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Victimisation of Women in Ngugi's Petals of Blood

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DEDICATION:

I dedicate this work to:

To my beloved parents: "Mouloud" and "Saliha" for pushing me forward, and kept on encouraging me.

To my dear brother: Younes May Allah bless his soul.

To my beloved sisters: Meriem and Israa for always supporting me and being there for me.

To all my friends who taught me the meaning of real friends.

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Abstract:

This work emphasizes on the issue of victimisation of women in neocolonial Kenya; It studies the struggle of woman in one the famous novelist Ngugi Wa Thiong'o Petal of Blood. It deals with the general background of feminism, Marxism and the reflection of neocolonialism in Kenya. It also gives Ngugi's view about women in general, and then it presents the Gikuyu social life because woman is the center of the society. it attempts to explain the feminist and the Marxist aspects of the novel; the women characters in Petals of Blood are the victims of the patriarchal structure of the African society. Through Ngugi's novel Petals of Blood, the reader could highlight the African woman state in neo-colonial Africa, and how Ngugi defended the cause of women as well his theorizations in his book Petals of Blood and the depiction of the three selected females character; Mariamu, Wanja and Nakinyua tin his novel.

Keywords: Petals of Blood, victimisation, feminism, neocolonial

Résumé:

Ce travail présente la victimisation des femmes pendant la néocolonisation . Il présente l'étude des conflits de la femme dans le roman de Ngugi wa Thiong'o qui est *Petal of Blood* .On présente le féminisme, le marxisme et le reflet de la néocolonisation au Kenya. Notre intérêt est le cas de la femme Africaine dans l'Afrique néocolonial. Ngugi a réussi de figurer la victimisation de la femme dans la néocolonial Kenya et on voit cette figuration dans les trois personnages choisis: Mariamu, Wanja, et Nyakinuya.

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General Introduction:

Woman's issue in the world considered as an important subject because she has been abused throughout history. Despite the process of woman's liberation and calling for her equality she was deprived of her rights, and many challenges face her from different sides; as an example, when she used to work under poor conditions all day to obtain few coins however she has not the right to claim. Also, it passed to worse, because a woman was sold and bought like an object, and the man's practicing violence and rape against her due to the ignorance of woman's value.

Therefore, Africa is a wealthy continent that makes European countries like France and Britain seek to colonize it. That made Africa a place for wars, conflicts and the fast spread of diseases. Besides that, African woman suffered from marginalization and oppression, she is forbidden to be educated and forced to get married in early ages, in time she needs to play; these misconceptions about woman continued even after the colonies get its independence.

Many writers in their works indicate how women were living under the oppression and the dominance of man which is known by the Patriarchal society. Ngugi wa Thiongo in his novel *Petals of Blood* in 1977, he portrayed lifestyle of African woman in Kenya after the independence in 1963.

In this work, we aim to highlight the African woman state in neo-colonial Africa, and how Ngugi defended the cause of women as well his theorizations in his book *Petals of Blood* and the depiction of women in his novel.

In order to achieve the research subject matter; the descriptive and analytical method is going to be used. We define African feminism and neocolonialism, by considering these two concepts we can extract the relationship between the two. Neocolonialism is not a new phenomenon neither is feminism; yet their influence on each other caused deformation in the African Society. Contemporary African feminist writers such as Ngugi wa Thiongo made to show the pressure that Africa particularly Kenya is living under Neocolonialism as a duty through his novels.

The characteristics of Ngugi's Novel *Petals of Blood* are numerous; since our study is about African women. Ngugi deals with the victimisation of women as a theme in his works, which makes *Petals of Blood* a sample that expresses life of women beneath neocolonial Kenya.

Petals of Blood was first published in 1977. Set in Kenya just after independence,

During that time, Kenya was witnessing the control of the elite who exploit Kenya's goods for their benefits. Since Kenya is a capitalist country, the system that Ngugi did not support it as far as he mentioned clearly his Marxist point of view in his work. Not only men were targeting in that illegal system, but also women those who are suffering from both their men and the system.

The issue of victimisation of women is present in *Petals of Blood*, its influence within the life of the female characters is shown from different dimensions such as from a feminist and Marxist point of view Ngugi gave the female character a special reference.

The motivation that brought us to deal with this topic is:

- First, the issue of victimisation of women is the trend of the current time, because it touches woman life aspects, and shaping life as it is lived and continuously showing its influence across the world.

- Along with the raise of forms of oppression such as those based on race, class, and gender and the understanding of feminism in African Novel attributed to the different perspectives and perceptions of Victimisation of women..

- Behind selecting Ngugi's *Petals of Blood*; it is one of African Novels that is similar to our traditions in context. The novel tells the reality of African woman in neocolonial Kenya, and the reader can relate its strong similarity with our culture, way of thinking and struggle.

The research will investigate the trace of victimizing women in Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *Petals of Blood* in the light of the following questions:

1. Does the novel's female protagonist represent the victimization of women in Africa?
2. How is neocolonial Kenya affected the Kenyan woman in *Petals of Blood* ?
3. How woman was obliged to work as prostitute so that to make living?
4. How patriarchal society plays the big role in victimization of women?

In the first chapter we attempt to give an overview on the historical background of feminism and its three waves, and since our study focuses on Africa; we give a special attention to feminism in Africa then in Kenya. Then we move to give a general background about Marxism and the exploitation of workers in Africa to show how the Kenyans act against the bourgeoisie who are exploiting them for personal benefits. After that, we will deal with Neo-colonialism in Kenya to see that the Kenyan society is different from the one before the independence; we explain that the western still have a control against their colonial countries like British power against Kenya.

In the second chapter we will deal with Ngugi' view about women, then giving the political background of Kenya, and the structure of Gikuyu society, It is important to highlight the lives of Gikuyu society to show how the British colonialism has impacted negatively on the lives of the Kenyans ;and further how the postcolonial patriarchal African government in Kenya has not improve the welfare of women. Then, we attempt to understand the women's situation and Mau Mau Struggle, where we shed light the role of the effective role of women during Mau Mau struggle. Moving to The impact of British colonization on women in Kenya through examining how the colonialism changed the life of Kenyan women and impact on it wrongly.

The third chapter focuses on our case of study; Ngugi Wa Thiongo's Novel *Petals of Blood*, a Contemporary African feminist novel, studying the novel's feminist perspectives will be our main purpose by using feminist and Marxist approaches . As a first element, we will pass by its framework; the novel's Critical reception. The second element's spotlight is a trial to discuss the issue of Matriarchy in *Petals of Blood*; where we give a background about the concept matriarchy, and then we'll exemplify the old woman in the novel named Nyakinyua. Finally, we study the

female characters of *Petals of Blood* who are the victims of the patriarchal structure in neocolonial Kenya, in order to finish our practical and analytical part within the research.

The African people became slaves of the imperialistic Western world. They influenced patriarchal ideologies in many different areas as social, economy and politics. Also they supported men to oppress women, Male domination made the African women powerless and feeble. There are historical evidences that African women during pre-colonial era had economic independence. They had actively participated in social, cultural, religious and political activities and functions. The rule was expected to improve the condition of women in African societies by raising their living and educational standards and free them from farm labour, but colonialism didn't liberate them, In fact, it diminished the rights, the woman had enjoyed during pre-colonial era (Alazzawi, 112).

Literature Review: Eleanor Burke (1922-1987), an American anthropologist in her book *Woman and Colonization* asserts that the relation between men and women were equal in many fields of basic life, but due to colonialism women were ignored and oppressed.

African women have often been subjected to negative stereotypes and their contributions have been neglected or even omitted. The exclusion of females from social settings and their being denied rightful opportunities to stand up for themselves in their communities also "give substance to the marginalization of females from important decision-making processes in their communities and families" (Alazzawi,849).

However, it condemns all forms of patriarchy which dehumanizes woman and portrays her as a second-class citizen. Rooted in African historical and cultural experiences, it advances the view of the complementarities between man and woman by stressing the Male Female principle in the creative order. Eko's claim that Ngugi is "a groundbreaking example of the modern African male author's shift from portraying women as objects to that of subjects" (1986, p. 212), as he wants to project the African woman as a survivor of the harshest conditions. It exposes a number of the patriarchal challenges and constraints imposed upon helpless women by traditional African societies. (Alazzawi,849)

Chapter One:
Historical Background and Theoretical
Foundations

1. Introduction:

In this chapter we attempt to give an overview on the historical background of feminism and its three waves, and since our study focuses on Africa; we give a special attention to feminism in Africa then in Kenya. Then we move to give a general background about Marxism and the exploitation of workers in Africa to show how the Kenyans act against the bourgeoisie who are exploiting them for personal benefits. After that, we will deal with Neo-colonialism in Kenya to see that the Kenyan society is different from the one before the independence; we explain that the western still have a control against their colonial countries like British power against Kenya.

2. Background of feminism:

Many researchers and scholars used the term "feminism" and attempted to define and explain it differently. Some of them use it to refer to some historic political movements in the USA and Europe. Whereas others refer to the belief that women live an injustice life with no rights and no equality (Amina Ghorfati and Rbha Medini 06).

Zara Huda Faris in her article Article Do Women Need Feminism? “ explained this idea as: “...Women need feminism because there are women who suffer injustice ...” . Also ,Rosalind Delmar said that :”Feminism is usually defined as an active desire to change women’s position in society” (qtd. in Emerson 17)

In Global Gender Issues Spikes, Peterson, and Anne Simon Runyan said that Feminism is an orientation that views gender as a fundamental ordering principle in today’s world that values diverse ways of being and knowing, and that promotes the transformation of gender and related hierarchies (90). Brigitte Studer noted that the term "feminism" has multiple meanings for its lawyers and opponents, as evidenced by its origin and controversial use.

Shellies Sachdev has said that in the late 1880s, in the Journal La Citoyenne, the term 'Feminism' appeared in France, where they were trying to criticize male domination and to defend the rights of women, apart from the emancipation promised by the French revolution. The French Revolution was also used in the Journal La Citoyenne in La Feminitè. Furthermore the term appeared first in English in Britain, then in America in the 1910s and then, in the Niswia of the Arab World in the 1920s, in the first decade of the 20th century. Feminism comes from the Latin term femina, which explains women's problems. Feminism is not just about women as a category of biology (Shellies Sachdev,01).

This was because the biological differences of women and men reflected in the organization of society, and based on these differences, men have treated women as inferior. Rosalind Delmar said that: "Feminism is usually defined as an active desire to change women's position in society." (qtd. in Emerson 17).

Zara Huda Faris added also: "...women have traditionally been dehumanized by a male dominated society, which they call patriarchy; and that has been always better to be a man..." (Zara Huda Faris,01).

3. Waves of feminism :

In an attempt at some sort of classification, feminism histories have spoken as a series of 'waves' about the historical appearance of strong feminist movements at various moments (Fridman ,04).It is divided into three waves namely First wave, second wave and third wave:

3.1. First wave feminism:

Martha Rampton, has published an article in which she noted that the first wave feminism is in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's, the first wave of feminism

took place, emerging from an environment of urban industrialism and liberal, socialist politics. This wave's goal was to open women's opportunities with a focus on suffrage. The wave formally started at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention when three hundred men and women rallied for the cause of women's equality. Fridman acknowledged that the 'first wave' feminism is used to refer to the feminist movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that were (although not exclusively) concerned with gaining equal rights for women, especially the right to vote.(04).Leslie Goldstein announces that the central issues of this wave were equality in legal and political rights and formal equal opportunities, feminists wanted the opportunity to vote, hold public offices, gain more jobs and education, and legal marriage rights such as disobeying their husbands, suing for divorce, keeping their children after divorce, and legal protection against physical marriage.(91).

Martha Rampton added that the wave formally started at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention when three hundred men and women rallied to the cause of women's equality. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who drafted the Declaration of Seneca Falls outlining the ideology and strategies of the new movement. In the declaration's preface, Gordon wrote: "The history of mankind is history of repeated injuries and usurpation on the part of man toward women, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her" (41).

According to Amina Ghorfati and Rbha Medini the first feminist wave started in the First World War, when the National Women's Party went on strike outside the White House in the United States. They wore texts about the government's undemocratic practices in America against women. They want to show the world that in very bad situations they were living. In that period, institutions of women and organizations all over the world started discussing women's voting rights and thinking, etc. Among them was the United States National Women's Party. That's why many women have been arrested and

educated, even white. This action of the National Women's Party is somehow inspired by a radical agitator, Alice Paul (1885–1977), who wanted to introduce militant tactics by marching, picking up the White House and watch fires burning President Wilson's speeches. (Amina Ghorfati and Rbha Medini ,11).The first wave of feminism has influenced, inspired and allowed women to vote in the early days other feminist movements throughout the world. The first wave of feminism in the USA was linked to other reform movements, to enable women to participate not just in politics or voting in working classes in all the fields. This process of feminism was also supported by black abolitionist women like Maria Stewart (1803–1879). Their work was supported by Sojourner Truth (1797–1883), as did Frances E. W. Harper (1825–1811).(ibid)

Also, women's rights activists realized gradually that their efforts had no value, they began to act differently by making it a universal controversy. These feminists wanted, in some ways, to demonstrate the importance of voting for women. In addition, they talked about the rights of colored people. This work to strive for equality affected all sorts of women (educated, uneducated, rich, poor...).((Amina Ghorfati and Rbha Medini,13)

Women were not permitted to do anything without the control of men in particular, in public places, during the First World War and the Second World War. Mainly in all fields, this domination of man over women was no exception. These activities gave a stereotypical picture of women and gave her a judge. She was just a householder, a mother and a wife (Susan Faludi 40). Furthermore, women's rights activists argued in these kinds of segregations that women should immediately have the right to vote not just for women but for men. In addition, she could perform her roles as moms and housewives even better if she had her rights, such as voting and working.

During that time, women activists were trying to put all their energy into making people feel and touch women's suffering and thus each time they produced a new concept such as "equal opportunity feminism" or "equity feminism." Furthermore, biological differences were the major and fundamental ideas relating to the social role of gender, when certain anti-feminism did not accept them as valid grounds for discrimination.

In Mary Wollstonecraft's famous "A Vindication of Women's Rights" (1792) the First Wave of European Feminism was mentioned, which was regarded as a revolution itself. In this book, Wollstonecraft thought education was the best way of ensuring women's equal standing with men in society. In this wave, Virginia Woolf wrote a famous book "A room of one's own" (1929) about women rights, in which she assisted Mary Wollstonecraft and others in building a new path for women to change their lives. It started to spread to women all over the world and was moved to the Soviet Union, Russia and Germany. Furthermore, these leaders in those countries opened the door to the second wave.

3.1.1. Second wave feminism:

Second wave feminists called for women to emancipate and to free themselves from the marginalization of the past and kept women in the social environment assimilated. The second wave took a more critical approach to liberalism than the first wave. Thus the second wave of thinkers still had a modernist way of thinking. (Amri 13)

Second-wave feminism referred to radical feminism mainly in the late 1960's and early 1980's and to the liberation movement of women. This activity was the continuation of the previous activity. In 1968 and 1969 there was a contest named Miss America Pageants. Women were presented as cattle to highlight the importance of how women look, wear and speak in terms of their way of thinking, believing and acting (Amina

Ghorfati and Rbha Medini 14) . In America and other countries this event made feminists angry. They were trying to stop the event and were carrying out several typos of theater activisms: the courtship of a Miss America sheep, and the throwing into the trash of reporters of oppressive gender items such as girdles, fake eyelashes, high heels and making up. They wished to show the world that women are not just the marionette in the hands of the man, is a woman an equal creature. They made strikes and walked particularly against the competitions and the image of women. They carried posters in their hands like "Women's Liberation," "Freedom For women" and "No More Miss America." This time, feminists have made their message clear and strong: Women were victims of the patriarchal, commercialized culture of repression and unfair beauty. They have been carrying pictures such as "Women's Liberation," "Women's Liberation" and "Women's Freedom" as well as "No More Miss America." After all these events, women's rights and equality began to become a global concern and the media (television, newspapers...) began to talk about it. (Martha Rampton, 1-2)

Indeed, radical secondary feminism, like in the Anti-Vietnam War Movement, lesbian and gay movements and in the US, the civilian rights and the black power movement, was unable to study and to discuss women as a topic separately from others of the sixtieth and seventeenth centuries. These movements all argue about the same ideas as "capitalism" and "imperialism" criticism. The Redstockings, who developed the name through the combination of bluestocking, a pejorative term for educated and otherwise powerful females in the 18th and 19th century, with red.. The Redstockings produced many expressions and words that have become a symbol of feminism in USA mainly, though not very long (from the 1960s to the 1970s): "Sisterhood is powerful" "conscience raising," "The Personal is Political," "Housework politics." In the same period the books related to second-wave women's feminism were published in Juliet Mitchell (1970),

Shulamith Firestone (1970) and *The Dialectic of Sex, The Case of the Feminist Revolution* (1970).

Feminists at the time sought not only women with the right to vote or the equilibrium of man, but also all their bodies and feelings. You started talking about women's right to marry and to be with the person you don't like about your sex. That is why the new ideas of lesbians, homosexuals and heterosexuals were regarded as sin for anti-feminism. On the other hand, feminists and leaders of such activities and ideas have sought to show anti-feminism and the whole world, in particular, that, in spite of the differences between them, they have strong relationships and to show their unity. (Martha Rampton)

After a long time of fighting, strikes and events, women began seeking their rights more deeply. She wanted her full freedom in almost everything, economic, political, social and religious fields by asking just for the right to vote and to marry. Furthermore, other groups, such as: Socialists and Marxist feminism, joined this period. They began to criticize women's working conditions and demand equal wages and wages. The idea of equality and the right-wing, racism and class of women was discussed by Sheila Rowbotham (1972), in addition to Angela Y. Davis, in a book called *Women, Race, and Class* (1981). These feminists tried to remove capitalism and raise socialism by all means. This is the best way for them to ensure that women are equal to men and that the idea of dependency and self-confidence is no longer dependent on men and families, and that they are involved in different areas of work.

Feminists believed women had no political or social rights and that in their lives they had no power or decision. That is why they have tried to offer suggestions and solutions to the situation of women. They also begin to wonder about the right of women

to be rewarded even when they are working as citizens in their own homes (housewives). Moreover, People should respect the women, because they are most important in society. if they wish. In a similar context, all kinds of feminist organizations in the USA, particularly Liberals, Socialists and Marxists, have joined the activity. Most of these leaders worked hard to influence society by increasing public awareness. Moreover, they tried to convince women not only by calling women (or a wife of or daughter of...) an adequate place in society. On the other hand, while a group of feminists known as radical women were in some ways the extremely feminist category; they expressed contrary and negative opinions concerning those activities. These institutions and organisations, rather than as human rights or women's rights organisations, were regarded as patriarchal institutions. This radical kind of feminism was in many ways effective in people's opinions at that time and they have still affected people and are still searching for strange things such as preventing the pregnancy of women by allowing children to grow outside their bodies.

In the 1980s, the real goals of these feminist waves were corrected. The waves ' leaders have tried to show people that they want women to join men in society and want them to vote, work, and get married as a normal person. They want to change the stereotypical thoughts about the reality of women's rights, not only as an organization on women's rights, but also as an human rights organization. (Martha Rampton,1-2)

It was also able to increase the criticism (mainly the second wave identity), from the Black, workers and lesbian feminists towards many others. The idea of feminism equality was able to sensitize women and also to build their own identity. For them, it is only by working on her real identity and the way, as well as what she wants, that women have their rights of equality, dependence and freedom. (Martha Rampton,1-2)

The act of constructing women's identity opened the way for women throughout the world to show that they have a right to live their lives in a way that they want. In fact, the idea of equal status and the identity of women, which some people welcomed, but other people also rejected, was able to develop a cult of women and an interest in many things like literature, poetry, politics and religion. The black woman was the best example, mainly in the USA, of women who were trying to remove barriers of racism and inequality. They looked to change their bad fate by establishing organizations such as: Black Women Organized for Action (BWOA) and NBFO. These two organizations (and others) wanted to make gender and racism aware of the country and not regard colored women as inappropriate, as some call them. As it is not generalized, as it is known in America as "l'écriture féminine" and the three waves of feminism were suggested by Europe, the idea of the identity of women has been quite different in Europe. The idea of patriarchy and the common concept of "the man like the one and only" were suppressed in the same context by European feminists, and more accurately French. They also wished to give women the right to choose how it will be to allow same-sex marriages and to give gays, lesbians and homosexuals opportunity without disgrace or embarrassment to show their reality.

In some places around the world, women began to give up on the reason why many women, scientists, and scholars started searching for other ways of achieving their goals, as the previous activities were not enough. For example, Julia Wood was among those scholars who wanted people to believe that the question was not whether or not you were a feminist, but what sort of feminism you were. This was the principal reason for the emergence of feminism of the third wave and it did not appear because the previous one had failed but because it was the first step in the feminist ladder. (Martha Rampton.1-2)

3.1.1.1. Third wave feminism:

Martha Rampton, has published an article in which she mentioned that the third wave feminism refers to a feminist group. It was beginning from 1990s till the present. The symbol of this wave is Rebecca Walker. In 1992, she first used the term "feminism of the third wave." It was a reaction from the second wave of ideas and activities such as female pornography, sex work and prostitution.

In general, the third wave feminists consider themselves to be the most powerful, the efficient and the stronger group between all previous feminist activities. These new generations of feminists felt that developing and changing the ways and methods to look after women's rights was the best way to make this third Wave more effective than the latter. In the last decade, where the world has witnessed huge developments in technology and science, these have started by means of words which are simple and solid as women, saying "girl" and attracting the new generation to the importance of feminism. They began preparing some inventories and parties about fashion and clothes for girls and young female interests. By doing so, they wanted women to love themselves (from inside and from outside) and trusted their ability to positively transform the world. They used phrases such as "do it yourself" but not all girls correctly understood these words and did not achieve the objectives of this wave, such as improving women and social development.....

These activities also contributed to the growth of the "riot girls¹⁰" groups in the United States and Europe. The wave leaders were completely convinced that their activities were effective. They have been using new methods and technology, such as TV, magazines, radio and recent networks, to expand their ideas about feminism.

In addition, they produced numerous works related to this idea, such as "Internet Guide Friendly Girls¹¹"(1996) and " World Wide Web Guide"(1998). This activity was to

delete stereotypical, traditional and typical women's images by deleting ideas like girls and women's unfair sexist words. They have developed new words, new words, and new forms of communication, used by girls, and only girls.

The importance of the evolution of feminist theories and politics by all the possible means was totally convinced by this wave of feminists, and they believed that those theories were effective and successful. These new generations of women criticized previous waves and feminists in a very strange and attractive way, but at the same time showed them their respect and great efforts. They began to propose various legislation and policy on women's roles (maternity, womanhip) and some interesting issues for women such as gender, class and sexuality.

It was also related to the generation and the new world order, which were marked with the fall of communism, and new menaces of ethnic and religious fundamentalism. The new wave called girl feminism in the United States and new feminism in Europe.

Characterized by local, domestic and transactional militancy, it addresses ideas such as violence against women and self-mutilation. These feminist knowledgeable waves wished, in America as well as in the whole world, to create a new image of women's rights. In a respectful and positive way, they tried to give the world a new world order and to give close, logic answers and definitions to some of the questions on feminism, women's status, and identity. They criticized the previous waves of women. Indeed, they wanted to finish what the previous imagery did, but at the same time they wanted to preserve the true spirit of feminism and feminism in a new way, gathering ideas and stereotypical images. This new wave of feminism was an attractive and effective Endeavour, and its leaders were the reason why it was successful. They were determined to prove that the third wave feminism, not only by words, but also by actions and decisions, is powerful and effective. Moreover,

the first and most important objective of their work was to prevent women from being classified in categories and stereotypes. In addition to that, This new group of feminists not only sought women's social and political rights but wanted them to play their part in the field and, even though this was a simple matter, to have a greater role in life. In this same period many authors and scholars were present who wanted to make people believe that we can not separate women from all activities in society. They thought we could not separate women from society. Judith Butler, who was a gender and social theorist, was among these researchers. She wrote many famous books such as "Gender Trouble" (1990) and "Bodies That Matter" (1993) that tried to talk about the unfair rules put forward by governments and certain anti-feminist organizations and criticize them. In addition to others as Willa Shalit and Elizabeth Wurtzel, we have some literary works as "The Vagina Monologues" by Eve Ensler (an American playwright).

The ideas and suggestions on cyber feminism used by Donna Haraway's (1987/1991) were another important perception that contributed to the feminist Third Wave. It helped women to play an important role in technology development, especially after new techniques and technology developed and expanded.

In that period, Feminists wished to reorganize women's theory and politics by challenges and to discover women's interests and perspectives, i.e., without exception all the women's groups. These feminists seek to integrate the many different relationships and roles that women play. This is why many feminists from the 1990's to now tried to prove that the theories and activities of these feminists were respected and honored in the various events. They also tried to collect most people from various places, races and religions. They wanted to persuade people of the importance of helping each other overcome women's segregation.

In a few ways, women's rights have not been sufficiently strong in the third wave since they were lacking in a coherent objective and are generally viewed as an extension to the second wave. More importantly, it has no set definition that can differentiate itself from second-wave feminism and its various objectives.

Each feminist wave previously discussed has, from the 1960s until the present day, played a significant role in feminist theories and politics. They have opened the way for other waves and activities that help women to achieve their own social, political, cultural, religious and sexual rights.

3.1.1.2. Socialist Feminism:

Socialist feminist originated in the nineteenth century and was inspired by feminists who imagined a world in which monetary rivalry and abuse would be replaced by idealistic groups in which household assignments, family unit tasks, and younger consideration would be given to women and men. Socialist feminists offer the view of radical feminists that gender mistreatment is the focus of persecution and see social activism as crucial to achieving their goals. In addition, they have sought a more perplexing investigation of sexism than radical feminists have supported, one that looks at how mistreatment is formed by class, financial, nationality, race, and history. (Worell 473)

4. Feminism in Africa:

Lilian Adamo et al in their History of Feminism in Kenya acknowledged that for better understanding the concept of feminism in Africa, it has to know its history in Africa. African women were participating in the struggle against the colonial powers. They were fighting for better rights especially reproductive rights. In this period, the age of marriage was raised in some African countries like Egypt. Today, African women like Albertina Sisulu who is the wife of Walter Sisulu and the respected senior women in the

African National Congress (ANC) use the African feminism term when she joined the women's walkout from the ANC Party Conference in Durban in 1992 which demanded that the ANC commit itself 33% female representation in parliament and in other government positions in South Africa. Lilian Adamo et al also add that women's movement on the continent of Africa represents the gender organization of various African communities within the cultural, social and political structure. There are ample proof that African history is full of various examples of women's mobilization, although historians have often omitted them.. The available evidence suggests that women's movement in Africa reflect the traditions of organization that have characterized spiritual and material life in Africa as far back as history goes. African women have long been organized around lineage and kinship groupings, and around women's religious, cultural and political duties and their productive and reproductive roles. (Lilian Adamo et al, 09)

5. Feminism in Kenya:

Lilian Adamo et al acknowledged that Kenyan women were organized in various social and welfare groups and they proved capable to make widespread civil disturbances if they found their interests compromised. Also, the women's organizations were redirected by missionary groups and colonial governments, which make Western ideologies shifted to the African women. The modern "women's club" were often designed to "civilize" and "uplift" African women. In Kenyan society, women's movements faced many challenges to gain quality at the level of political, social and economic aspects due to the patriarchal nature in Kenya (Lilian Adamo et al, 10) . Professor Wangare Muta Maathai who was one of the most notable women who have contributed in the feminist movement in Kenya and an environmental and political activist in 1977 who formed the non-profit organization which called The Green Belt Movement which is aimed to protect the environment and the women's rights in the same time, The association is known to

involve women in planting trees, also it improved women's livelihoods by helping them to access to the resources such as clean water and firewood for cooking. It is a fact that Kenyan women still struggle to protect their dignity in different issues such as domestic Violence, poverty, Female Genital Mutilation, and other social injustices.

6. The Marxist literary theory:

is a theory analyzes social processes, the tactics to be used for fighting and for organizing struggle, the struggle of the working class and peasants, its internal political conflicts and strategy. Marx influenced Ngugi invites the exploited to join forces so that effective results can be achieved in order to meet their needs. Ngugi emphasizes unity when he said that : “humanity is born of a large number of hands, because, Gikuyu once said a single finger can not kill a mouse, a single register can't burn through the night, but a single man can't build a bridge across the river and many hands can lift a heavy but strong body.” (Ngugi,56) .

According to Ogude (1999): “Marx saw human history as a source of struggles between classes the oppressor and the oppressed”.Trainer(2010) says that the bourgeoisie is the most prominent class: people with land ownership, resources, factories and other production methods and the proletariat; those with wages. Marx thought that under capitalism the system was unfair; workers became poorer, poorer and alienated.

Reiss (1997) says they become powerless once workers are alienated from their hand products. He also said that in order to end the problem, Marx believed that capitalism must be replaced by the socialist system which will equate people and satisfy their needs.

Abrams (1999) added that alienation in communism can be universally avoided and that education can be provided to all the means to control for the future generation, and women will be empowered as workers instead of being dominated by men .

7. Neo-colonialism and it's influence in Kenya :

“Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content . By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it ...”(Fanon, 169).

Kenyan society is mainly dominated by local elite, whose actions are the exploitation of the disadvantaged group, the masses. Neo-colonialism in Kenya increases the gap between the rich and the poor rather than reduce it. Various nationalist leaders maintained the same old system that colonialism had practiced during colonial period and they made changes in laws suit the people in power but not the Kenyans because is still exploitation observed in the Kenyan society after the national independence. Neo-colonial elitism brought the pain and sufferance to the Kenyan masses which have been presented by Achebe (1987), who also talked about the attitudes of the post-colonial African leaders, he characterizes them as:

“ash the mouthed paupers five years ago, but who have become near-millionaires under our very eyes” (qtd in Sitwala,41)

Ngugi also insisted to the Kenyan leaders to reject foreign bases as he said:

“Always put Kenya first; to love Kenya; to have faith in the capacity of the people to change their lives; to insist that people are the subjects and not the passive objects of development. They should insist on certain minimum professional ethics and democratic principles; to reveal that ordinary peasants and workers struggled for liberation. The songs to praise the Mau Mau movement should continue as in the past.” (qtd in Sitwala,42)

Just as in *Animal Farm* (Orwell, 1986) the animals were exploited by powerful people, Ngugi points out that after Kenyan independence, it is the same. Different

nationalist leaders have almost stepped into the colonialist shoes, maintained the same old system and only changed slightly; when asked about it, Ngugi claimed it would suit the powerful people, but not the masses, with the changes made to former colonial laws. In the midst of national independence, exploitation is still being seen in Kenyan society. (Sitwala,111)

8. Conclusion:

Through theoretical foundations of feminism, and describe some of the main issues relating to feminism as a movement, and its three waves, the researcher seeks for extraction on how women have suffered, and been raped. However, this does not mean that women are able to provide them with social, economic and political liberties, but that it is human beings who can live, marry and vote to say no when they want. You are not disposed to be proud of yourself and every woman in the world. In particular, these women's activists were able to give women the same confidence as men in their important creature.

For Marxism it sheds lights on how economical system impact on women lives because they were working in the farms of the white settlers .Then, for the reflection of neocolonialism in kenya and how it helped patriarchal society to marginalize women.

Chapter Two:

Women in the African Society

1. Introduction:

In this chapter we will deal with Ngugi's view about women, then giving the political background of Kenya, and the structure of Gikuyu society, It is important to highlight the lives of Gikuyu society to show how the British colonialism has impacted negatively on the lives of the Kenyans ;and further how the postcolonial patriarchal African government in Kenya has not improve the welfare of women. Then, we attempt to understand the women's situation and Mau Mau Struggle, where we shed light the role of the effective role of women during Mau Mau struggle. Turning to the impact of british settlement in Kenya on women by investigating how colonialism has wrongly transformed the lives of Kenyan women.

2. Ngugi's view about woman:

Ngugi blames both colonialism and post-colonialism for the oppression of the African woman. For instance, the colonial government offered men more educational and job opportunities than women. As a result, men gain upper ranks in politics and economics. In post-colonial Kenya this male hegemony persists, where women are marginalized. Nonetheless, Ngugi dedicated most of his work to women's issues so as to show their (often ignored) contributions to the struggle of freeing societies of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial oppression. Therefore, women are the protagonists of Ngugi's work because Ngugi embraces the idea that women like men and are even more capable of doing anything. As an example, women like Wanja in *Petals of Blood* ,Muthoni in *The River Between*, Njoroge's two mothers in *Weep Not Child*, Mumbi in *A Grain of Wheat*, Nyawira in *Wizard of the Crow* and Wariinga in *Devil on the Cross*. They fight to overcome patriarchal barriers in order to live a life of their choice .Ngugi is among the African feminists writers who have joined his voice to recovering the image of the African

woman misrepresented in literature which is mostly written by African men writers with Eurocentric views about a woman. According to Jennifer Evans in "Mother Africa and the Heroic Whore: Female Images in *Petals of Blood*," "for Ngugi, struggle is the dynamic of history and society, and is central to his reappraisal of the African past". (Sayed Sadek,177-180)

Further, opines Evans, Ngugi transcends the passive image of the African woman by both colonial and male domination by presenting courageous women who have important role[s] in the struggle against oppression and exploitation directed to them and the society. Therefore, Ngugi's women characters "are resourceful, determined and resilient. Consequently, Florence Stratton's argued that Ngugi's female character like Nyakinyua, a traditional Gikuyu woman in *Petals of Blood* because he values the central role of women in the regeneration of African culture for the reconstruction of the oppressive postcolonial society so as to engender respect and equity (Sayed Sadek,177).

Ogued added : "constantly stifled by forces of capital and male oppression. Although the revolt is contrived, it points to Ngugi's hope in the victim type and the possibility of regeneration" (qtd in Sayed Sadek, 179).

3. Petal of Blood from a Marxist perspective:

Ahmed Jasim Mohammad el Alazzawi in his FEMINIST INTERPRETATION OF THE SELECTED NOVELS OF NGUGI WA THIONG'O argued that the economic life has been destroyed .the Kikuyu people have been forced to work on their own territory and to pay taxed heavily. Ngugi considers himself the champion of the Kenyan farmers and workers and asks for social revolution to eradicate capitalists in order to bring all Kenyan farm workers and workers together and restore democracy and equality. Ngugi argues that the same nationalistic aim had been pushed from the earth by all Kenyan farmers and

workers. The colonization culture has been the culture of rule and exploitation. As a consequence, the Mau Mau Revolution in Kenya became independent for the country. The Mau Mau Revolution was the culmination of cultural tensions and conflicts between the British colonialists and Kikuyu.

In his book *Mau Mau alternatively Detainee: The account from the Kenyan African of his experiences at detention camps from 1953 to 1960*, Josiah Mwangi Kariuki (1929–75), a Kenyan political socialist, explains that British colonized Kenya together with missionaries, traders, and managers. The people of Kenya knew the British had knowledge, which was welcomed by people from Kenya: educational, medical, farming and industrial techniques. Kariuki demonstrates the complaints about Europeans by the Kenyan people. Kariuki says that Kenyans have been used by Europeans as slaves, often as though God created Kenya and its people for its use.

The Eurocentric colonial education had a disastrous impact on African people. The Siriana Mission School on "The River Between" works to alienate young Kikuyu from the culture of their homelands and is an ideal tool for colonizing the country Ngugi (1986) asserts:

“African children who encountered literature in colonial schools and universities were thus experiencing the world as defined and reflected in the European experience of history. Their entire way of looking at the world, even the world of immediate environment, was Eurocentric. Europe was the centre of universe. The earth moved around the European intellectually scholarly axis. The images children encountered in literature were reinforced by their study of geography and history, and science and technology where Europe was, once again, the centre.” (Ngugi 93).

4. **Petal of Blood from a Feminist Perspective:**

Alazzawi argued from a feminist perspective, Ngugi perceives women. Most of his literary works focus on women's issues and on the culture of Kikuyu society in order to show that women make a major contribution to liberating the society in pre colonial, colonial and postcolonial times from male domination.

From a feminist perspective, it is necessary to demonstrate women's characters, their meaningful role in the patriarchal system as well as their impact on the role and the relevant reactions of women. In light of feminist perspective, Ngugi shows the women's characters and their significant roles in the patriarchal system, as well as the impact of colonialism on the roles and the corresponding reactions of the women's characters.

Ngugi believes that African women are oppressed by colonialism and post-colonialism in a prominent way. Through his novel “Petals of Blood”, he makes clear about the problem of patriarchy and its effects on women in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Kenya; they are even marginalized and regarded as foolish. Women became aware about their rights during colonization, and began to dismantle gender inequalities. (AMJ Alazzawi,166)

Women fight to eradicate masculine rule—socio-politics and economically in Ngugi's novels. Ngugi's aim like Achebe is, unlike western authors who presented Africa as a backward continent, to present Africa's image in realistic terms. Sembene Ousman, (1923-2007), Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Nuruddin Farah (1945-) are feminist writers. Ngugi is a writer of the African Women's literature which was negative in African men who write about female writers from the Eurocentric point of view. The positive aspects of women's lives are explicitly expressed. They also call into question the dominance of patriarchy in

social and political matters and strongly encourage women. In addition to the sexual roles of their women, they explore alternative self-updating possibilities. .(AMJ Alazzawi ,167)

Instead, according to Alazzawi novelists such as Cyprian Odiatu Duaka Ekwensi (1921-007 and Elechi Amadi (1934), describe women as lascivia-pleasing–lustful–predators and seductive women and strengthen the stereotype. In their fictional works they have only negative aspects of the life of women. Ngugi depicts patriarchy as a prevailing phenomenon under society's skin. He shows that women are exploited, oppressed and ill-treated sexually, physically and in mind. Rape and successive pregnancies, verbal and physical violence, low pay to domestic workers, the allocation of female taboos, sexual oppression and abuse and women's objectification are illustrious examples of the facets of oppression women are continually experiencing in the highly patriarchal and women identity African society. The reader can easily understand how colonialism, in addition to patriarchy, has severely deprived women of their active part in society (AMJ Alazzawi 170) . Roopali Sircar (1995) asserts:

“Several anthropologists like Leacock (1972), Boserup (1970) and Gough (1971) have concluded that in societies where men and women are engaged in the production of the same kinds of socially necessary goods and where widespread private property and class structure has not developed, women’s participation in production gives them access to and control of the products of their labour. It also gives the women considerable freedom and independence. But where the colonizers introduced cash crop cultivation, women were displaced by men. Women were also deprived of technology with men alone given access to machinery. This reduced women’s contribution, relegating them to the domestic sector.” (Roopali Sircar ,6)

5. The political Background of Kenya:

Alazzawi argued that Kenya is situated in the eastern coast of the African continent. Kenya gained her independence from the British on 12 December 1963, and it became a republic in 1964. Many immigrant like Arabs, Asians and Europeans had visited Kenya for their special benefits and purposes such as trade. The colonial history of Kenya refers to the Berlin Conference in 1885, when the European powers first partitioned East Africa into spheres of influence. In the 19th century Europeans started travelling to Kenya because the demand grew for the products of Africa including ivory and cloves. On July 1895 The British government made a direct rule through the East African Protectorate. The official language in Kenya is English; and Kiswahili (Swahili) which is a mixture of Bantu and Arabic is the national language.(AMJ Alazzawi 161-162)

Also, Albert Mugambi Rutere argued that After independence, the country was characterized by dictatorship and neocolonialism. it was governed under one party, Kenya African National Union (KANU) .Multipartite politics emerged in 1992, opening up more democratic governance, Kenya's politics were ethicized so much that nepotism and corruption characterized all the leadership chosen to govern the country.(Rutere ,94).

Most Kenyans are economically based on farming, which includes cultivation of crops including maize, beans, millet and sorghum. Cash crops such as coffee, tea, cotton and sisal are growing on a small scale, not cost-effective because of the price fluctuations adversely affected by unreliable weather, unnecessary bureaucracy and delays in corrupt sales agents.. The majority of Kenyans therefore walk in poverty not being able to afford healthy food, decent clothing and adequate homes. The biggest revenue of Kenya comes from government-controlled tourism. Kenyans are highly taxed but most people still have no access to good healthcare, education and employment. The development of the social infrastructure that the colonial government has inherited is progressing slowly. Trade and

industry are highly controlled by Asian-born Kenyans and ruling elite fronted by foreign investors. Therefore corruption is still the country's highest vice. A normal Kenyan, on average, has less than a dollar in daily subsistence (Rutere ,95).

6. The structure of Gikuyu society:

According to Albert Mugambi Rutere, Doctor of Philosophy the social and economic life of Gikuyu people must be discussed because Ngugi's literary works are mainly depicted in a cultural landscape in Gikuyu-Kenya. Ngugi appreciates Gikuyu social, political and economic institutions as they emphasize distinct gender and human dignity responsibilities. Gikuyu is a Sub-Saharan African group that migrated from the geographical area such as Lake Chad, Nigeria, and Cameroon to Southern part of Africa settled in the North East of Nairobi which is presently a part of Kenya. The Gikuyu people settled and distributed in other regions all over Kenya due to their economic might, education and as workers in the farms (Rutere 89-90).

6.1. The Social life of the Gikuyu people:

First of all, The Agikuyu worshiped their god, Ngai or Murungu whose residence is on the top of Kirinyaga Mountain. Ngai talked directly to the people on a hierarchical level. The first is that God would speak to seers or prophets, and the second is to elders, and the third is to parents. God-people relationships have constantly been maintained through sacrifices mainly made before and after crop harvest. Hence, before British colonialism the Agikuyu led a relatively a stable life.

The Gikuyu tribe is divided into three governing principles. First one is the immediate family who are individuals related by blood, mostly it is a family consists of a father, his wife or wives, children and grand-children. In all family matters the father is the supreme. Second one is the Clan which is a combination of many families that have the

same clan name which are delegated by a leader who is the older man on the clan, he was chosen by the his peers. In total, there are nine clans such as Achera, Agachiku, Airimu... named after the legendary of nine daughters of Gikuyu and Mumbi. Godfrey Muriuki said :

“Taken in conjunction with the recently collected data, indicates definitely that there are 10 clans. The evidence stipulates that originally there were only 9 clans which were directly descended from the legendary nine daughters of Gikuyu and Mumbi...Opinion varies, however, as to how many clans there are, but in the published lists they range from 9 to 13 ...taken in conjunction with the recently collected data, indicates definitely that there are 10 clans. The evidence stipulates that originally there were only 9 clans which were directly descended from the legendary nine daughters of Gikuyu and Mumbi.”(140-141)

The use of female names as the name of the clan is a testimony that the Gikuyu society was a matriarchal. According to Godfery Muriuki the the third one is called The Kiama which is a set of elders in the society who are the responsible to find solutions in the political, economic, and social matters to ensure peace and harmony in the society. “The council of senior elders was known by a variety of names such as kiama kia mburi igiri (the council of two goats), kiama kiria kinene (the big council), kiama gia athamaki-(the council of leaders) or simply as the kiama (the council). It was the highest authority in the land vested with executive and judicial functions.” (Godfery Muriuki 163)

Women and especially mothers had an important role to bring up children in accordance to the norms and traditions that characterize Gikuyu society. A Gikuyu child should learn ethics in early ages through tales and proverbs . Mother’s role to educate their children the correct way to be a good person in the future, it is common in the African society to hear people ironically speak about an errant behavior of a child in reference to his mother for example they say to the child if those are the manners that his mother taught

him, which means that the bad habits is the reflection of the behavior that learned from the mothers however the good one is attributed to the father.

6.1.1. The Economical life of the Gikuyu people:

Gikuyu society depend on agriculture and trade. They have religious attachments to the land because they believe that the god (Ngai, Murungu) gave land in general to them. They love the land because they believe that is a gift from the God and they should to take care of it by sowing, weeding and harvesting. The land gives them Beans, millet, sorghum and many other vegetables and plants. Although land preparation involved collective work, women were worry about agriculture (Muriuki). Godfrey said : “After all, the Kikuyu who had "never seen a white man before ... likened (him) to their god Ngai, as (he) was a great medicine man, and they believed that fie)could make rain." (Godfrey Muriuki ,206)

A woman had autonomy and control to decide how to share her products. A woman could spare some grain and sell on a [ndonyo] market to buy what she likes (Kenyatt 178). Godfrey added: “Trade, however, was largely in the hands of women, and was certainly not the sort of job that appealed to self respecting warriors or elders.”(Muriuki ,132)

In addition, the Agikuyu maintained animals for transportation such as cattle, goats, sheep, and donkeys. The main concern of men was livestock. The animals were only owned by the rich. According to Godfrey Muriuki However, sheep and capers were common and significant to the Kikuyu because they used their skins for bedding and clothing . Also while women did the selling and buying, men acted to them as security escort (hinga). Today, the most intensively farmed regions of Kenya are the Gikuyu homelands on the slopes on the Mounts of Kenya and Aberdares . Moreover, in their native settlements and the Diaspora, Gikuyu people interest and success in trade are evident. According to

Muriuki: “from 1920 onwards land had become a bone of contention between the Government, the Kikuyu and the white community.”(Muriuki,13)

7. Women and Mau Mau Struggle:

Kenya workers waged a war against the racist British colonial government which called Mau Mau struggle. They waged a war against the racist British colonial government which called Mau Mau struggle which focused on the land that was exploited for colonial settlement. The loss of Kenyan people their land by the white colonial settlers was bound to create an intense conflict. In addition to that; they were forced to work on the same land. Therefore, Mau Mau was an important point for Kenyans to struggle against neocolonialism and the racist colonial policies that marginalized Africans. (Albert Mugmbi Rutere,138).

Rutere added that the participation of women in Mau Mau was each overt and covert. They played an essential function in protecting their families while men have become actively concerned in Mau Mau war. Women at some stage in this period treated harshly, they had been devastating, and psychologically traumatizing. Ladies were a target of colonial revenge because they were suspected that they had a link to their men. Consequently, colonialism terrorized women with a purpose to demoralize their men within the battle. The torture ranged from denial of motion, food, shelter, bodily beating, and sexual abuse. Additionally, they suffered psychologically after their men had been arrested in Mau Mau.

Women’s contribution in Mau Mau turned into significant. further, the African ruling elite have betrayed Kenyans by way of fronting the pastimes of worldwide capitalists of their banditry activities in postcolonial Kenya. Arguably, ladies’ political

focus and the ensuing challenges they pose to men, by some means impact the latter's participation within the Mau Mau war.(Albert Mugmbi Rutere,138-150)

8. The impact of British colonization on women in Kenya:

Through Christian evangelism, the British plundered the world, facilitating imperialism and colonial powers. Their slogan was to raise the world's weak races which were really dubious. The Africans became slaves to the Western imperialism. They infused patriarchal ideologies into the educational system and encouraged children rather than girls to go to school. It also supported men in suppressing women. In the social, social, political and economic fields, African woman domination made her powerless and disabled and gender strife which undermined the Kenyan society's stability. It was an obstacle to the country's development as a whole.

Historically, African women had economic independence during the pre-colonial era. They participated actively in social, cultural, religious and political activities. In the above fields, their associations were quite important. It was hoped that the colonial rule would improve the status of women in African societies through increased living and education and the release of farmwork and oppression.. Indeed, colonialism reduced women's rights in pre-colonial times.

In her book *The Women and Colonisation: Anthropological Perspectives* (1980), Eleanor Burke Leacock (1922-1987), an American anthropologist, affirms that the relationship between men and women was equally important for hunting and gathering and for early planting society. That is how the communal home, the reciprocal division of labor, expressed this equality. Both men and women contributed to livelihood. Men were hunting , and women were collecting vegetable products, but women were neglected and oppressed due to colonialism.

Women are autonomous and could decide how production is to be shared. They have worked in a variety of jobs such as the cultivation of land and food. They also increased surplus crops, traded agricultural products, manufactured food items and products for market market sale. Furthermore, retail trade has been the most prevalent occupation of the women. But they were marginalized and oppressed during the colonization and were subject to a double colonization. Women fought both African and British male governments in the colonial era.

Nine clans of the Kikuyu Society included Achera, Agachiku, Airimu, Ambui and Angare and Anjiru. The names were named after Kikuyu and Mumbi's legendary nine daughters, the patriarch and maternal officer of the Kikuyu tribe. The Kikuyu tribes were all made by the clans. The society of Kikuyu is stated as matriarchal in the beginning. Women were potential and had substantial leadership positions in the Kikuyu community, such as Wangu Wa Makeri, a legendary Kikuyu leader and a powerful matriarch. The River Between (1965) by Ngugi through Chege shows that women were in power: "women and men were formerly the ruler of this country. The men started to resent their hard hand, and they were harsh. So men came together and destroyed all the women when they were pregnant. Women owned it all before. Your goat was the animal you saw. But the goats ran away because the women were unable to handle them. Women knew they were weak. So why should they fear them? Why should they fear them?" (qtd in Mohamed .A.Jasim 165-166).

9. Conclusion:

Ngugi's view about women brings out because he believes in women's abilities; he shows the female's characters and their significant roles in the patriarchal system.

In addition, the political background of Kenya which gained its independence in 1963 and the impact of British colonialism on women clarify the women's situation before the neocolonial system.

Then, Talking about the nature of the Gikuyu society and mentioning their past which make about real situation of the Kenyan woman understandable. Also, Kenyan women took part in the Maw Maw war and stood beside men and fight.

Chapter Three:

The Issue of Victimisation of Women in

Ngugi's Petal of Blood

1. Introduction:

The third chapter focuses on our case of study; Ngugi Wa Thiongo's Novel *Petals of Blood*, studying the novel's feminist perspectives will be our main purpose by using feminist and Marxist approaches. As a first element, we will pass by its framework; the novel's Critical reception.

The second element's spotlight is a trial to discuss the The issue of Matriarchy in *Petals of Blood*; where we give a background about the concept matriarchy, then we'll exemplify the old woman in the novel named Nyakinyua.

Finally, we study the female character's of *Petals of Blood* who are the victims of the patriarchal structure in neocolonial Kenya, in order to finish our practical and analytical part within the research.

2. Critical reception of Ngugi:

Joseph McLaren mentioned that *Petals of Blood* is the interlinked history of Muneira, Karega, Wanja, and Abdulla, which he suspected were the killings of some wealthy businessmen at the beginning of the novel, Ngugi's interest in historical memory was shown at *Petal of Blood*. With flashbacks and various perspectives, Ngugi describes in detail the metamorphosis of 'Ilmonog, a fictional village' as it is turned by neo-colonialist influences and the seductions of the western capital of the new Ilmomog, in which the population classes are marginalized. (McLaren,74).

McLaren has observed that the effectiveness of *petals of blood* can be split between different interpretations in terms of ideological and geographical lines and different views on the pursuit of the 1970s by Ngugi Marxist politics. His novel has taken note of the contentious problems which have been brought up in two connected problems: the use of

realistic instruments in fiction, their validity in the voice of political imperatives; and the continuous debates on art as ideology, the contentious nature of political novels. (McLaren 73-92)

2.1. The European and North American reception:

Critics in the Western world began to examine political ideology and novelistic form when the *Petals of Blood* released, often raising questions about the role of literary art. (McLaren 74). Josef McLaren acknowledged:

“One of the first reviews appear was Christopher Ricks's "Power Without Glory in Kenya," published in the June 26, 1977, issue of the London Sunday Times. Ricks was complimentary of Ngugi's achievement and used the metaphor of power to explain the literary effects of the novel. *Petals* was hailed as a "remarkable" and "compelling" novel which was successful because of the way in which it presented political issues within the context of "other things (Ricks 41). In using the metaphor of power, Ricks suggested the inherent power of art to transform: "art at work upon the old and the new to create something which is at once new and old (41). Furthermore, *Petals of Blood* was innovative in its use of language despite its being written in traditional English prose” (McLaren, 77).

2.1.1. The African reception:

The reception of the novel in Africa also revealed patterns of critical evaluation that involve ideology, form and characterisation. Some Western critics were equally interested in numbers, starting from the beginning their responses to *petals*. (McLaren, 79)

Josef McLaren also acknowledged a thorough review of Ngugi's character complex was carried out by Kenya's *Weekly Review* on 27 June. Anonymous reviewers debated Ngugi's interweaving between plots and personalities in order to create a novel that would affect the Kenyan readers in specific. A pinnate in Ngugi's fictional method was described,

described as Ngugi's "crowning literary accomplishment." It also was observed that a Kenyan reader could be able, because of the manner the novel challenged the outcomes of independence, to see Ngugi "walk all around your soul." A further problem was the lack of humor in the text, which was considered to be a weakness. The revelator claims that Ngugi "superstimates the lay people's" and their absorption of marxist philosophy is completely lacking in laughing, and it seems that he takes laughters out of African life is to misread him (McLaren,79).

3. Women's oppression from Marxist perspective in *Petals Of Blood*

Umar Bello acknowledged that The rich middle class's social exploitation of poor women stresses the wickedness and inhumanity of the capitalist system (224).The greed of black imperialists has degraded the status of African women intensely by creating tourist centers on Ilmorog that recruit young girls and women to satisfy white tourists.As Ngugi saying :”smuggling of gemstones and ivory plus animal and human skins. It was a center for the plunder of the country’s natural and human assets”(Ngugi 1977,395).

Capitalism abuses the African woman .As a capitalist , Kimeria raped the young girl, Wanja, to be barred from school and thrown into a degrading prostitution life. He was treating her just as sex object. Also ,Karega detests the attitude of men towards women’s low pay in factories and other places(Sitwala 12). Karega regrets that: “Men too seemed to think they were better off than women workers because they got a little bit more pay and preference in certain jobs. They seemed to think that women deserved low pay and heavy work: women’s real job, they argued amidst noise and laughter, was to lie on their backs and open their legs to man’s passage to the kingdoms of pleasure”(Ngugi,304).

4. The issue of Matriarchy in *Petals of Blood*:

4.1. Matriarchy Background:

During the prehistoric era, we have no written evidence of people's life, but we can imagine their behavior and social life from archeological evidence. There was no division of labor and gender difference. Women were used to gather various types of fruits and vegetables and hunt animals for men. Men were also considered less valuable and children were known by the identity of their mother. Women had the power to control their family and they were the family leader (Lahrach Mkhiber 10). This society was matriarchic society according to the historian (Plain and Sellers 12-5).

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary matriarchy a social system that gives power and authority to women rather than men. Also, Encyclopedia Britannica define matriarchy as it is a social system with the absolute control of a family group by a mother or woman's elder who have powers over the community as a whole.

4.1.1. Nyakinyua and matriarchal society :

Nyakinyua is the old woman in Ngugi's novel *Petals of Blood*. Ngugi portrays her as Africa's past glory. (Gitanjali Multani, 04). The elderly folk said : "..... may the Lord bless Nyakinua, the old woman" (Ngugi, 07)

According to the novel, she is the grandmother of Wanja, when Abdulla asked Wanja about her grandmother "Who is your grandmother?" (Ngugi1977,31), then she answered him: "Nyakinyua... Don't you know her ? 'she is who told me about you two: That you are strangers to Illmorog". (Ngugi ,31),

Alzawi recognized that Ngugi portrays Nyakinyua as the woman who has a great respect in Illmorog (Alzawi,192). She is not only the grandmother for Wanja but the mother of all Illmorog community (Gerald Moore, 281), and she had a power to drive a

society like in the old days, when Muriuki argued that the African society were a matriarchal, he said: "Significantly, the clan system had evolved by mid-17th century and matriarchy had been superseded by the patrilineal and patrilocal social and political organisation; such a transformation could hardly be expected to have been completed overnight." (Muriuki,62).

Nyakinyua could know every single movements that is happened in Illmorog, she has hidden eyes everywhere, because she is jealous and afraid about her society. Ngugi mentioned: "Later, after dusk, the three peasant farmers staggered back to their homes, but not before reporting their findings to Nyakinuya" (Ngugi,13).

Usually Nyakinyua makes the first move to contact every stranger came to Illmorog. she is who 'waited for Munira outside the school kei-apple hedge' (Ngugi 1977,6). Even, she is not educative who believes in traditional griot, Nyakinyua is the second teacher for Illmorog as whole, whereas Munira is the schoolteacher for the modern generation,. (Junyon Kim,22)

Alzawi argues according to Ngugui that women are more concerned with community welfare than men. Nyakinyua is an assertive woman; she opposes colonialism and advises people to be conscious of colonialism. She believes that colonialism has more oppressed and exploited women than their men, and that westernism has affected people to leave their village and parents and become idlers. Nyakinyua observes the situation:

"Our young men and women have left us. the glittering metal has called them. They go, and the young women only return now and then to deposit the newborn with their grandmothers already aged with scratching this earth for a morsel of life. [...] Others sometimes come to see the wives they left behind, make them round-bellied, and quickly go away as if driven from Ilmorog by Uhere or Mutung'u." (Ngugi,09)

Therefore, The idea to send delegates to the city is only through the Nyakinyua's advice to meet with the Illmorog people's representative in Nairobi. She has a voice in affecting the community and brings the villagers together successfully. She describes Ilmorog as the thriving community to inspire individuals to prepare for a bright future (Junyon Kim,22). Nyakinyua's speech to motivate Illmorog people:

I think we should go. It is our time to make things happen. There was a time when things happened the way we in Ilmorog wanted them to happen. We had power over the movement of our limbs. We made up our own words and sang them and we danced to them. But there came a time when this power was taken from us. We danced yes, but somebody else called out the words and the song. They ate our forest. Then they sent for our young men. They went on swallowing our youth. Ours is only to bear in order for the city to take ... that is why Ilmorog must go there and see this Ndamathia that only takes but never gives back. (Ngugi, 115-116)

Nyakinyua argues that once they're in Nairobi, they're supposed to surround it and demand their share back, and once they've got it, they're going to be able to sing and dance their songs like in the past. She relates how the warriors would follow their stolen goats and cattle in the olden days and would not return until their stolen wealth was recovered. (Sitwala ,146)

5. The Female Character's and the issue of women's victimization in *Petals of Blood*:

The word victimisation according to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary victimization is a noun the action of making somebody suffer unfairly because you do not like them, their opinions, or something that they have done. The victimisation of woman in petals of blood reflects Ngugi's Marxist and feminist view. *Petals of Blood* thus lends

itself to be a practical manifestation of his Marxist feminist views through its portrayal of the African woman and her role in her society and how the relationship is damaged by the suppressive system of domination. The novel through the character of Wanja, Nyakinua, and Mariamu accentuates the Victimisation of the African woman under the neocolonial system and her struggle to protect herself (Alzzawi,196) .As Sakshi Semwal saying:“We see women portrays as victims of colonialism, patriarchy, oppressed figures, mothers, and also freedom fighters. The women have pitted against the unjust social, economical and political order and play their positive roles for the establishment of a new order”(Sakshi Semwal ,377).

Sitwala said that *Petals of Blood* reflects the past, the way that the people of Ilmorog survive and utilize their past to create a new world and to understand it. It reflects the concept of the postcolonial theory .. that the author needs to take the past to shape the public's future, The community of Ilmorog does not like the modern changes that have come to the area.

Bitterly defined Postcolonial theory as an: “approach to literary analysis that concerns itself in literature particularly written in English in formerly colonised countries” (Bitterly,65)

5.1. Mariamu the victim of her husband:

Mariamamu represents the African women who have to fight for themselves against their men's oppression. Her husband's forces Mariamamu to work in the settler's farm rather than him, and after he exploited her sweat without her agree. She would not to be submissive to her husband anymore; she wouldn't work for nothing on the settler's farm and demanded for her rights.

Her husband was beating her every time when she did not obeying and giving him the complete wage that she worked hard to gain it. Mariamu's self autonomy appeared when she decided that she has to run away with her child Ndinguri to Limuru. Her chance to escape her husband will be more successful and the right decision than to stay and resist his abuse and punishment. According to Geetanjali Multani saying: “ Mariamu ... She is a victim of double exploitation both at home and in the society. She is the second of the two wives, who had to slog not only on the fields but even at home.” .(Geetanjali Multani,08).

Mariamu's only possible option is to go to the farm of Ezekiel Waweru who is the father of Munira, as she described in the novel as the woman who lives in the farm of Munira's father: “She took Ndinguri and ran back to Limuru where she begged for cultivation rights from Munira's father” (Ngugi,69).

She is no longer a victim of her husband, but a victim of the patriarchal society, when she arrived to Munira's father and asked him for a work, unfortunately he refused her demand only by a condition. He wants to exploit a desperate woman for sex . Morgan said: “It is equally for the same reason that men demand sex favors before employing any woman” (Rutere Morgan,162).Geetanjali Multani added:“but Mariamu has too much self respect to trade her body for a piece of land. She had refused the dominance and injustice of her own husband, so how could she let Brother Ezekiel exploit her.” (Geetanjali Multani,08).

5.1.1. Wanja:

According to Sakshi Semwal, Wanja is one of the protagonists in *Petals of Blood*. She had unhappy childhood because of her father who runs after money and does not care of her. Geetanjali Multani added his saying :“The constant fights between her parents

highlights Ngugi's belief that domestic harmony is impossible without wider social harmony. As Wanja realises later, that the cause of constant fights between her father and mother was in fact a social one. While her mother believes in going back to her African roots, her father sees it as going back to ignorance and backwardness. As a child she is baffled by these domestic fights." (Geetanjali Multani,08).

Sakshi Semwal added that her miserable life started from, when her Kimeria raped her. She became the victim of sexual exploitation in which she became pregnant in her adolescence; due to this unexpected pregnancy, she was forced to leave school and was thrown out of a family fold. Wanja believes strongly in the philosophy of you eat somebody or you are eaten. Wanja believes that between a worker and a prostitute there is no difference. She says "What is the difference whether you are sweating it out on plantation, in a factory or lying on your back, anyway?" (Ngugi 1977, 293). She herself admits: As for me, it's a game . . . of money . . . you eat or you are eaten . . . they are proud to be seen with me . . . even for one night...and they pay for it . . . I have had to be hard . . . It is the only way. . . the only way . . ." (Ngugi,94-293). Ngugi highlights the factors that force Wanja to prostitute. By her image she goes into prostitution as a means of survival. Also Bonnie Roos added : "For given Ngugi's Marxist politics, what is always more critical about Wanja at any given moment than her social condition (i. e., gender position), is her economic self-sufficiency, whether through prostitution or some other means" (Bonnie Roos,166). According to Ngugi neo-colonial and imperialistic conditions are responsible for Wanja's miserable life (Mohammad Alazzawi, Ahmad Jasim 197). In addition, postcolonial theory appeared when Wanja narrates her past and how it reflects negatively on her present life.

5.1.1.1. Nyakinua:

Nyakinyua, Wanja's grandmother is victimized by neocolonial institutions. Although she is a widow, the government appointed land and administration officers auctions her land. She resisted because every Kenyan thinks that the shamba (land) is very important. Unhappy with capitalist rule, she vowed to fight to recover her country as she announced it (Umar Bello,225): "...I'll struggle against these black oppressors ... alone ... alone" (Thiong'o, 328)

6. Conclusion:

In Ngugi's *Petals of Blood*; we see much of the African woman reality, and since Ngugi has marxist view; he knew how to describe each of the females' lives under neocolonialism. Through narrating the struggle of Mariamun who was the victim of her husband, Wanja the young girl who lost her childhood, then she became a prostitute, and Nyakinyua the old woman..

Ngugi could manage to tackle different issues of victimisation such rape and seeing women as a sex object in what happened to Wanja, women exploitation in working like Mariamu, Forgetting and not estimating the sacrifice of females in the war as Nyakinyua. *Petals of blood* is a novel that depicts much of the women daily life in particular and Africans in general; Ngugi saw that woman are victims of the patriarchal structure of the African society.

General Conclusion:

This study seeks to explore the image of the African women life in Ngugi's *Petals of blood*. By presenting the Ngugi's perspectives on the concept; this research formed a general idea about the influence of neocolonialism on African female character in *Petals of Blood*.

We attempted to discuss how neocolonialism impact on Kenyan woman. Yet African women are the ones living the challenge of victimization in neocolonial Africa. By starting with the historical background and definition of Feminism; discussing its three waves and the different ideas that each wave brought through time, we can notice that woman was able take back her rights and change her negative image. Feminism demonstrates that women can play significant roles like men. The most significant objectives for feminism, in relation to equal chances in the depiction of political and social occurrences, were to give women their liberty. Then, we give the attention to the African feminism

However, the definition of African feminism is hard to be defined due to the various thoughts of feminist philosophers. It defers from Western feminism in cultures and roots. Indeed it gives more importance to role of African woman and her achievements in the political, social and the economical fields. It shows also her status in the decisions making in addition to restating the common obstacles that can any woman face when looking for her rights.

Ngugi's novel *Petals of blood* reflects the African woman reality under the pressure of neocolonialism and patriarchal society; Ngugi knew how to introduce the sufferance of his female characters. He used Gikuyu Language in order to avoid the sense of being with no identity. Through Ngugi's narrative, the reader can extract the

issues of victimization of women such as; rape and seeing women as sex object in what happened to Wanja, women exploitation in working like Mariamu , Forgetting and not estimating the sacrifice of females in the war as Nyakinyua ,the old woman.

The author narrates the struggle of Mariamu, Wanja,and Nyakinyua while their living in neocolonial Kenya , within the novel; the reader will get to know each of the characters' suffer from the man domination and the society, and how they resist to survive. We can see the special attention and focus that had been given by Ngugi to the female characters; they are given the role of fighters and victims, nevertheless; the result took a pessimistic direction. Through Ngugi's representation to these women under the neocolonialism pressure; he gave the reader an idea about the real African women's response to the same situations.

In *Petals of blood*, we can find the issues of raping, violence, poverty and economic corruption and it showed the economic and political exploitation plans adopted by the government, Because of the persistence of oppressive system and inequality had a strong relationship with the previous colonization and domination of neocolonial structure.

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ملخص:

يركز هذا العمل على قضية اضطهاد النساء في كينيا خلال الاستعمار الحديث ؛ من خلال دراسة صراع المرأة في واحدة من الروايات الشهيرة للكاتب الكيني نغوجي وا تينغو , ألا و هي بتلات دم و اعطاء الخلفية العامة للحركة النسائية و الحركة الماركسية وانعكاس الاستعمار الحديث في كينيا. كما أنه يقدم وجهة نظر نغوجي حول النساء بشكل عام، ثم يعرض الحياة الاجتماعية لمجتمع جيكويو لأن المرأة هي مركز المجتمع. إنه يحاول شرح الجوانب النسوية والماركسية للرواية ؛ الشخصيات النسائية في بتلات الدم هي ضحية لكل من المجتمع الأبوي و نظام الاستعمار الحديث في كينيا . نسلط الضوء على حالة المرأة الإفريقية في إفريقيا المستعمرة الجديدة ، حيث نجح نغوجي في تجسيد اضطهاد في كتابه بتلات الدم من خلال شخصيات الإناث الثلاثة المختارة , مريامو و وانجا و نياكينوا .