to escape from the Devil's grasp, but when they saw their chance, they seized it and fled. "It was a story of sadness and terror and relief-oh, what a narrow escape-and even before they were done with the tale, one of them stated that there will be no more garbage collection for him" (p.41).

It is also believed that daemons had left the churches and mosques and that they are now rooming around in the land and the two reports that soon began to circulate in Eldares were claims that Satan had been recently visiting Maritha and Mariko at their house in Santalucia just to pick a fight with Maritha and Mariko and the second narrative was that of Satan going about the towns and villages plucking out people's hearts, leaving their bodies as empty shells on roadsides and dumpsites. After the event involving the Ruler and the broken glass at All Saints, Maritha and Mariko stood before the congregation and

confessed that they were tormented by an irresistible lust for other people's flesh. Narrations about the devil spread the whole country that he truly exists and thus is also able to take different forms such as for a cat, dog, human etc.

The Ruler's illness narratives were created from different theories of which one of the unshed tears by his legal wife Rachel that she locked up her soul inside after her fall from his grace because Rachel confronted him about the issue of young school girls. The Ruler never admitted that he was aging but he had no problem being compared to the 'white man' and so he aligned the proverb to say that "a white man renews his youth with spring chickens" (p.6). In order for the Ruler to execute his punishment towards his wife Rachel, he constructed a mansion for her and "all the clocks in the house were frozen at the second, the minute and the hour that Rachel had raised the question of the school girls. The clock tick-tocked but their hands did not move, the calendar always flipped to the same date, the food, bedding and clothes were all identical to the same clothes Rachel wore when he questioned his husband (the Ruler)." (p.8).

This is an indication that narratives played an important role in this novel and they also brought out a great picture of what constitutes within this novel and thus one can say that Ngugi uses this dimension of writing to bring about issues that are experienced amongst communities of certain beliefs and attributes.

5.4 Exploration of magic realism in *Wizard of the Crow*

Magic realism is an important aspect of postmodern writing and Ngugi has widely used it in this novel and therefore the researcher found it to be a feasible part to explore as it contributes to a wide significance of this study. Thus, this section will explore magic realism as part of the findings of this study.

5.4. 1 Significance of magic realism in *Wizard of the Crow*

Wizard of the Crow is presented as a realist work as Ngugi used his peculiar style and language to sniff out the foul stench of complacency towards repression of women and ethnic minorities as well as the widespread of corruption amongst most of the African communities and leaders. References are made to Ngugi's skillful use of literary and linguistic approaches to x-ray the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions which the text fulfils as a realist literature. Through this, Ngugi has applied aesthetics in his language use in order to depict magic use which paints a crucial picture that contributes to the meaning of this novel.

According to Krishnamurthy (2016) “Ngugi’s writing was anti-colonial, he used realism in his portrayal of character and milieu. But when he started writing against his government, he resorted to pastiche and exaggeration” (p.12). This is showing another indication of how magic is used in the novel as a postmodern element. She also argued that, Ngugi uses folklore imagery to draw attention to the cruel and oppressive rulers in Africa and suggests that power can come from the ordinary people who fall back on traditional belief systems and indigenous knowledge. Post-modern writing allows for such descriptions since issues concerning reality are de emphasized and magic realism is adopted.

Though Kamiti has a master’s degree from one of the best university in India, he is unemployed and a beggar. Thus, he finds himself in opposition allies against the Ruler and his cabinet. He ended up joining a group of political activists that are protesting against Marching to heaven project by pretending to be beggars. The police rose up in arms in order to disperse the crowd thus ended up following Kamiti until at the end of the street. Kamiti in fear, he ended up taking refuge in Nyawĩra’s house who is a leader of the protesters in disguise of a beggar. Trying to frighten the police from entering Nyawĩra’s house, Kamiti decided to put a sign outside Nyawĩra’s house warning that anybody who touches the house does so at his/her own risk. He emerged from the dark with a cardboard and wrote on the board “Warning! This property belongs to a Wizard whose powers brings the hawks and crows from the sky, touch this house at your own peril. SGD. Wizard of the Crow” (p.770). Nyawira tied some bones together with the rags and Kamiti further added a dead lizard and a frog and hang them just above the door. This types of rituals and traditions usually happen in Kenya and it was mostly practiced by the hunters of Mount Kenya.

When the police officer saw the bundle of rags and bones tied together, he stepped back and became frightened when he saw a frog’s leg and a tail of a lizard. “Suddenly, I felt a force take ahold of me, turn me around and compel me to look at it. One glance at the thing hanging from the roof and I knew that I was powerful magic” (p.98). When the policeman read what was written on the cardboard, he ran and muttering to himself “I knew that they were not thieves, they were devils, djinns of the prairie, sent by the *Wizard of the Crow* to trick me to death” (p.77).

Since the house belongs to a wizard who has power that can bring down hawks and crows from the sky, rather than chase away the police, the sign attracts Officer Arigaigai Gatherer, who came back because he eventually believed that the wizard can use his power and make him to get promoted at work. Kamiti (*Wizard of the Crow*) has no such powers. Rather he uses his magic by making people to disclose and speak

what is in their minds thus, the *Wizard of the Crow* has helped many people in realising and renewing their lifestyles.

Manifestation of magic powers towards Kamiti can also be witnessed in the way Kaniuru describes the *Wizard of the Crow* on his encounter with him at Marching to Heaven premises. Kaniuru described that he eventually followed Kamiti as he walked down the street and when Kamiti reached the Ruler's Square near Paradise, he walked into a public toilet. "I thought to relieve myself and went in to see what was happening. There was no body there, the man had vanished into thin air. An alien. Back to Mars" (p.112). Kaniuru also warned and cautioned Nyawira about the danger that she might encounter if she continues to hang around with Kamiti "I do not want you to come to an evil end because of bad company. I am not superstitious but that man is not human. He might be a djinn or an ogre" (p.113).

One day, Titus Tajirika, the real-estate businessman and director of Marching to Heaven project woke up unable to speak as he obsessively looks in his bathroom mirror. He was stricken by terror and he started to bubble two mysterious syllables "if-if, if-if" which is said to be the "white-ache" malady. With the help of Nyawira and his wife Vinjina, they accompanied him to the shrine of the *Wizard of the Crow* in order to look for a cure for an illness that cannot be cured by Western healthcare. Kamiti's way of healing is described as unusual as he does not use any herbs or medicine but he rather uses rational discourses that are arranged in question-answering method. "I believe the man has the gift of second sight and he can see into the hearts of men" (p.542). The only witchdoctor's equipment he uses is a mirror whereby he pretends to see both the past and the future of the bewitched patient through the so called shadows and images in the mirror whereby he warns and advises the patient on how to avoid evil and future danger.

This means that Kamiti acts as a representation of the realisation of the urge for one to have their own true voice. However, Kamiti escape tricks gained popularity and he is left with no choice but to perform a role of a divine healer sorcerer who heals everyone with his magic powers. When patients show up at his place for healing, Kamiti sometimes has to treat the patient with the help of Nyawira and they would sometimes have had to put up a performance to show their wisdom in wizardly. However, Arigaigai ended up being promoted at work and Tajirika got cured from his malady of word called the 'white ache' disease and even the Ruler himself ended up getting back his speech with the help of the wizard.

As it is believed that the wizard has power to turn anything into something according to his desire, this came into question when Tajirika asked Kamiti what he did with the money he paid him for curing him from the 'if' malady. "You remember the money I paid you for healing me, three big bags. You told me that you buried the bags somewhere in the prairie. Tell us this: why did you really bury the bags in the ground? Were you hoping that the money would grow? Like money breeding or whatever" (p.601).

Tajirika believed that the *Wizard of the Crow* buried the treasure in the prairie guarded by the powers of the netherworld. All of a sudden, Tajirika saw that the leaves of the tree bushes in front of him were not ordinary leaves. He cried out to his crew "look, please look and tell me if those are not American dollars growing on those bushes" (p.547). When the Ruler heard this news, he gave orders to the army chief to go and retrieve the dollar trees and the precious soil in which they grew. The Ruler sees this as a good opportunity that he will no more need to beg the global bank for funds but he will rather capture the *Wizard of the Crow* to use his magic and produce money to build his Marching to Heaven project.

Later on, the scenario called "pestilence" emerged "all the leaves and all the roots of the bush had been eaten by the pests, leaving nothing but bare twigs" (p.551). Arigaigai Gatherer narrates that the pests had the body of a white termite and the head and mandibles of a red ant and that the pests were as big as locusts. When the soil was turned over by Kahinga to see if the leaves were buried there, he only found more termites fattened to the size of big worms or caterpillars after feasting on leaves of money, an indication that the termite-like creatures had eaten all the money. Tajirika claimed that "the *Wizard of the Crow* had already bewitched the place where the dollar trees grew" (p.553). This is an indication that it is believed that the *Wizard of the Crow* is the cause of all this misfortune with his magic and witchcraft powers. "It is the *Wizard of the Crow* who produced these white termites" (p.555).

Moreover, Arigaigai Gatherer continued to confirm and acknowledge the *Wizard of the Crow's* unprecedented power of the night he chased he chased two beggars who, on jumping over a cleft rock in the prairie turned out to be one person. A.G added that a force that he cannot explain propelled him when they were digging in the prairie looking for where the wizard had buried the money. "it was then that I recalled the night that the *Wizard of the Crow* had split himself into two powerful djinns" (p.554). Kahinga also confirmed that the *Wizard of the Crow* belongs to a family of djinns which are considered to be very dangerous spirits.

Even when the Ruler had succumbed to the malady of his bodily expansion, it was seen as the work of the magic power of the *Wizard of the Crow*. “Do you think this is the work of the *Wizard of the Crow*? Or the Limping Witch? Vinjina whispered” (p.653). Tajirika responded that “with the wizard, you cannot rule out anything” (p.653). This is an indication that it is believed that all good and evil incidences are caused by the *Wizard of the Crow*.

When Kaniuru had just gotten news about the *Wizard of the Crow* and was preparing to break it to the Ruler in person, he learned that His Mightiness had suffered another bout of bodily expansion and now was floating in the air. “The *Wizard of the Crow* must be behind this, he thought, and fearing that he might be the next target, he decided to keep the news to himself until he learn more about the situation” (p.654). In order to save himself from the wrath of the wizard, he retreated to Jane Kanyori’s place and asked her to chain one of his legs to the bedpost and lock the door from the outside. Whenever the wind shakes the windows, Kaniuru would hold the bedposts with both hands.

In order for Kaniuru not to be caught by surprise by the *Wizard of the Crow*, he thought of working out alternatives to save himself, thus “for a few days, he drove everywhere, even the shortest of distances in order to make it impossible for the *Wizard of the Crow* to use the wind to blow him into the sky. For short walks, he got himself boots with soles reinforced with iron, but dragging the boots became cumbersome and after a while he settled for the much simpler idea of weights in his jacket” (p.655).

Also when Kaniuru went to finally visit the Ruler, he vividly described the image that “the ceilings where the Ruler was hanging looked earthly and that the walls even looked earthlier and of course the expanded Ruler whose body despite the straps, kept swaying slightly from side to side like a balloon in the light breeze. The Ruler was also talking in a voice that sounded as if it came from Heaven. The fact that the straps and the platform were visible ruined the illusion of a deity in the sky” (p.656). This gave Kaniuru thoughts as if he had sprouted wings and was about to rise and float in the air like the Ruler.

Magic realism is such a strong part of discussion in this study as it does not only involve Nyawira and Kamiti but also the Ruler at some point in order to show that the conspiracies in the fight between the wizards and the Ruler were executed in different and similarly ways in the hope of winning the ruling battle. In order for the Ruler to dispute the disturbances by the snakes at the launch of his birthday gift, he decided to issue a warning to the rumors of snakes, devil worship and supernatural powers by pointing

at the cameras with his club-shaped staff as an indication that he, the Ruler, would out snake all their plastic terrorist snakes with real ones. "He raised the club higher in the air as if ready to throw it at any one. The cameramen ducked behind their cameras, and all at once as if hit by the same object simultaneously, every television screen in the country split into seven pieces" (p.25). The viewers did not know whether the Ruler had actually thrown the club or simply had the power to disintegrate their screens.

Moreover, the ruler decided to counter the basis of the malice of magic and snakes towards him thus, he decided to visit a church and he rode on a donkey in imitation of Jesus. As soon as the Ruler set his foot at the doors of the cathedral "the walls shook as if moved by an earth tremor. Crosses on the walls, people's clothes or pieces of paper danced strangely, as if struggling to flee" (p.270) and then the whole congregation heard the sound of something "crashing through the window, breaking the glass into seven pieces" (p.28). It is said that the Ruler had attended a few other churches and in all cases at least one glass window was shattered into seven pieces by whatever force the cross and the Bible-wielding priests had driven out. When the Ruler later visited the Islam synagogue in order to demonstrate his equality of all faiths, the congregation heard "the iron bars of one of the windows creak and some of them bend outward as if someone were pushing the bars to set himself free" (p.29). All these incidences at places of worship is said to have restored devillness normal order of worship on these religious shrines and some city dwellers put up posters written "ELDARES IS A DEVIL-FREEZONE" (P.29).

When Kamiti was briefly narrating to Nyawira about his flight over Africa, the Caribbean and South America as well as to Manhattan in New York in his bird form in search of black power, Nyawira could not believe him. Kamiti narrated that their seeds of defeat were actually caused by "ogres" and that the ones he saw were half beast and half human. "They were real the ones I saw when in my bird form were real" (p.732). Kamiti also narrated to Nyawira that his great grandmother believed in the physical reality of devils and angels and that they often walked on earth.

When Tajirika was stricken with white-ache and Vinjinia came to work in the office for the first time in her life, she often brought her children with her and Nyawira use to tell them stories and they loved the story of the two mouthed 'ogres' with one mouth at the back of the head and the other in front. Kamiti commanded Nyawira to go to Maritha and Mariko and ask Vinjinia to find out whether her husband Tajirika has grown long hair or covering his head at night or doing something unusual. "I want to know

whether Tajirika has grown a second mouth. It is not just Tajirika, I suspect the same with of Kaniuru and the other followers of the Ruler” (p.733). Kamiti’s speculation of ogre like characters gave an imagery of the type of people and their characters often linked to corruption and greediness. Ogres are known to scare and feed on human blood and flesh, the same thing that is exactly happening to Aburirian people under the Ruler’s government and his corrupt cabinet that are having all the resources to themselves, leaving the rest of Aburiria to suffer.

Maritha’s feedback to Nyawira when he visited Vinjina’s house to ask her if Tajirika had grown a second mouth ended in vivid narrations about the events that Maritha witnessed as an indication that indeed there was a change in Tajirika’s physical appearance when she eventually visited Vinjina’s house. Maritha described that Gaciru (Vinjina’s daughter) got stuck in the Lake of Tears that was situated within their house as she tried to flee from her parents that she described that “since mother and father became big in the government, they have become strangers to the home and to us children...and so when I saw him... don’t take me to father, I saw what he now looks like” (p.739).The Lake of Tears is described to have a group of ducks that were suspended in the air and birds frozen in one spot in the sky.

All the creatures on the surface of the lake were also trapped at the stand still and Gaciru was frozen in the act of running. “It was then that I heard something make a movement in my belly” (p.737) which is an indication that Maritha was under an unknown influence that made her and her husband laugh uncontrollably and continuously until tears started flowing down their cheeks and when their tears of joy and laughter touched the still water in the lake, everything that had stood frozen began to move. Gaciru eventually started walking to where Maritha, Mariko and Vinjina were “she walked on the water, but she did not sink” (p.739). This can be a witness of magic type of narration/writing that Ngugi used to carry the message on the events that happened to show the type of leadership in Aburiria.

A few days before yet another double celebration of the Ruler’s birthday and the Anniversary of Baby D, four apparitions covered from head to foot with long silver hair and beards converged at the headquarters of the Eldares police from four different directions and collapsed at the entrance. It is said the apparitions carried a message that they had been sent by the dead people and ancestors to announce that the reign of the Ruler should come to an end.

Lastly, in *Wizard of the Crow*, the depiction of Kamiti and Nyawira in the forest resembles a pastoral folktale and thus Ngugi also fashions animals in a frozen state or suspended time and places Kamiti in a magical world where he is taken by comrades to “their farms where they grew foods, millet, sorghum, yams and arrowroots as well as varieties of Aburirian berries. Unlike the polluted soil of Aburiria, the forest is perceived as a school and the gardens were nurseries for healing plants” (p. 758). This could be the reason for concluding the novel with portions set in the natural world to attempt to resolve the particular dilemmas of Kamiti and Nyawira with broader issues of ecology.

5.4.2 Kamiti as a representation of magic

Kamiti once went home to visit his parents when he eventually discovered that he belongs to an old family of hunter-sorcerers and that his grandfather was a reputed healer of his community. The ritual improvised by Kamiti and Nyawira is a resemblance of a precise ritual called “the claw ritual” that had been used by the Meru hunters and minority of the Mount Kenya inhabitants as a protector and curse against the intruders of their land and resources. They use it to protect their economic welfare and later on from British settlers. Although the performance of Kamiti and Nyawira seems fictitious and superstitious, it still carries a meaningful purpose in an African society to curb harrowing spiritual and moral decay during the times of political dictatorships that Kamiti and Nyawira are experiencing at the time.

Kamiti usually had had sensations of feeling himself ease out of his own body especially at night in the wilderness. He would see himself abandoning his body for the sky as if pulled by a force intent on impressing him on the grandeur and mystery of a universe with no beginning or end. He would roam free in the universe the whole night and when he returns to his body in the morning, he would feel his spirit imbued with fresh energy. “Kamiti had always had a strong sense of smell, and even as a child, he could scent things in distant places. His power of smell was so strong, animal-like, that he often knew the identity of a person before he appeared and he was sensitive to the different smells in a crowd” (p.48). However, Kamiti could not really tell where the smell was coming from and he wondered whether it was coming from his body or perhaps from his surroundings. Even when Nyawira asked Kamiti why he did not attend Marching to Heaven gathering, Kamiti could not tell her of about his odd sense of smell. He did not like being in crowds as foul smells galore assailing his nostrils.

Kamiti, a luckless job seeker, one day woke up on a rubbish heap to find himself possessed of magical powers. He could not tell whether he was in a temporary coma or a deep sleep, but when a slight breeze

blew, it lifted him out of himself to the sky where he started to float. In his magical form, Kamiti could see his own body lying on the ground in the sun, and free of the body, he wandered Aburiria where he compared the conditions in the different towns and regions of the country. "This is really funny, he said to himself when he saw that he looked like a bird and floated like a bird; he enjoyed the rush of cold air against his wings. He recalled a Cristian song and when he started to sing, he could not open his beak as wide as his mouth. From his vantage point, he had a bird's eye view of the northern, southern, eastern, western and central regions of Aburiria" (p.38).

It is through his bird form that Kamiti got the chance and pleasure to explore the whole of Eldares as well as every part of his country Aburiria that he never visited before. Through his magical bird form, he had seen that everywhere people were hungry, thirsty and in rags. In most towns, shelters made out of cardboard, scrap metal, old tires and plastics were home to hundreds of children and adults. "So I am not alone, he heard himself say to his bird self. Maybe he should abandon his human form and remain a bird, floating effortlessly in the sky, bathing in the fresh air of Sky land" (p.39). A bit confused, he thought that before making any decision about the form in which he would lead the rest of his life, he should return to his body lying in the sun to recover and review the shocks of life. "But what if his body had been completely scorched by the sun? At the thought, he flapped his wings and hurried back to Eldares. When he arrived, a truck full of garbage had just pulled up at the foot of the trash mountain. He was about to reenter his body but he held himself in check and floated a bit longer to see what they would do with his shell" (p.39), a clear vindication of Kamiti's wizardism.

Kamiti also had another experience in his bird form when Dyn Furick (the Ruler's doctor for the self-induced expansion disease) asked to challenge Kamiti in finding the cure. The affliction that had visited the Ruler's body had defied Kamiti's divining skills as he did not know how to prescribe the cure without first divining the cause of the malady and felt as if the illness was mocking him. While Kamiti was lying down in his room thinking of how to deal with the malady, he heard a voice telling him to go to all the crossroads, market places, temple sites and all the dwelling places of black people and find out the sources of their power. "There you will find the cure for SIE (Self Induced Expansion)" (p.494).

The voice was singing a song telling his spirit to wake up, "*Wake up brother spirit, if you let sleep rule over you, Blessings will pass you by*" (p.494). The voice had a Nyawira shape and in his sleep, he felt as if Nyawira was stretching her hands out to him from above. "He felt his whole self-lighten and he saw

himself rise, rise and float, reaching beyond the grasp for Nyawira. He had left his body behind and now a bird, he was flying freely in the open sky” (p.494). The form in which he had travelled had been so real that he automatically touched his mouth when he woke up: to his relief, his lips were not a beak, and his arms not feathery wings and the clothes on him were the same as he had on when he first lay on the bed to rest.

In his bird form, Kamiti continued “Maybe I should let them burry my body, he told himself, or rather his bird self: the body is a prison for the soul. Why shouldn’t I cut off the chains that now tie me to it, let the body and the soul say good-bye to each other so that my soul will be free to roam across the land and all over this sky” (P.40). When Kamiti saw men lifting up his body and throw it into the pile of rubbish in the back of the lorry, headed for the dump, he heard a voice from within cry out that the body was the temple of God and the soul had no right to cut loose its connection to the world before it had completed its purpose on earth. The stench which hit his nostrils was so strong that it made him sneeze as he tried to sit up. When the driver of the lorry saw this together with the garbage collectors, they all fled and the three were now screaming out Satan.

When Arigaigai Gatherer was tasked by Machokali to search for the *Wizard of the Crow* as he was reported that he vanished from America and is said to be back to Aburiria, Arigaigai approached the person who was tasked to draw the pictures of the Wizard in order to make his search and capture easier and told him that no human hands could draw the likeness of the Wizard of the Crow. “Ask yourselves: who was the Wizard of the Crow? Was he a man or woman? Personally I knew that he possessed the ability to change himself into a man or a woman or into anything else. He is a whirlwind. He is lightning. He is the sun and the rain. How can you draw the likeness of air, breath, soul? The Wizard of the Crow is the being that animated everything, and how can you draw a picture of that?” (p.569).

When Kamiti was summoned by the Ruler at the assembly grounds to use his power with mirrors to capture Nyawira and reveal her hiding place or otherwise he will be fed to the crocodiles of the Red River, one of Kaniuru’s fearless youth crouched behind him trembling “That man is not a man, he told Kaniuru in whisper. Listen to me, I use to be a garbage collector. We were three. I was the driver. That man was once dead. We buried him. He rose from the dead before our very eyes and he chased us across the open field. We were saved by the Soldiers of Christ. One of us joined the sect right away. The other one went to hide right in the bars. I joined the youth. That man is Satan in a human form” (p. 684). This words

echoed in Kaniuru's mind especially that he himself had witnessed the man vanish without a trace from the public toilets not far from Paradise.

Kamĩĩĩ was finally welcomed into the Movement for the Voice of the People's headquarters, whereby he saw posters and drawings of some heroes and heroines of Aburĩrian and African anticolonial resistance who were never mentioned in official documents. Then his eyes rested on a big map of the world with Africa at the center where a red paper arrows appeared pointing at cities with a black maker. The arrow began to move down the map, and it would stop and flicker at those towns he had visited in the body of a bird. The man who entered and interrupted his exploration of the map stated that, they try to locate their origins and know all the places to which black people have been scattered, from India, where dwell the Siddis, to Fiji in the Pacific, where the people claim Tanganyika as the site of their origins as "the centers of ancient black civilisation are the sources of black power" (p.757).

5.5 Grotesque in *Wizard of the Crow*

Grotesque is an element that paints a character with an ombre picture thus, Ngugi used it in this novel in order to show and create images for the readers to familiarise themselves and have a wide understanding of the types of leaders Kenya had at that time. The following section will present the use of grotesque in the novel and how it contributes to a clear understanding of this study.

5.5.1 Exploration of grotesque and its significance in *Wizard of the Crow*

Grotesque is understood to be in an aesthetic category and it is demonstrated how it functions within its fundamental existential experiences. Moreover, grotesque is being identified as an important as well as a potentially anthropological universal device that societies have used to conceptualise change and alterity. In fictional writings, characters are usually considered to be grotesque if they present signs of empathy and disgust. In *Wizard of the Crow*, grotesque characters and activities ranging from beggarly appearances up to wizardly characters, to vulgar dance performances puts the authoritative measures which are taken by the Ruler and his cabinet ministers to halt.

Everybody in Aburiria knew that the Ruler was the supreme educator and teacher number one. All institutions of learning from primary schools till universities and colleges were only required to teach the ideas of the Ruler as he is regarded as the supreme educator. They would be required to offer the Ruler's mathematics, science, philosophy and history. The students will be taught the geography and

demographics of all the countries the Ruler had visited and intended to visit. In recognition of the fact that the Ruler was the number one writer and that all book published in the country should have the name and signature of the Ruler as the original author. All new editions of the Bible, the Quran, Torah and Buddha's books of light or any religious texts read in schools would have prefaces and introduction made by the Ruler. It is also said that "the Ruler had power, real power over everything including years and Time" (p.7). This is all evidence of the Ruler's self-gratification.

"Ngugi uses the Bakhtinian notion of the grotesque and obscenity by turning the rulers of post colony into objects ridicule and in the process transcends the limitations Bakhtin imposes on the term" Pucherova, 2019, p. 109). Mbembe (1992) supported this idea of Bakhtin grotesque as he stated that it is the local bourgeoisies like in the case of the Ruler and his cabinet who boast about their cleverness and their evil ways on how to steal from the people as well as how they bow to the control of the foreigners that the grotesque is restricted. Ngugi does this in order to show how the Aburrian government is exploiting the wealth that is meant for the masses and how greedy those that have access to the national resources are.

Bhat (2014) stated that, *Wizard of the Crow* is presented in a satirical mode as Ngugi has used forms of realism and fantasy, creating a world that is rejected by the desire. Satire suggests that what is depicted in the novel will obviously be exaggerated in order to show and act as a warning of what might surface and this is exactly what Ngugi did in *Wizard of the Crow* as the novels presents an exaggeration of what is depicted, making Ngugi's work a more chilling satire. By using grotesque, Ngugi mocks the inconsiderate characters that are holding political ambitions without any beneficial income for the masses. It is not by extension of real to the world of impossibilities that Ngugi is able to make his political characters to look goofy and absurd, thus behaving in a strangely manner.

This novel is an indication that Ngugi wa Thiong'o creates his ogre-like characters through the use of the grotesque body's image to draw attention to their predatory nature. Ngugi uses the literary device, grotesque, efficiently to bring down to earth the moral degradation and corruption and he employs the deformed images as a literary device to reach the attention of the masses. The depiction of the moral and political corruption through various characters and their confession about their act of robbery emphasises the violation, devastation and domination prevailing in Kenya. Thus, Ngugi's use of literary technique firmly supports his goal to unveil the corruption of postcolonial Kenya.

The leader is surrounded by a group of incompetent ministers whose sycophancy culminates to grotesque body modifications in separate plastic surgeries. The story goes that Machokali who is just an ordinary member of parliament one day flew to England to have his eyes surgically enlarged to the size of an electric bulb so that his eyes will be very sharp in such a way that he would be able to spot the enemies of the ruler no matter how their hiding places might be.

In hearing of the good fortune that befallen Machokali, Sikiokuu enlarged his ears so that he will be able to overhear the conspiracies against the Ruler. "His ears were larger than a rabbit's and they always primed to detect danger at any time and from any direction" (p.14). Another ordinary member of parliament called Benjamin Mambo followed suit and had his tongue elongated his tongue in order to spread the Ruler's almighty word. This is all evidence of grotesque use as *Wizard of the Crow* give an insight of characters that change their bodies and physical appearance in order to satisfy the Ruler's request and self-gratification.

Machokali, who enlarges his eyes, is eventually rewarded with the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs while Sikiokuu, who enlarges his ears, is honoured with the post of being a Minister of State who will be in charge of spying on the citizens thus, he was made to become the director of the secret police machine known as M5. Big Ben Mambo was also given to lead the Ministry of Information and each new development was twisted by Machokali and Sikiokuu in order to fit the narratives that are meant to facilitate their lust for power and cover them against the wrath and punishment of the Ruler. They remain in high positions of power not by virtue of their credentials in good governance but by their capacity for storytelling and twisting of facts. Soon they help to build the tower of Babel which is linked together with layers after layers of stories and as the tower grows higher and higher, it crumbles to the ground.

Moreover, grotesque presents characters in ways that undercut their 'real' configurations. An example can be taken from when the Ruler returned from America, he is depicted as an enlarged balloon-like pregnant figure that people had to push him in the helicopter that they returned with to Aburiria. "Tajirika stood on a chair and grasped at the Ruler's feet, but no matter how often he did, the Ruler would again rise like a balloon" (p.650). When doctor Kaboca came to attend to the Ruler, Tajirika emphasised to the doctor that the Ruler has conquered gravity. The Ruler further explained to the doctor that, when he heard the news from the global bank that they have rejected the Marching to Heaven loan project, he became angry and that is when his body started to expand and that his anger almost choked him, thus

he felt himself lifted uncontrollably. The Ruler's balloon-like floating body does not only add to the mockery but expands the mind bending shift from the 'real' which is further complicated by his giving birth to a son. Ngugi also employs a range of scatological and olfactory references to identify the ruling class where money is associated with stench, rotting bodies with a minister and excrement as a method of escaping from imprisonment.

As grotesque in literature is described to focus on the body of a human, and that it has ways that it can be exaggerated and distorted, grotesque is seen as to draw its power from a combination from the familiar and the distorted images. The presence of grotesque in *Wizard of the Crow* is made in such a way that one can link the scenarios described in the novel of which its main focus is to present self-gratification of the Ruler which pinpoints out the type of leader he was and the unpleasant issues that people under his leadership were going through. Another form of grotesque used in this novel is when the Ruler thought of protecting the country against malicious so called historians, novelists and rumormongers that spread their lies and distort the real information. This is why the Ruler has decided to appoint his own personal official biographer, "it was then that everybody realised that the man with the leather-bound notebook and a pen the size of a water pipe was the Ruler's official biographer" (p.21). In this case, a pen is used as a distorted grotesque image to represent the type of people that fits the Ruler's caliber.

5.5.2 The link between body, politics and voice with grotesque

According to Journo (2008), the link between the body, voice and politics goes back to Roman and medieval times and that is why Ngugi used this image of the body of power in this novel in order to show and outline the functions of a fictitious African dictatorship in Aburiria. Journo (2008) also added that, there is a correlation in the link between power and body and thus these two characteristics are often linked in Africa. A big man's belly in Africa is regarded as a sign of his economic (wealth) or political power and eating is often assigned to the behavior of politicians as being greedy and unfairness of wealth distribution.

Sikiokuu, one of the prominent ministers of the Ruler, after having mentioned the enemies of the state, in the process of correcting himself, he reassured his Ruler Master that "O my Lord, you don't know how sweet your name sounds in the ears of those who truly believe in you and who knows that you and the country are one and the same" (p.136). The reinforcement of this identity is clearly linked to the physical

effects of the Ruler's actions towards his country. The novel highlighted the Ruler's common features of dictatorship and this is why it is stated that "his signature on a paper or a word from his mouth could bring about the immediate cessation of life" (p.233). This indeed made the Ruler to believe in his omnipotence and that he was now sovereign. Also emphasising on the warning he was about to issue to the terrorists of the Movement of the Voice of People when he eventually threw his club at a cameraman during an interview and, "simultaneously every television screen in the country split into seven pieces" (p.25).

However, the novel itself stands as evidence for a theme of the Ruler's puffed up stomach. This became evident as it is stated in the novel that when the Ruler got confronted with the letter from the global bank and upon reading that they have rejected his proposal for Marching to Heaven project while his country is in a mess "the Ruler rose to make a speech... but when he opened his mouth, no word came out... all of a sudden, his cheeks, stomach and his whole body began to expand" (p.486). This came up in the new context of dictatorship as it is described to be a hyperbolic dimensions of the mysterious inflation of the Ruler's body along with the impended malady power of speech as it is presented in such a way that it stands as a representation of the loss of his power and body through the anticipations of his speech.

The images of the body are not only used to describe the Ruler as the head of state but it also includes the description of his limbs as well as his cabinet ministers and advisors. The novel mostly laments on the two ministers of the Ruler as they are also prominent characters as they changed their body appearances. Minister of Foreign affairs who was an ordinary member of the parliament went as far as England to have his eyes enlarged and thus they became the most prominent feature of his face thus, Sikiokuu having heard of the fortune that had befallen Machokali, he also travelled to Paris to have his ears enlarged so that he is able to hear all the conversations against the Ruler and his government. This is an indication that the members of the government are depicted to possess so many limbs as they are headed by the Ruler and these graphic descriptions will enable the reader to capture the caricatured nature of the mentioned characters.

There is however an analogy between the illness and political crisis that goes hand in hand with several scenes within the novel. It is said in the novel that Tajirika was once testifying in front of the video-cameras and eventually linked his illness to a coup-d'état. On the other hand, when Sikiokuu in turn to imagine himself in the posture and position of being the Ruler of Aburiria, he immediately gets contaminated by the white-ache disease called "if". "His white ache came back with a force that almost swept him off the

ground” (p.741). However, the cure the *Wizard of the Crow* had prescribed had been a response to Tajirika desire to become a white English man, moreover, an ex-colonial type. The white *American* male was the desirable one. The final stage of the degradation of the social and political body is when the witch doctor who once managed to cure the malady of words got infected by the same disease thus giving a picture that the only healthy that is left in Aburiria is only the subaltern women who are fighting for freedom under the leadership of Nyawira.

The ‘if’ malady that have stricken the Ruler stands as a representation of power hunger and the Ruler’s cravings of his comparisons to white people as he believed that they are better than him or rather that he could do better and get better offers if he was a white person. “if I had been white, would they have done what they did to me? Or, if I had been white, would they have treated me the way they just did in the presence of my ministers?” (p.491). This shows that, the body of power takes turns in amplifying the Ruler and his cabinet ministers quest for power and felt that their identity is the reason for their downfall rather than them realising that their downfall is mainly caused by their greediness.

The Ruler refuses to admit to the decaying nature of his governance and thus linked the opposition leader to a disease: “Nyawira is a disease, an infectious disease” (p.369) that needs to be gotten rid of. In a similar way, illnesses are described by Titus Tajirika in a political way when he was interrogated by Njoya and stated that: “diseases do not knock at the door and say, I am so and so, please let me in; they force their way, more like a coup d’état” (p.337). His interrogator understood this description as a threat to the Ruler’s power thus, Tajirika’s interrogator fumed “so you were really thinking of a real coup d’état?” (p.338). These representations had spread through the novel thus creating images of hunger for power amongst the elites and on the other hand made it easier for the reader to visualise the nature of decaying power.

The body as a representation of power is explored in the text through the so called “self-induced expansion” (p.488) of the Ruler, and this is seen as a representation of power and corruption. People are only shown the part that is presentable and eventually became grotesque when it is hidden. Moreover, the people are not presented as individuals in the novel but rather described as homogenous mass or group, apart from few prominent figures such as the *Wizard of the Crow* and Nyawira. The queuing mania is a good example of this poor distinction as the ques are described as having “no beginning and no end” (p.159), a person would go for window shopping and would suddenly find out that a que had formed

behind him/her. The ques started out of the blue without a clear objective, later to become a “site of democracy” (p.199) for opposition leaders like Nyawira.

On the other hand, the representation of the body of the people and mostly of the opposition is represented by its voice in such a way that it cannot be stopped by the power and leadership in charge. *Wizard of the Crow* represents several purposes and one can say that it might be viewed as a comical device that mocks the type of dictatorial power. It is also educating the readers in the sense of power and how power is able to change.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher analysed the selected text from a postmodern perspective. *Wizard of the Crow* is a vast, sprawling and satirical allegory type of novel that is written in 6 parts namely: Power, Queuing, Female, Male, Rebel and Bearded Daemons. The novel is set in the Republic of Aburiria and it deals with the self-loathing project of its Ruler to build a tower ‘Marching to Heaven’ which is a comparison to the house of Babel which would reach the very gates of heaven while the Movement of the Voice of the People under the leadership of Nyawira who is one of the major characters tries to bring democracy back to their corrupted land by the Ruler and his cabinet.

This novel had shown that the Ruler is fond of the Soviet-style communist type of leadership which is also accompanied by his embodiment mimicry of Englishness. This evident as one of the widespread illness and theme of the novel is “white ache” meaning that the elites wished they were whites as whiteness in Aburiria is associated with power as the characters with ambitions of becoming powerful desire to be white. This is witnessed when one of the characters, Titus Tajirika partially accomplished his wish of being a white man and had his right arm and left leg whitened through a plastic surgery. Tajirika also went ahead to take over the leadership of Aburiria through a coup de tat thus replacing the Ruler to become “Emperor Titus Vespasianus Whitehead”9p.753) an imitation of Roman and English imperialists.

This novel also emancipated that African leaders eventually worship Western science as Tajirika went to have his white arm and leg surgery in New York, Sikiokuu went to have his ears to be enlarged in Paris, minister Mambo had his tongue elongated in Germany and Machokali had his eyes enlarged in London. This evidence is a demonstration that the characters are filled with identity crisis and that they need to fill their emptiness of identity with borrowed identities. Identity emptiness is emblematised by the Ruler’s

balloon-like inflating body which later gave birth to 'baby democracy' which is a typical postmodern experience as it is associated with the feeling of ones lack of own science, scholarship and traditional philosophies.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study was based on the exploration of postmodern elements in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) which he wrote in Kenya. The objectives of the study were:

- To investigate the effectiveness of grand narrative;
- To explore the significance of magic realism; and
- To examine the use of grotesque in the novel.

The study used concepts of Postmodernism theory as a theoretical framework lenses to analyse the novel.

6.2 Conclusion

The study analysed how *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) fictionalises magic as well as grotesque in order to narrate stories about the type of leadership in Kenya. However, grand narrative formed an important part in bringing to light the events in this narrative novel, thus, the research employed a postmodern theory in the analysis and interpretation of the events depicted in this fictional novel *Wizard of the Crow* (2006) by Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

In *Wizard of the Crow*, Ngugi used magic realism as well as grotesque language that relates the narrated events exposing the type of governing style as well as the type of leaders in Kenya at the time. This study is however aimed at helping to reconstruct about how majority of African inhabitants are treated under the governance of their fellow African in the real world through Ngugi's aesthetic style of writing by fictionalising grotesque characters as well as using magic realism as a powerful tool to execute the real events that are treated and perceived as an important part of an African being or culture. The study adopted the qualitative, desk top approach and the texts were interpreted through content analysis.

The themes in *Wizard of the Crow* are exploitation of the masses by the elite and the struggle for freedom and equality by the masses as a result of postmodernism in Kenya. It is through Ngugi's interpretation of the conditions which he believes were created by the coming and involvement of western imperialists to Kenya as a result of modernism, and therefore Ngugi portrays the West as the source of Kenya's struggle

in leadership and community development amongst the masses. In this fictional novel, Ngugi shows that all the factors that caused disruptive effects on Kenya's governance were caused by the West and thus sees it not good for Kenya or any other African country.

This can be seen whereby the Ruler and his cabinet ministers subjecting their plea to the world bank which is controlled by the West to lend them money in order to build his birthday tower 'Marching to Heaven' which turns out to be a failure due to mismanagement of funds by the Kenyan elites. Ngugi continuously blames the Kenyan government for failing to see into the future so that they can reject all the financial and governance systems which are not attainable by the Kenyan government without the help of the West. *Wizard of the Crow* also highlighted how Ngugi shows the greed of the Kenyan leaders and their subjugation to the white man controlling Kenya from abroad. Evidence is the meeting of the Ruler and his corrupt ministers with the officials of the world bank in America to discuss about the loan for 'Marching to Heaven' which landed the Ruler into sickness as their ideas were rejected.

In *Wizard of the Crow*, magic realism is observed as a factor that showed the progress in the liberation of the oppressed as articulated by Ngugi. This can be witnessed when Nyawira who once had relationships with the exploiters at her brothel like John Kaniuru, decides to eliminate them. As a connective to magic realism, Nyawira disguised herself as a limping witch; and she becomes the leading activist for her community in order to bring the corrupt government to halt.

The study also revealed that Kamiti who is the main representation of the title of the novel *Wizard of the Crow* acquired the name as a result of protecting himself from the elites ranging from an incidence whereby he joined the masses in demonstration against the dubious 'Marching to Heaven' project that only benefited the corrupt elites, thus leaving the ordinary citizens like Kamiti in dire poverty. Though Kamiti was a well-educated person, he could not secure a job in the project as all the opportunities were only granted to those close to the government officials and only few people like Nyawira secured odd jobs like in her case, being a mere secretary despite her education and capabilities.

Kamiti got the name *Wizard of the Crow* as a cover up and protecting himself from being in trouble with the police that chased him and Nyawira from a crowd of other beggars. The name grew like wild fire through a policeman named Arigaigai Gatherer who kept on emphasising on how strong the wizard's magic is. Kamiti discovering that he came from a family with wizardly power, he took this as an opportunity to

make a living for himself by curing people with mirrors and helping them with their problems with the help of his mate Nyawira known as 'The limping Witch'. All these events stipulate the presence of magic realism as a postmodern element that the researcher pondered on in order to bring across the message of real life in Kenya that Ngugi highlighted in the novel.

The novel is written in a form of different types of narratives that Ngugi used in order to encapsulate the message carried across in the novel. As a postmodern element, Ngugi use "white ache" as a narrative to show how Kenyan leadership depends on the western demand and thus the leaders in Kenya were made to believe that being white means to be superior and to be the best. This is evident in the novel whereby it is said that the Ruler felt good and superior when he was being to a white man when it was said he lured young girls to sleep with him as a way of renewing his energy. One of the prominent narrative of "white ache" is evident when the Ruler himself as well as one of his right-hand minister/ leader of 'Marching to Heaven' project Titus Tajirika were both discovered with the malady of words called "IF", a sickness that stroke them as they imagined and wished they were white in order to get more fame, respect and money. To sharpen this representation, Tajirika went forward and made body transplants whereby he made one of his arm and leg to become white, unfortunately, the hospital that performed this surgery disappeared thus he had no choice but to remain with legs and arms with different skin colors.

This study also ventured on the use of grotesques characters that dominates the novel as an evidence that Ngugi used to indicate what African leaders are capable of sacrificing for the sake of power, fame and money. All cabinet ministers are described to possess grotesque bodies as all of them deformed their bodies in order to please the Ruler and get a position in the government. Machocali (minister of foreign affairs) had his eyes enlarged, Sikiokuu (minister of state) had his ears enlarged as well as Mambo (minister of information) had his tongue elongated. The Ruler was also described to have Balloon-like shape as he started to swell up due to anger that was caused by the refusal of the Global Bank to grant him a loan for building a tower for his own selfish gratifications. Grotesque images were also shown when Ngugi refers to the greedy elites as to be growing two mouths, one at the back of their head and one in their foreheads. He referred to them as Ogres as an indication that African leaders often turn into terrifying monsters once they come into power, thus terrorising and mistreating their own people that they are supposed to groom and care for.

Ngugi, like Fanon, emphasises that the masses should use violence because it is the only way left for them to make the ruling elite understand their grievances. He suggests that the modern nation in Kenya should stop imitating Europe, but rather seek its own way to create a more inclusive society where everyone can feel free, or put in Fanon's words, "for Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to afoot a new man" (Fanon, 1990, p. 116). Ngugi is positive that social change to end exploitation is imminent, but this is all in the hands of the masses just like the way Nyawira took it up to organise and empower people in the community to fight against the corrupt government.

Lastly, Ngugi uses *Wizard of the Crow* as a motif to show the state of things in independent Kenya under the leadership of its own people. The novel chronicle the exploitation of the vulnerable sections of the society namely: women, students and ordinary citizens. There is rampant corruption by politicians and Ngugi uses narratives, magic as well as grotesque characters in order to paint a picture of the type of leaders Kenya has as well as Africa at large.

6.3 Recommendations

Although the main purpose for Ngugi to write this novel was to unpack the type of leaders Kenya has through the use of language, it does not benefit Kenya alone, but a lot of African countries that are still stuck with the same types of leaders in their society. Therefore, it is recommended that more researchers in Namibia as well as other African countries should investigate literary texts through Postmodernism lenses with the aim of exposing the type of leaders that are bringing the development of the African continent down in order to fight against these type of leaders.

There may be need to consider Kenyan as well as other African countries fiction in other genres such as poetry and drama in order to gain a deeper understanding into the problems arising as a result of Postmodernism, also, a comparative analysis of this types of fiction written by Namibians need to be brought to attention because the subject of postmodernism can open up many opportunities for literary studies as it is a crucial subject which deserves specific attention in our time as most of the countries, especially in Africa are experiencing upheavals in the mode of leadership.

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