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Alternative Development in Festus Iyayi's *Violence* and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil On The Cross*

*Leonard O. Onwuegbuche**

Abstract

The question of positive direction for most African countries after independence has continued to elicit volumes of writings from authors based both in and outside the continent. This attention comes against the backdrop of obvious failures of the new leaders to address albeit adequately the myriad of socio-economic and political problems confronting these countries. This paper examines Festus Iyayi and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's attempt to confront headlong obvious present-day challenges of nation-states, and the inability of its "appointed" managers to rise to them. The concern of the paper is not only to identify these hydra-headed monsters but most importantly through these works proffer an enduring viable option to counteract the glaring and inadequate system that has left a sour taste in the mouths of the peoples of the African continent.

Keywords: Exploitation, Alternative, Economic, Marxist, Neo-colonization, Development

Introduction

The fervour with which political freedom from colonialism was pursued in the African continent and the hullabaloo that greeted such illustrious development has gradually turned into something of an illusion for the people of the continent. In the past, it was

*Lecturer, Department of English and Literary Studies, Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State - P.M.B. 1010, Abakaliki, Nigeria. Email: leonardonwuegbuche@yahoo.com

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easier to place fingers on Europeans and Westerners at large, as the main obstacle to Africa's development. However, the realization of political independence has thrown up a whole load of dust as people's expectation of glory days ahead has been driven underground by the new managers of the African body polity.

The African intellectuals who had shouted themselves hoarse in telling Europeans that Africa is not all about savagery had to come out of their hiatus to confront the present monster, epitomized by the new African leaders who are nothing but stooges in the hands of the Europeans. This is what has aptly been described as neo-colonialism; where Europe remains albeit indirectly in control of the economic and political affairs of the nations of Africa. Frantz Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth* underscores that:

> this natural middle-class bourgeoisie who receive the mantle of leadership from colonialist is one where its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists prosaically of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant though camouflaged, which today puts on the masque of neo-colonialism (122).

This development has kept African nations grounded in terms of real development, as these elites tend to alienate themselves from the aspirations of the people by not allowing the wealth to go ground, rather, arrogate it to themselves and their foreign masters. However, writers have equally taken up the gauntlet to attack this new "evil" through their writings. Perhaps, no better-committed writers in this quest than Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Festus Iyayi, and through their works, *Devil on the Cross* and *Violence* respectively have brought into sharp focus this hydra-headed problem in the society that has come to derail the march to greater heights by the fledgling nations.

To appreciate the underlying philosophy behind the works, *Violence* and *Devil on the Cross*, the theoretical framework of Marxism would be employed. According to Charles Bressler, this ideology flourished in the nineteenth century as a pragmatic view of history that offered the working classes of society an opportunity to change their world and therefore their lifestyle. By providing both "a philosophical system and a plan of action to bring about change in a society, Marxism offers to humanity a social, political, economic, and cultural understanding of the nature of reality, of society and the individual" (Bressler 155).

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels declared in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) that the capitalist or bourgeoisie had successfully enslaved the working class or the

proletariat through economic policies and control of the production of goods. The argument here, therefore, is that the proletariat must revolt and take control of the economic and political power from the bourgeoisie and put such ownership of all property in the hands of the government to distribute fairly and equally to all.

Expounding further on the above in *Das Kapital* (1867) Marx (cited in Bressler 116) recognises that history and our understanding of people and their beliefs are determined by economic conditions. He opines that an intricate web of a relationship emerges when any group of people engages in the production of goods. A few of these people will be employers while the majority will be employees. The employer who has economic power will quickly gain social and political control of society. Thus, this upper class will impose their beliefs, their values and even their art on the working class consciously or unconsciously. In that, the rich become richer while the poor remain poorer and oppressed, having been forced to swallow the ideology of the employer.

To rid society of such an ugly trend Marx believes that the government and not individuals should own and control means of production to protect people from the oppression of the bourgeoisie. The books provide us with a theory of history, economics, politics, sociology and even metaphysics. In the understanding of a literary work, therefore,

> a critic must place a work in its historical setting, paying attention to the author's life, the time of period in which the work was written, and the cultural milieu of both author and text, and all of these concerns are related to sociological issues and most importantly the economic means of production (qtd. in Bressler 117).

Literature and the African Society

Writers of the African continent have consistently engaged the question of leadership and the accompanying shenanigans by the new managers of the nation-states. There appears to be an ensuing confusion with the recently enthroned caretakers and neo-colonialists on what form of government to practice against the backdrop of emerging realities of the level of social injustice, class conflict and inherent contradictions associated with capitalism. These numerous daunting challenges occasioned by their very ineptitude, to say the least, leaves obvious schism in the society desirous of appreciable development.

Early writers like Chinua Achebe, Elechi Amadi, and many others furiously wrote about cultural affirmation and reclamation. Achebe in *Morning Yet on Creation Day* said as much:

> If I were God I would regard as the very worst our acceptance – for whatever reason – of racial inferiority. It is too late in the day to get worked up about it or to blame others, much as they may deserve such blame and condemnation. What we need to do is to look back and try and find out where we went wrong, where the rain began to beat us (44).

This initial worry simply paled into insignificance, as the narrative changed for the new nations of Africa. The disillusionment and disappointment that characterized these new leaders meant that emerging writers had their hands full in engaging the hydra-headed monster and questioning why things have suddenly gone awry in a continent with so much hope. Thus, writers like Sembene Ousmane, Ayi Kwei Armah, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Festus Iyayi, Alex La Guma, Ben Okri and other strident voices began to address the myriad of concerns of the masses, who are left holding the rung end of the stick in the scheme of things. And who largely form part of the group suffering from exploitation, deprivation, and denial, decide to take up the gauntlet to challenge the system that inhibits their economic and social existence. These writers begin to articulate the obvious inequalities as workers groan under stringent economic conditions with calls for a change of order. As Terry Eagleton observes, "the narrative Marxism has to deliver is the story of the struggles of men and women to free themselves from certain forms of exploitation and oppression" (vii). These writers, therefore, chiefly concern themselves with the predicament of the workers and downtrodden in the society occasioned by the corruption, sleaze and class divisions perpetuated by the beneficiaries of leadership positions. This is at the heart of Charles Nnolim's submission in *Approaches to the African Novel*: "(to the Marxist approach to literature and art) – to literature that depicts the plight of the masses on the contemporary African scene; to social art which is at once propagandist and tends toward proletarian concerns" (49).

These novelists, therefore, use their works to address not only the palpable inhuman conditions masses undergo, but more interestingly to call for a revolution or change of order to dislodge the oppressors by the working class, eventually granting them relief from their traducers. Ime Ikiddeh opines that:

> While the disillusion syndrome carries with it disappointment in unfulfilled hopes leading to mixed reactions of frustration, anger and cynicism, even

> self-contempt, the more heartening message is that organised action can reverse the situation…It is the positive manipulation of group action to achieve a reversal of odds through revolutionary action that signals the possible advent of a new order (37).

And that in itself is the hope and desire of these writers to help turn around the fortunes of the nation states in the overall efforts towards an African recovery.

Question of Struggle and Survival in Contemporary African Setting

It is against this backdrop that the exploitation and class distinction Iyayi portrays in *Violence* begins to have an import on the reader in society. The novel captures the exploitation, humiliation, and even degradation of labourers in the city of Benin, Nigeria. The reader is exposed to the varying degrees of their struggle to turn around their highly pitiable situation. The story, therefore, revolves around two sharply divided classes; the proletariat or the working class and the bourgeoisie or the propertied class. While the oppressed and proletariat is faced with the basic question of survival from day to day, the opposite end encompassing the bourgeoisie or oppressor is opulent, and still eager to get richer through the exploitation of the working class, whose level of poverty is disturbingly palpable. Adisa draws her husband's attention; "Look at me! I am getting leaner and thinner and yet when I married you God knows I was fatter…"(3)

Pitched against each other in this class struggle are Idemudia, his wife Adisa, Osaro, and Patrick Osifo, while Obufun and his wife Queen inhabit the oppressive class. And it is Queen who exploits the poor men by underpaying them to unload cement from trailers: "I'll pay you five naira each, nothing more. If you don't want it you can go away" (21). Also in a related development, Iyayi captures equally the unenviable state of these men as they continue to toil and soil at the low-cost housing site: "The sun continued to bear down mercilessly. And one after another, the men removed their shirts until their backs glistened with sweat from labouring" (247). It is quite glaring that there is a basic issue in the novel and that is the unequal opportunities that exist for the masses in society. These irregularities are a result of capitalism. These poor men have no choice but to continue working in the most arduous conditions. Even on a personal level, Idemudia is forced to sell his blood to obtain money for food. This inequality is heightened by the fact the available resources do not go around as it is supposed to hence, only the privileged few have access to these basic needs, while the majority wallow in penury. While they stood, they

watched Queen's steward stuff dustbin with remains of *jollof* rice, *dodo*, meat, and beans, prompting Osaro to remark: "It is so unfair…one man has enough to eat in fact so much that he throws some away. Yet here we are hungry with nothing to eat" (20).

This inequality which they are fully aware of persists and they continue to take it in their strides. But all that was to change later. According to Udenta O. Udenta Udemudia's naivety at the beginning of the novel could be likened to "Waringa in *Devil on the Cross* before her exposure to the causes of inequality in Kenya. This situation continues right up to the period of Idemudia's hospitalization because of overwork and exhaustion" (71). Iyayi creates a character who at the very beginning is not only inexperienced but at the same time ignorant of his social and economic predicament. Thus, he chooses to vent his spleen at the slightest provocation on the body of his wife, Adisa.

But to equip him for the work ahead, Iyayi has taken pains to delineate Idemudia's biography against a background of suffering, struggle, and hope. In his essay, "Ideology and the Dialectics of Action" Onyemaechi Udumukwu, argues that *Violence* is cast around an intricate web of conflicts, flashbacks, and events from which we can discern definitive landmarks in the biography of Idemudia. (46) Iyayi, therefore, presents to us his poor, rural and peasant background of an extended family where bitter quarrels and fights amongst the children are always constant. He drops out of school and moves to town to join the army of the unemployed in search of a job. It is worthy to note here that he finds no solace either, as there are no jobs. Thus, he hangs around major streets with other unemployed waiting to be hired as casual labourers. In the meantime, they embark on selling their blood to willing buyers.

Idemudia, therefore, comes to see how his social context operates. He sees his poverty, unemployment, and unfinished education as inextricably set within a broad sphere of violence. At this period also, he begins to acknowledge and appreciate his wife's devotion, and the sacrifices she has made for him, and equally measure his development in terms of this ability to change his condition. His development also equally starts to manifest as he goes to work for Queen at the low-cost housing site. The working condition is deplorable, the pay is substandard, and the workers are policed ruthlessly by the Greek, Papiros.

In Idemudia, Iyayi personifies the qualities of his ideal revolutionary leader. He sticks to the common cause, possesses charisma, is courageous, and can refuse inducement and enticement, at the same time being resolute in dealing with forces

of subjugation. Idemudia, the protagonist embodies all these ideals, as a social organizer, he organizes the workers to go on strike. The strike action, therefore, forms the revolutionary impulse in this novel. The imprisonment of Idemudia in the hospital as a result of his inability to pay his hospital bills made him a newer appreciation of the reasons for his social and economic woes. This awareness at the hospital bed sparks off the rebellion in him to fight against injustice and deprivation, as he resolves: "I am going to continue to struggle, to fight. And where I cannot fight because I am held as I am held now, I am going to escape" (157). The play he watched from the hospital bed creates immense awareness for Idemudia to appreciate the strenuous working conditions they are passing through building houses for Queen. The play highlights and exposes the working class, depicting the greatest act of violence.

This realization is shared by Udumukwu who says that through Iyayi's characters, we are constantly reminded that:

> although the material condition renders the satisfaction of needs impossible, it is nevertheless mandatory for humans to change their condition first by understanding it. Thus understanding one's condition becomes the first strident step to action through reason (43).

Iyayi, therefore, foregrounds characters who are constantly engaged in an intellectual struggle to grasp the logic of their milieu. The experience offered by the play imbues Idemudia with the courage to protect the interest of his class. That when he leaves the hospital and picks up casual employment with his comrades, he is a changed man, just like Kerega in *Petals of Blood* and Bakayoko in *God's Bits of Wood*. Udenta underscores this point and observes that "he is thoughtful, increasingly knowledgeable and aware, and ready to protect the interests of his class" (72).

He refuses Queen's bribe for him to forestall the strike action and comes to appreciate more the inhuman treatment visited on them after noting the devastating, cheap, slavery and inhuman condition of their workplace. This, coupled with the long hours they put in with very little to show for, and the attitude of their employers, he cries out:

> What kind of life is this? A man gets a job and he cannot protest. He cannot ask for higher wages, the period of leisure is cut down arbitrarily and he must come out to work when he is told. This was slavery, this was…this was violence… His unfinished education, his joblessness, his hunger, his poverty, all these he found out where different forms of violence…a gradual debasement of himself, his pride as a man (243).

All these realizations serve as a binding force among the workers who now believe that only solidarity and organization can solve their problems at the workplace. Udenta writes:

> The workers never accept their lot as they did in the beginning, but resolutely determine to stand together, and fight for their rights, and if possible help in the establishment of a new socio-economic order where institutionalized violence and barbarity will have no place (72).

Here, Iyayi positions these workers as the weapon of change, who are set to put a stop to the exploitative device of the bourgeoisie class. So the class consciousness of the nature of their subjugation becomes the first step in achieving the overall aim. Idemudia's leadership quality as seen by Bernard, the older worker, at the site is, therefore, a catalyst to galvanize them into positive action. In an interview, Iyayi states his conviction as a writer: "I am motivated by my desire to uplift the political and economic lives of my fellow man" (12). Therefore his social vision is realized through inter-class confrontation. He strongly feels that proletariat must sufficiently confront the forces of oppression symbolized by the bourgeoisie class in society. This class institutes a capitalist system that uses the surplus value created by the proletariat class represented by Idemudia, Adisa, Osaro and others.

Iyayi condemns the present state of affairs and calls for a radical and even violent form of reaction to overthrow the capitalist system. To achieve this however the poor masses have to be alerted to their destiny and historical duty through teaching and leadership. Iyayi provides a teacher in the learned counsel in the novel and a good leader in Idemudia. Ngugi in his book, *Writers in Politics* acquiesces with Iyayi's role in this novel and the issue of commitment by writers:

> It demands of an African writer that he recognizes the global character of imperialism and the global character or dimension of forces struggling against it to build a new world. He must reject repudiate and negate his roots in the native bourgeoisie and its spokesman, and finds true creative links with the Pan-African masses over the earth in alliance with all the socialistic forces of the world (80).

The argument put forward here by Ngugi is that an African writer must try and reflect not timidly the struggle of the African working class and its peasant class for the total liberation of their labour power. The conditions of these workers, therefore, should be brought to the fore to enable the call for action against these conditions which they toil more tenable.

An appendage to the underlying theme pervading the novel is sexual exploitation. Queen, a businesswoman, made her fortunes through her husband's contact in government circles and by sleeping with members of the Tenders Board of different ministries and parastatals. To forestall the strike at the building site and in recognition of Idemudia's premier position, she invites Idemudia to a chalet and tries to seduce him after Idemudia had refused her three hundred naira bribe. On the other hand, also, her husband Obofun, seduces Idemudia's wife, Adisa, as the poor woman was running from pillar to post looking for money to pay her husband's hospital bill.

Iyayi takes a swipe at different facets of societal life. The judicial and legal system is found wanting equally. The arrest and imprisonment of Pa Jimoh for a crime he did not commit attest to this. The health system is equally indicted, especially the way it is run, the lack of employment which leads Idemudia into off-loading cement under the rain resulting in pneumonia, and lack of parental attention. Lilian, daughter of Obofun and Queen is raped under the very nose of her parents, while they were busy chasing money. Iyayi identifies all these as violence and calls for a total overhaul of the system. A society where a man watches while his wife is being raped, his daughter kidnapped and his son murdered in cold blood does not retain the qualities of a decent society.

As a critique of society and its social values, *Violence* aims at awakening social consciousness to class division, moral depravity, greed and exploitation in society. The novel attends realism, which here singles out an individual from the faceless masses and is made realistic through an elaborate portraiture of identity within their class structure.

Exploitation and Attendant Consequences in the New Nations of Africa

As we come to *Devil on the Cross*, we are no less confronted by the same question of the theme of exploitation in its varied forms and class distinction as part of the societal norm, in a neo-colonialist setting. While Iyayi uses a man to affect his socialist vision, here Ngugi introduces the feminine through the character of Wariinga to buttress his ideology and the whole concept of social justice. Helen Chukwuma observes that *Devil on the Cross* "is a fight for rights by the common men, it is a class struggle between the poor and deprived and the rich and exploitative" (67).

It is pertinent to delineate the character. It is the story of a young woman, Wariinga who gets impregnated by an old man from Ngorika, he abandons her and the pregnancy, forcing her to quit school. She considers taking her life but is rescued at

the railway tracks. She was to travel to Nairobi after giving birth to a baby girl. There also she loses her job for refusing advances from Boss Kilhara and losing her boyfriend John Kinwana, who suspects her of dating her boss. On getting home, she is thrown out by the landlord for her inability to pay the inflated rent and in frustration she attempts to take her life the second time but is rescued.

This brief biography offers readers insight into the person of Wariinga and how crushing and tough life has been for her. She is deceived, exploited, harassed, degraded and dehumanized by Kenyan society, where capitalism has taken firm root, and everything is seen from the angle of profit first. Charles Nama echoes these thoughts also in his essay, "Daughter of Moombi: Ngugi's Heroines and Traditional Gikuyu Aesthetics". He observes that "Wariinga is a victim of the educational, religious, political and social expression by foreign and domestic exploiters" (148). These 'domestic exploiters' whom Africa had gladly installed, believing that their focal point would be the interest of their nation-state first before any other thing. They have, instead become the continent's albatross. Writing in *Decolonising the Mind,* Ngugi Wa Thiong'o underscores this ugly realization by identifying the imperialist tradition in Africa today as maintained by the international bourgeoisie using the multinationals and of course the flag-waving native ruling class (2).

The neo-colonial economic structure is capitalist. The development here is one where the rich grow richer while the poor keep getting poorer, and at the same time being reduced to a human machine. The ubiquitous and fattening image of the robbers attests to this. The changing and exploitative nature of present-day Kenya with its capitalist tendencies prompts Wangari to lament in frustration:

> For today, is there a single corner, even in the most far-flung reaches of Kenya, where a poor man can run to escape poverty? Ilmorog, Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru, Kisumu – the water in all these places has become bitter for us peasants and workers… (41).

The domineering effects of neo-colonialism make it assuredly possible that her attempt at a private business meets with total failure since economic exploitation is at the foundation of this "indirect rule". Through the ugly trend of bequeathing power to blacks under the name of independence, with the expectation for blacks to concentrate on building up their country, instead, they chose to protect the interest of these colonialists. This negation of independence according to Grace Okereke has made the effort to be nothing but a "superficial attainment" (139).

Ngugi, therefore, indicts the new Kenya which is still in a form of colonialization despite its celebrated independence. That permits are needed to enter Kenya speaks volumes of the true state of affairs in the country. There are also vagrancy laws that are instituted against the indigenous people. It is during the competition in the cave for the best thief and robber that Ngugi captures all the facets of Kenyan life that are being bastardized by these foreigners and their cohorts in African leaders. Ngugi uses a series of stories right from the Matata Matamu Mutata bus to Ilmorog to depict this.

Thus with each story, especially at the cave, the balkanization of Kenya society is brought to the fore, and one is forced to compare the present predicament with that of how the country was in the past, and the sacrifices its leaders made to keep their country. There is a dualism of good and evil inherent in this work. Each story touches on life in Kenya, and how survival is pursued albeit illegitimately. In politics, it is all about fraud, rigging, and intimidation to get to power. Again, true to stereotype, one of the robbers can rip off society by camouflaging little girls from his school window. Okereke observes that the whole concept of competition in the art of theft and robbery is based on the large-scale neo-colonial economist exploitation and domination of Africa by the West and their black stooges (142). Here, the state machinery is not meant to serve the people, for instance, the police, but instead used to incarcerate and suppress opposition. Ngugi uses the opportunity to lampoon that fact of life, with the arrest of Wangari who had reached some kind of pact with the police to stop the competition. In his collection of essays, *Moving the Centre*, Ngugi underscores the point about political survival, and what it means for society. That the question of power and who wields this power, and on whose behalf that power is wielded is crucial as a guardian of its physical and economic survival. He goes further to acknowledge that the power to decide between options, alternative tactics and strategies for survival be wielded by the society (77). Therein lies the crux of the matter, as society is gradually being eroded by the evil machinations of foreigners. Wariinga's nightmare where the Devil is majestically lowered down after the crucifixion and protected with an armoured vehicle lays credence to the tough battle ahead to dislodge them.

Wariinga's encounter with the voice marked a point of reawakening for her, and the injustices she faced in life were man-made. Just like Idemudia as he watches the play at the hospital, a new form of awareness of his condition starts dawning on him. The sexual exploitation Wariinga's boss was exposing her to before she left, is

equally faced by Idemudia in *Violence* to forestall a strike by the workers. Ngugi, however, briefly positions the masses through the workers, peasants, and students as the proletariat to dislodge the criminals or bourgeoisie at the core, highlighting his Marxist leanings. But it is in Wariinga, who had gone through that re-birth, Ngugi positions to make a statement about his socialist vision in a country derailed due to Western influence and ineptitude of the African leaders at the helm of affairs.

As she picks up the pieces of her life, she rudely discovers that her fiancé's father was the rich old man from Ngorika, father to her daughter Wambui. She displays courage of unquantifiable magnitude and vengeful fury in shooting the rich old man from Ngorika, and not allowing him to mess up her life once more. As observed by the narrator, this is just the beginning: "But he knew with all heart that the hardest struggles of her life journey lay ahead…" (254). Olawale Awosika opines that "Ngugi's works are always dominated by four themes: the theme of Messiah/or saviour, the politics of decolonization, culture conflict and theme of betrayal" (104). While this could be said to be true, Lewis Nkosi, however, posits that "in *Petals of Blood* the perspective shifts from concerns with naturalism and cultural identity to the overriding question of class conflict and internal exploitation" (73). This he continues to develop in *Devil on the Cross*. Ngugi holds this purview in *Homecoming* too and identifies colonialization and capitalism as twin brothers whose mission is to exploit the material wealth of subject, people and who, in order to gain acceptability and perpetration, enlist the services of the more shy but attractive cousins of Christianity and Christian oriented education whose duty is to capture the soul and mind as well (45).

Style

In *Violence*, the technique of employing a story within a story is an effective style. It encapsulates in one moment all the various injustices that are found in society as highlighted in that drama in the hospital, which as it was marked a turning point in the central character's life and helped prepare him for the responsibility ahead. Iyayi uses an omniscient point of view to narrate the story and delves into the mind of every character for the reader to see. He equally employs the technique of "showing" especially with Idemudia, as he develops in the course of the story. For instance, his murderous impulse at the beginning of the novel gives way to a compassionate and understanding love for Adisa. Also, he isn't aware of his condition much earlier, and was rough, but is to change later.

On the other hand, Ngugi uses the traditional oral narrative form to convey the story to the reader. This is better appreciated as one realizes that the novel is written in Gikuyu. He employs flashbacks to bring to the reader Wariinga's past. The setting shows the disparity in living standards in the country. The Golden Heights area is for the rich and powerful while the poor people huddle in Njeruca and surrounding shanty areas. In characterisation, the dualism that exists in the novel still pitches characters to angles they pander to, either good or evil. Representing good are Wariinga and Mutun Gatuiria, while Mwaura, the man with dark goggles, belongs to the evil lot. Even in Wariinga and Wangari, a distinction between a young, educated lady and a village, rusty old woman is portrayed.

The recurring motif in this novel is the journey. While speaking with Venkat Rao, Ngugi acknowledges that with Gikuyu, he could play with word sounds and images, and could use more proverbs, riddles, and anecdotes. For instance, *Devil on the Cross* is based on a series of journeys (164). And this could better be appreciated with Wariinga leaving home to stay with her aunt at Nakaru, and running to Nairobi after her pregnancy; from Nairobi to Ilmorog, and back with Gatuiria to see his parents. But her greatest journey is one she is about to undertake at the end of the novel. What Ngugi seems to be saying here is that the task of returning Kenya to its glory days is not a day's job, as this involves a complete overhaul and toppling of the capitalist system and enshrining a more societal involving module. This is recognizable in Emmanuel Yewah's view that a close reading of *Devil on the Cross* will show Ngugi's anti-capitalist, anti-neo-colonialist, anti-dictatorial stance (221).

In the symbols, the Matatu depicts the ordinary man striving to be good as could be seen in Wariinga, Gatuiria, and Wangari, while Mwaura, Mwireriwa, and Makinaai cave symbolize darkness in terms of devils habitation and the criminal features of fat men is a sign of how corrupt they are. Ngugi uses an omniscient point of view to enable him to harness the varying points of view and imbue them with many stories. According to Chukwuma, "*Devil on the Cross* is a highly successful story both for its contents and its technique. Ngugi is a deeply committed writer, sensitive to the plight of the masses and workers in present-day political setup" (69). The present realization of the predicament of the people has never been more poignantly stated.

Conclusion

The two books *Violence* and *Devil on the Cross* have been able to throw more light on the worldview of the authors, and their concern for the good of the society they live in. Particularly, not only in letting Europeans and their cohorts in African

leaders know that Africa is not all about backwardness, but most importantly, that means of production be domiciled in the hands of the society for all to get an equal share and not to be left in the hands of few privileged individuals, who manipulate and arrogate it to themselves alone.

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