CHAPTER THREE

CHINUA ACHEBE'S *THINGS FALL APART* AND NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S *PETALS OF BLOOD*: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
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3.1. Preliminaries

The African postcolonial novel is an influential branch of the worldly postcolonial narrative. As a part of the worldly postcolonial ideology it presents, it responds and tackles the European intellectual colonial discourse. It further responds to the problems and consequences of the newly independent ex-colonies. Authors wrote during the colonial and post-colonial eras consider themselves as social reformist and political activists whose works reconsider their cultures global status and identify their countries' political and cultural problems during and after colonization.

The European invasion of Africa has generated a state of political and cultural reactive influences against the foreign domination. Literature, as stated in chapter two, is given a distinctive significance as it has simultaneously emerged with the resistance movements. However, the colonizer's languages have become a part of the African culture, but still the native sensibility has restored its cultural terrain within that language. A war has been waged to fuel the social commitment and protest the colonialist influences. Africa had to suffer under the colonial rule for decades. Therefore, the African nationalists have adopted variety of resistance modes to oppose the colonial political and cultural invasion. African people had been politically and culturally exploited by the colonialist power. Consequently, they have to undergo a crisis of clashing values generated by the imperial ruling power. The African society has become under a radical transformation. In a mode of protest, The Africans have confronted the new values and habits that have targeted their cultural background. To do that, they have made use of the colonialist education for
the sake of spreading the African actual image. In this sense, African literature is employed to mirror the crisis of self-identity generated by the colonizer in the African society. African writers deliberately focus on presenting myths and legends as integral part of the African culture, which, as they suppose, are not less impressive than other ingredients of worldly cultures.

During the colonial era, African writers showed concern for the cultural damages the colonial depiction of the Black Continent presents. They have exhibited a concern for the liberation and independence themes. The two issues dominate the postcolonial context before independence. Senghor's and others' views of Negritude have influenced many African writers, which has been initially founded to reject the French colonialism. Negritude writers have found an encouraging African values in the concept to reject the colonial racism. The African diaspora uses the term to constitute a tool in fighting the political and intellectual hegemony. Negritude in collaboration with Marxism has initiated a literary style which the majority of African postcolonial writers have adopted in writings. The Harlem Renaissance movement in the United States and the Haiti inspiration have significantly influenced the Negritude movement. Leopard Senghor had asserted that the 20th century would be incomplete without acknowledging the African civilization. He called for Negritude as African self-defining movement which African writers had to adopt. According to Senghor, Negritude is not only an African self-identity manifestation but a way of living. It asserts the rediscovery of Africa and its people to establish a new social structure. In other words, writers' attempts are to recover the African psyche which witnesses heavy destructive consequences after the encounter with the west.

Franz Fanon's views have notably contributed to the postcolonial literary context and framed out most of the writers' writings. His works, *The Wretched*
of the Earth and Black Skin, White Mask have influenced most the strugglers for liberation all over the world.

After achieving independence in the colonized countries, the African writers have written in a tone of disenchantment and betrayal for the new post-independent situation. They have reflected the preoccupation which has followed decolonization; their writings are the real manifestation of the people's sense of despair and resentment of the new emergent situation of the neo-colonization. Beginning in the 1970s, the African novelists tended to express more clearly their nations' cultural and political issues.

As a part of the postcolonial studies, the African writings are read and studied by the Western audiences as being representative of the Third World. The African fiction is considered by the worldly intellectuals as a source of the anthropological information and windows of the cultures they represent.

Language is the concern of the African writers as they are conscious of the linguistic medium which is accessible to the Western audience. This issue has become more negotiable for African writers after independence. Some writers including Ngugi have opposed the usage of the ex-colonizer language after independence as it is perpetuating the colonial cultural hegemony at the expense of the native languages. Other writers such as Chinua Achebe and Wole Soynika have rejected this trend and stances as they have found it impossible to articulate the self and compel the reconsidered image in a worldly term unless taking advantage of the European language and appropriating it to fit the African situation.

3.2. Things Fall Apart: Analysis and Interpretation

The African writers have portrayed the disintegration of the cultural pattern due to the heavy influence of the Western invading ideas. In a response to this
disintegration, the African writers have to present a synthesis of the actual pattern of the African culture. They have felt it necessary to present the African civilization and ethos. In doing so, they are able to highlight the background of the African civilization, its mythology and art, and put marks under the new ideas that invaded the African continent.

In the same context, while proposing the African writer's role in society, Achebe states that the writer is or can assume the role of a social activist who is concerned with social transformation. According to him, the writer is 'a leader and teacher' and has the capacity to show his people the way to a promising future. The writer, for him, is a history teller as he is the product of moment of history. Achebe argues:

The prime duty of the African writer is to show his own community that African people did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans; that their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth and value and beauty, that they had poetry, and, above all, they had dignity. It is this dignity that many African people all but lost during the colonial period and it is this that they must now regain. The worst thing that can happen to any people is the loss of their dignity and self-respect. The writer's duty is to help them regain it by showing them in human terms that happened to them, what they lost. [As quoted by Bernth Lindfors. Bala Kothandaraman eds. (13: 1993)]

The African writers have focused on their works on the social and political movements and given them the priority while struggling for freedom and human rights. Novelists like Achebe have underscored that the superimposition of the Western values has deformed the African image and generated illegal consequences. Therefore, it becomes clear that African
n overall, Achebe's approach to literature emphasizes cultural identity, resilience, and the preservation of traditional values. His work serves as a means of restoring pride and confidence in African society, challenging the negative stereotypes perpetuated by Western writers. Through his anthropological novels, he spotlights the positive aspects of African culture while also exposing and denouncing the dark, barbaric practices that some Western writers and the colonizers themselves contributed to. Achebe's narrative prowess and his commitment to authenticity and cultural fidelity make him a significant voice in the African literary canon, continuing to shape perceptions of African history and identity long after the colonial period.
nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation. One of these creatures rose to his hands and knees and went off on all fours towards the river to drink. (*Heart of Darkness*: 17)

Conrad portrays the way the natives drink water—it is animal-like way. They crawl on the ground to reach the river to drink. Moreover, Conrad depicts Africa as prehistoric and simple. Structurally, the native characters are of no importance and utter unidentifiable language to contribute to the plot. Africa is depicted in reference to its banks, "…rotting into mud, whose waters, thickened into slime, invaded by the contorted mangroves that seemed to writhe at us in the extremity of an impotent despair." (*Heart of Darkness*: 14)

In this context, Africa resembles its inhabitants in the way Conrad portrays, It is comprised of formless elements, mud, sludge, and roots. African land is 'rotten' as though it is lifeless object.

In his postcolonial fictitious context, Achebe has critically responded to the colonialist discourse that Conrad introduces in *Heart of Darkness*. *Things Fall Apart* is a serious attempt to reconsider the African culture and at the same time a mode of resistance to the colonialist discourse that has been intentionally constituted in the colonial era. Consequently, Achebe's works are read as contesting writings that are set against the colonialist discourse of representation. Critics opine that Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is seen as the major critique in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. However, *Heart of Darkness* is not the only stimulus to agitate Achebe's pen to write, but Cary's *Mister Johnson* has also struck Achebe and formed his determination to write his novels about the Africa. *Mister Johnson* is loaded with stereotypical European perspectives in which egocentric, racial and disrespectful observations of Nigeria are profoundly remarkable. Cary's description of Nigerian setting is much relevant to the superimposition Western image of Africa which portrays
the continent ignorant, underdeveloped, and its people are mindless primitive. The Congo and Fada in *Heart of Darkness* and *Mister Johnson* respectively are racially and prejudicially portrayed in the two novels. However, *Heart of Darkness*, keeps Achebe's main concern sharpened as it is widely read and deemed as a masterpiece in the English literature.

### 3.2.1 The Cultural Reconsideration and Confrontation

To encounter the European image the Westerners create about Africa, Achebe's intention in the first part of the novel is focused to delineate a counter-part image of Africa. The microcosm he creates manifests Africa systematically with religion, government, and organized family system, financial and judicial systems. Structurally, Achebe devotes the first part of the novel to celebrate the Ibo African culture. Achebe confirms the counter-part image of Africa in the first part to depict the confrontation of the native Ibo culture with the values of the colonizer's in the later parts. The novel projects the confrontation on the basis of anthropological details in the tribal life of the Ibo community. Achebe's intention in the first part is to shed light on the society patterns before disintegration. Accordingly, he manifests a coherent picture of the Ibo community which possesses thousands years of history behind it and recognizable civilization. Achebe shows a keen consciousness in presenting and affirming sets of systems that govern the Ibo community. It is then the actual image of Africa that has been distorted and darkened by the colonial discourse—Africa is not dark, bestial, and prehistoric, as it has been unjustly delineated.

To establish his image of Africa, Achebe presents series of incidents, practices and daily life activities. In chapter two, Umuofia is attacked by a neighbouring clan when a lady unjustifiably is killed. The clan men systematically gather so as to take a decision of the matter. The whole members are adherent to the
oracle decision in waging a fair war, otherwise, they are excluded and punished. Further, people of the clan are aware of their reputation in not involving in unfair war." And in fairness to Umuofia it should be recorded that it never went to a war unless its case was clear and just and was accepted as such by its Oracle—the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves."(Things Fall Apart: 10). Achebe obviously presents how reason dominates taking any decision in the clan, and going to war as such should be adhered to the highest authority in the clan. Mbaino is offered to fight against Umuofia or sacrifice a boy and maiden as compensation for the committed crime against an Umoufian. The Ibo community is rich with civilized institutions that provide democratic patterns of governing. Life in African is not dominated by kings or single-minded chief but there is a simple democratic authorship that gives people opportunity to share in ruling. Democracy however simple it is; it is not the thing the Europeans firstly initiated but it is already present in the African community. Further to say, it is the single authority of the District Commissioner that devastates this democratic system later on.

Likewise, in the context of the self-identity reconsideration and affirmation, the mindlessness and emptiness of the Ibo belief, which Westerners claim, are questioned. Ibo people believe in hierarchy system of gods and goddess. Chukwu is the supreme god who lives in sky, the dialogue between characters Akunna and Mr. Brown reveals it:

You say that there is one supreme God who made heaven and earth,' said Akunna on one of Mr. Brown's visits. We also believe in him and call him Chukwu. He made the world and the other gods. (Thing Fall Apart: 131)

Ibo people pay loyalty to and worship Chukwu by obeying and sacrificing to minor local gods like Anyanwu, Igwe, and Ala. All these gods
are connoted with the architecture and nature of the Ibo community. Chi is the personal god and guiding spirit. Ibo community has its own priestess who is known as Chielo, she is a widow having two children. Priestess of Agbala, the Oracle of the Hills and Caves, is feared and respected by all. She is known as Chielo among the clan people and nobody fears her when she gives up her title as priestess. The holy ancestors' spirits, who are represented in the masked Ibo members, are respected and consulted by the clan. Ibo people believe in the reward and punishment that involve their relationships with their gods. Okonkwo, for instance, violates the Week of Peace by beating one of his wives. Therefore, he has to sacrifice to curb the anger of the earth goddess after doing an evil act. Consequently, Okonkwo's disrespect of the clan gods, as the clan people think, brings him bad fortune:

And so people said he had no respect for the gods of the clan. His enemies said his good fortune had gone to his head. They called him the little bird nza who so far forgot himself after a heavy meal that he challenged his chi. (Things Fall Apart: 23)

However, this divine hierarchy and adherence to belief suggest the social cohesion and organism that dismisses the primitive portrayal of the Africans.

Kinship and humane relationship are focused to depict the uniting force, essential to organic life in the Ibo community. Courtesy and ceremonies strengthen the social fabric and bind people together. Okonkwo gifts Nwakibie little kola, a pot of palm wine and a cock to ask his favour. His intimate relation with Obierika mirrors vitality, true and honest emotions that govern Ibo relationships. Okonkwo's presence in Obierika's daughter engagement ceremony maintains the social solidarity in the village. The ceremony engagement itself is a representative of the family gathering which is highly authenticated cultural trait. The elders of the tribe are drawn by Achebe as wise
men, the ancestral of the tribal wisdom as well as the heroic symbols. They are present in the major tribal activities, for their presence is a signal of rationality and traditions. Achebe employs symbolic representation in the novel. The symbolic traditions and rituals serve to identify the cultural symbolic pattern of communication. For instance, offering and breaking of kola nut stand for good will. A visitor of the village obi is offered a lump of white clay to draw his personal emblem as a mark of respect and friendship. So is wearing the mask by Egwugwu, the elders of the village, is a symbol of power. A Christian convert who tears up Egwugwu's mask seemingly violates the power represented by wearing the masks. Achebe symbolizes the death of the African traditions when the Ibo entire society falls apart.

Marriage and death ceremonies in chapter twelve and thirteen present respectively traces of the socio-cultural perspectives. Achebe manifests a clear-cut anthropology of the Ibo community which contributes to re-presenting the African identity that is civilized, rich with customs and self-contained. So is the trial scene in chapter ten, which demonstrates the sophisticated institution that settles disputes in a civilized, social and authoritative mechanism. Consequently, in the first part Achebe intentionally delineates well-organized African society in which good deeds are honoured, intimate ties are maintained—even to the ancestors' spirits, sophisticated participatory form of ruling is reliable. This part of the novel, on one hand, negates the colonial image which the colonialist discourse introduces—the image which tells about the dark prehistoric Africa and Negro's socio-cultural inferiority. On the other hand, it performs the writer's objective in probing the cultural patterns in the pre-colonial era so as to set the African image before things starting fall apart.

Comparatively, the second and third parts investigate the African setting after the arrival of White man. His arrival marks the beginning of the continent ordeal. Achebe delineates the devastating influence of the new culture and
religion. Society and culture of Umuofia, after then, become under the pressure from outs and within. Achebe is interested in probing and inspecting the processes that generate the social and cultural setbacks in the village. Consequently, part two and three expose The Umuofian confrontation with the Western culture and religion. Therefore, society undergoes two-way response: the first, comes to be in conformity with the processes of acculturation and assimilation, the second adopts the mode of opposition. Okonkwo's family, for instance, undergoes this two-way process. Okonwo's son approves the Western ideology and becomes one of the converts in the clan. The microcosm clash with his father symbolizes the macrocosm clash between the native and Western cultures. It also symbolizes the clash between old tribal traditions and Europeanization. Enoch is another example—he is a son of the priest of the snake cult. He converts to Christianity and kills the sacred python. This brings the anger of his father, so he is cursed. In a clan meeting, one of Okonkwo's relatives says:

   An abominable religion has settled among you. A man can curse the gods of his father and his ancestors, like a hunter's dog that suddenly goes mad turns on his master. I fear for you; I fear the clan. (Things Fall Apart: 122)

The plot traces the responses of the whole Ibo community in general and Okonkwo, the central character in particular. Okonkwo's stances expose his firm spirit and strong will to resist the new comers. The new culture and its intentionally-spread ideology crack the coherent social fabric. The colonialist is able to penetrate into the African mind to dismantle his values. This happens even with a titled man who is supposed to be model of the clan men—he gives up his titles to join Christianity.
The newly-converts are alienated from native society, and furthermore they confront the old values strongly. They back the colonial authority and become policemen, interpreters, evangelists. However, this has heightened the tension and widened the gap between the supporters and oppositionists of the new values in the society. Okonkwo's killing of the messenger at the end of the novel illustrates the highest point of this tension. Establishing a church in the village symbolically represents the erecting of Western ideology in the heart of the Ibo belief. The new religion strips society its native belief and cuts it down into groups. This disturbs the social fabric and hits the sense of togetherness in the clan. Okonkwo pities the condition of the clan after the new religion comes to the village:

How can he (the white man) when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad; and our own brothers why have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart. (Things Fall Apart: 129)

The passage is so significant that it manifests the destructive influence which the White man leaves on the social fabric. Things fall apart when they come to the village with their religion and government.

Europeanization relies on spreading Christianity and Western education as a mode of acculturation and hegemony. Mr. Brown's school widely attracts the clan members. They acquire the western teachings and traditions, and then Enrolled to become members in the White man's government. Mr. Brown
persuads the natives that they would lead the community after acquiring the proper education; otherwise, outsiders would come to rule schools along with churches. Very significantly, the white Man's efforts to hegemonize the community pave the way to reshape the natives' minds to approve the colonial codes and authority.

3.2.1.1. Language as Tool of Cultural Representation

As a postcolonial mode of representation, postcolonial writers appropriate the colonialist language as a medium of self-definition and re-representation. African writers experience English language as a medium of expressing their postcolonial aspiration and exposing the relevance of the colonial legacy on the 1988 African continent. For Achebe writing in general and novel in particular is a vehicle through which the self is discovered, identity exposed, and historical roots are re-discovered. Helen Tiffen [as quoted by R.K.Dhawan (1988: 50)] argues:

The literatures of the post-colonial world are inherently political in their use of language, as is the historiography of their patterns and their development. The very act of writing in the English language on alien ground restructures the world around the writer in terms of the imperial power. Attempts to break out of this particular prison-house of language have been, in many cases, both conscious and deliberate … it is not just the experience of other worlds that makes post-colonial literature fundamentally different from that of the European, but the double vision inherent in the use of an alien language to express these worlds, and concomitant perception of the political implications of the fact. (Helen Tiffen, Commonwealth Literature and Comparative Methodology.)
The perceptual values of English language are inefficient to expose the complexities of the Ibo community. Therefore, a mode of appropriation, and if necessary, subversion have been done to represent the Ibo culture. In the same context, Achebe's motivation while writing is to expose the richness, beauty and social integrity of the Ibo world. The medium of English enables Achebe to re-represent the Ibo communal identity, and at the same time, negate the ethnocentric presuppositions which the Westerners adopt while defining Africa. He makes use of the western literary traditions to liberate the African image from the ethnocentric impositions that have framed the colonizer's mind and language.

Therefore, in light of Bhabha's postcolonial views, appropriating the colonizer's medium of expression is a mode of mimicking the colonizer. This mimicry can be manipulated to subvert the colonizer's ethnocentric authority. Hence, the occurrence of the colonized in the colonial terms proves the ambivalence of the colonial context. Accordingly, the employment of the colonizer's means of articulation is a form of cultural resistance from within. This manipulation of the Western terms and culture reverses the colonizer's modes of perception.

Moreover, Achebe's linguistic manipulation serves his objectives in creating an oppositional text that exposes the richness and fullness of the African Ibo culture. The Ibo linguistic properties make clear the ways of living and modes of thoughts. Achebe captures and celebrates the rhythm of this well-organized tribal culture. It is quite noticeable the usage of the Ibo words particularly on the first part of his novel, for instance, (Afo, Eke, Chi, Ikenga, obi, etc.) which have no English cultural equivalents. They serve to give a sense of idiosyncrasy to the Ibo cultural identity. The Ibo self-identity and individuality can only be retained by borrowing terms from its cultural context. Hence, Achebe exposes the Ibo reality through including the Ibo cultural terms.
The Ibo linguistic structure reflects a profound property of figurativeness and proverbs. Therefore, Achebe's manipulation of language is not only to perform an act of communication but it is a cultural experience. Consequently, language represents a civilization and therefore all the modes of the cultural perception will be automatically underscored within. Achebe captures all the European cultural values and its language, then turns to portray the cultural conflicts between the African and the White colonizer in terms of exposing the native culture. Hence, exploitation of the English language and its cultural structure by the novelist serves to expose the differences in the modes of perception. The European mode of perception which uses English language as its medium is reversed and appropriated to fit the African self-awareness and oppose the colonialist image.

What distinguishes Achebe's style is his employment of sets of Ibo proverbs such as:

- The sun will shine on those who stand before it shines on those who kneel under them. (*Things Fall Apart*:5)
- If a child washed his hands he could eat with kings…and other proverbs. (*Things Fall Apart*:6)
- A man who paves respect to the great paves the way for his own greatness. (*Things Fall Apart*:15)
- A toad does not run in the daytime for nothing. (*Things Fall Apart*:16)
- Eneke the bird says that since men have learnt to shoot missing, he has learnt to fly without perching (*Things Fall Apart*:17)

Such proverbs demonstrate the values of the Ibo society—values by which characters live and die. The African man, whose history and culture enrich him with humane values, can enjoy his own self-identity as other worldly cultures. Achebe's proverbs are meant to be keys for understanding his novels because
they serve to add a local cultural touch, clarify the conflict and to focus on the social values of the African culture he delineates. Likewise, his use of literary figures of speech, such as similes, are interwoven with the structure of the proverbs. Using similes perform the purpose of enhancing the cultural milieu within which the plot takes place. However, this manipulation of the structure linguistic milieu in Achebe's novels adds a sense of historicity and sensitive cultural touch to his writings.

3.3.2. The Political Encounter: Colonial Authority vs. Clan Authority

Along with the socio-cultural message *Things Fall Apart* conveys, the novel demonstrates a political scenario, i.e., the encounter between the African community and colonial authority. The second and third parts of the novel demonstrate the encounter which simply begins when the White man brings his religion, Western tradition and colonial government. As the colonial discourse portrays the African as barbaric, cultureless and child-like-minded, then it becomes the white man's heavenly duty to acculturate and civilize the Other. According to Edward Said (1978: 5), it is the colonial discourse of the portraying the Other that paves the way to colonialize the Orient. He states:

To believe that the Orient was created—or, as I call it, "orientalized"—and to believe that such things happen simply as necessity of the imagination, is to be disingenuous. The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of complex hegemony….

The idea of the European cultural superiority in comparison with all non-European idealizes and justifies the political authority. Thus, "My idea is that European and then American interest in the Orient was political." Said (1978: 5) concludes.
The mode of the colonial dominance the novel demonstrates operates in three levels: the cultural, political and economic, "...where the white man first came many years before and where they had built the centre of their religion and trade and government."(Things Fall Apart: 127).

With the occurrence of the White man's court and the District Commissioner in the scenes, the colonial political dominance seems to be intensified. The District Commissioner is an obvious representation of the colonial ruling authority in the village. However, the serious encounter with the White man and his brutal machinery is introduced when the massacre in Abame village has been referred to in chapter 15. After a mode of an armed resistance people of Abame acts against the White man, the whole village members are murdered and the village is stormed away. It is an act of mass punishment the whole village undergoes. This brutal action unmasks the aggressive nature the White man demonstrates against the natives.

Establishing a court is the second step the White man does to found his colonial authority. The court is established to prosecute the rebels who stand against and disobey the colonial will and authority. An Umuofian is sentenced to death after killing a missionary. The Ibo villagers are aware of the destructive influence of the White man missionaries—they consider it as a part of dominating their land. Converts (kotma) from other villages turn to be employees under the colonial authority. Some of them work as court messengers—they cooperate with the court authority against other villagers. Therefore, the new religion is read by the villagers as colonial scheme to divide society and then rule it easily. Obierrika, while talking with Okonkwo, states his fears of the converts of the new religion:

Our own men and our sons have joined the ranks of the stranger.
They have joined his religion and they help to uphold his
government. If we should try to drive out the white men in Umuofia we should find it easy. But what of our own people who are following their way and have been given power?

*(Things Fall Apart: 128)*

Achebe emphasizes the oppressive institutions the White man establishes to suppress his opponents. The court, the District Commissioner, the prison, the local policeman and court messengers manifest the colonial political authority. The Ibo people are aware of the political mission the District Commissioner performs. An Ibo man states that the District Commissioner is the British queen representative in the villages. Akunna argues with Mr. Brown, "...your queen sends her messenger, District Commissioner" *(Things Fall Apart: 131).* Consequently, the District Commissioner enjoys the full ruling authority in the villages. After destroying the church in Umuofia, the District Commissioner gives his orders to arrest the leading men in Umoufia as a punishing procedure against the action. The men are deemed responsible for the action of destroying the church, and therefore, they are to be fined according to the colonial authority law. The colonial ruling practices manifest the arrogant and oppressing actions which blindly prosecute the natives. While exposing these practices, Achebe emphasizes the colonizer's mind set which proposes the non-western as barbaric, human-like, and then has to be severely punished to know the rules. The reference to the queen of England in the District Commissioner speech is an obvious indication of the empire domination over the African land, "The District Commissioner spoke to them about the great queen, and peace and good government" *(Things Fall Apart: 144).*

The struggle against the colonial authority is heightened after setting free the leading man who later gather to determine the next action. However, the most enthusiastic character, Okonkwo, is frustrated after he fails to instigate his people to an armed action. He confronts the White man alone by killing his
messenger. Okonkwo, the symbol of the enthusiastic nationalist is so incapable of appropriating himself under the colonial government and passivity of his people that he decides to commit suicide. He realizes his alienation and the fatal loss of the encounter with the colonizer.

3.3.2.1. Okonkwo the Frustrated Nationalist

Okonkwo is the central character in the novel that the literary plot is interwoven with his existence. Okonkwo is the Ibo hero whose fame as undefeated wrestler is known by all the nine neighbouring villages. When he was nineteen, he knocked down a great wrestler, Amalinze, the Cat. Amalinze keeps unbeaten for seven years. Okonkwo is proud and an exceptional man for his bravery and firmness in Umuofia. His life is dominated by his profound adherence to the cultural customs and belief. He assumes himself the champion of the Umuofian traditions. Okonkwo is an active and principal member in his community actions and ceremonies. He represents the mindset of the Umuofian community which is obviously structured by societal values. In other words, he is the embodiment of the traditional laws and community belief. However, he never shows a complete obedience to the norms of his society. Consequently, he is punished twice for the violation of the society rules. As a result of that, he is exiled to his motherland after unintentionally killing a clan member.

Okonkwo's character is interwoven with the themes of Ibo rituals, traditions, belief, honour, colonialism and community identity. Thereupon, the community disintegration after the invasion of the new religion and traditions obviously shapes Okonkwo's downfall. Symbolically, Okonkwo's death is an obvious embodiment of the disintegration of Ibo communal ways of life. His actions portray his manly and fierce character. He repudiates all attributes that characterize him feminine and weak. As being preoccupied with the manly obsession, he is principally devoid the signs that complete his humanness such
as love, family passion and understanding. This obsession with being man of power and all manly attributes dominates Okonkwo's life. Therefore, killing Ikemefuna, whom the latter loves Okonkwo as a father, illustrates the fear of being thrown with femininity and cowardice. However, Okonkwo's fierce and fiery nature enforces his nationalist reactions.

The occurrence of the White man in the land with his new religion and government agitates Okonkwo and exposes his worry about the disintegrating impact of the new comers. The tribal belief and traditions which Okonkwo is strongly adhered to are humiliated and annihilated after the arrival of the White man. He believes in the fact that in order to cease the invasion of the new beliefs and authority there has to begin an armed struggle. While discussing what the appropriate action people of Mbanta should take against the invaders, Okonkwo suggests and justifies his choice of the armed self-defence to resist the invaders:

If a man comes into my hut and defecates on the floor, what do I do? Do I shut my eyes? No! I take a stick and break his head. That is what a man does. Those people are daily pouring filth over us, and Okeke says we should pretend not to see. (Things Fall Apart: 117)

As an uncompromising character Okonkwo advocates violence as he thinks it is violence and nothing else could retain stability and pride of the Ibo tribal life. As the above extract illustrates, Okonkwo sees things differently— the White man's influence can be read as only as colonizing practices which aims at dominating and establishing a new ruling system. Okonkwo is profoundly preoccupied with reserving the national identity that is disintegrating under the impact of the White man's policy of dominance. His enthusiasm in opposing the White man's policy seeks reviving the national consciousness, which he
thinks it lacks agitation. The narrator exposes the state Okonkwo undergoes after he is disappointed with Ibo people passivity:

Okonkwo was deeply grieved. And it was not just a personal grief. He mourned for the clan, which he saw breaking up and falling apart, and he mourned for the warlike men of Umuofia, who had so unaccountably become soft like women. (*Things Fall Apart: 133*)

However, the success of the White man in winning converts and loyal supporters hardens the effort to take one unified action. "Now he (the white man) has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one" Oberieka complains (*Things Fall Apart: 129*). Some clan members are more concerned with the new religion, government, and trading stores than their tribal affairs; some are reluctant to fight against their convert natives. Therefore, Okonkwo attempts to convince the leading personages to wage a war against the White man are in vain. As a result, Okonkwo's act of killing the White man messenger represents his desperation of his clan members to take an action. Further, it represents his individual avenge, which he always threatens to do upon the authority that devastates his cultural structure and belief. However, in this state of desperation and incapacity to digest the degradation and annihilation of his mother culture, Okonkwo commits suicide. Okonkwo's final action of suicide is an obvious annihilation announcement of a culture and belief which his death symbolically declares it. However, although Oknowkwo's individual attributes master his fierce and single-minded actions but still his national consciousness directs his revolutionary impulses to oppose the White man's policy.
3.3. *Petals of Blood*: Analysis and Interpretation

The textual manifestation Ngugi presents in *Petals of Blood* is remarkably a disillusioned portrait of the postcolonial Kenya in early years after independence. The plot takes the form of detective story in which the four major characters, Munira, Karega, Abudlla and Wanja, are accused of crime. The novelist uses the flashback technique to interweave the past and the present. Moreover, the novelist involves some of the characters in a storytelling technique to narrate the colonial and pre-colonial past. The prime underlining theme in *Petals of Blood* is the failure of the ruling Kenyan elite to adequately meet the needs of the people. After the new postcolonial governments come to power, the leaders perpetuate their associations with the outgoing colonizers, and consequently marginalize the everyman. *Petals of Blood* is overtly an expressive critique of the betraying ideals of the liberation struggle—the denial of the new ruling class to the national ethos in favour of the personal and capitalistic interests. In the novel, the elite are portrayed as both government officials and businessmen who violate the villagers of Ilmorog in both passive and aggressive ways.

Quite noticeably, the narrative focuses on the political, social and economic situations of the nation after being governed by the native ruling elite. The novelist illuminates the disenchantment of the masses who hopefully await the postcolonial ruling class to recuperate the nation of the colonial evils. However, the new ruling elite come with a camouflage version of the colonial oppressive and exploitive government. Frustratingly, the colonizer perpetuates his disguised presence by imposing his greedy and exploitive ideologies on the newly born government. In a carefully structured narrative, the novelist interweaves the past and the present to celebrate the past heritage and introduce it along with the disenchanted present.
The novel constructs its actions in a peasantry area where peasants and workers undergo exploitation, inequality and hypocrisy of the post-independent government. The Kenyan government perpetuates the state of oppression and violation of the human rights, which are vivid features of the colonial rule. Consequently, Ngugi obviously draws a critical statement of the neocolonial situation in which the nation's destiny keeps on risk. The narrative text highlights the postcolonial basis as is structured to decolonize the mindset. The postcolonial experience of Kenya and colonial heritage, which casts its shadow on the country, put the narrative on a highly tensioned framework. The ideological clash (political and economic), which features out the postcolonial texts, prominently constructs the narrative along with the alienating cultural effects of (neo)colonialism on the social fabric of the Kenyan traditions. The new conceptual codes of modernism, which annihilates the socio-cultural fabric, are put under criticism. However, Ngugi never subjectively idealizes every construct of the past but he is rather critical to the annihilation of the abstract cultural identity which the (neo)colonial modernism intentionally devastates.

Fanonian ideology of postcoloniality constructs Ngugi's narrative production. His diagnosis of the independence betrayal evokes Ngugi's critical appetite. In a sense, Ngugi's comprehension of Fanonian thoughts and notions of the post-colonial betrayal situation forms his postcolonial literary production. The disillusionment of the post-colonial situation, after the rule of the middle class elite, is primarily unmasked in Fanon's works. In these work, Ngugi finds expression of how the postcolonial government denies the ideals of liberation struggle and legitimatizes dictatorship instead of people rule. Besides, Fanonian notions have explained the transformation of the liberation idealists into indigenous bourgeoisie whose greedy capitalistic interests turn misfortune of nation into capitalistic and political advantages. Therefore, as a crystalized
view, Ngugi points out the current situation that dominates the nation as a stage of a masked colonialism. In another mode of the expression, he has pointed out that African personages and ex-colonial partners perpetuate the new colonial institutions under the guise of investment and partnership.

Ngugi considerably embraces Marxism as a mode of reformation and ideology to establish the newly independent nation. Being a Marxist believer, Ngugi identifies the working class and peasant as agents for a social and political change in the society. Therefore, in the text, a reader can find a socio-political treatise of Ngugi's expectation of the ruling system and ideology that, as he believes, are supposed to govern the nation so as to achieve civil and humane justice and equality. He inspires Leninian and Mao's socialist examples of constructing the nation. In this respect, Simon Gikandi (2000: 35) explains:

The opposition between the writer and the state is a crucial paradigm for understanding Ngugi's later works: while the novelist lamented the emergence of a deracinated African middle class, the Kenyan state saw the "development" programs that it had initiated as essential to the consolidation of the power and authority of the African middle class. While the novelist questioned the efficacy of an African capitalist class dependent on the goodwill of the international capital, the state displayed this class as a symbol of Africanization in the key sectors of economy. While Ngugi advocated and agitated for socialism, the state invoked a rhetoric of socialism to camouflage its unrequited desire for capitalism.

Like politics, the native culture captures Ngugi's literary attention in general and narrative production in particular. Culture and the impact of modernity are pivotal causes in his works. Aiming to defend the native identity against the
colonialist cultural impact, Ngugi considerably celebrates the cultural heritage of the nation, for he was not only content with representing colonialism and neo-colonialism ruling authority but to serve the postcolonial end of the text. The cultural sphere has been activated in the text. This is because, firstly, the cultural reconsideration is a theoretical necessity for the postcolonial end. Secondly, the cultural re-representation is essential for the national enthusiasm. The local Gikuyu culture has framed Ngugi's literary production. Thus, the loss of this cultural spirit and landscape under the feet of colonialism and neo-colonial modernism has awakened his literary production consciousness. The search for identity and belongingness among the ruins constitutes the cultural concern in his narrative production. However, Ngugi has to compromise the essentiality of the cultural concern as he uses as an alien language as English to highlight the cultural identity of the nation.

The Gikuyu identity and traditions have moulded his narrative themes. In this way, the Gikuyu traditions are juxtaposed against hegemonized policy of the colonizer. The cultural demonstration takes the form of identifying the colonial devastating impact, which is symbolized in a form of barrenness and drought, and restoring the national consciousness by reconsidering the nation's heritage and identity. In the text, Ngugi reconsiders the colonial representation which the colonial discourse sets to misinterpret the colonized. His cultural reconsideration designates the self-identity and restores confidence and faith in the past and the present. The black, primitive and uncivilized image of the African is set to exploit and conquer the land. In this respect, the lawyer discusses the crisis of representation in the colonial mindset while referring to the English teacher:

And now I saw in the clear light of day the role that the Fraudshams of the colonial world played to create all of us
black zombies dancing pornography in Blue Hills while our people are dying of hunger, while our people cannot afford decent schools for their children. (*Petals of Blood*: 198)

However, to achieve the cultural aim Ngugi has compelled the portrayal of the clashing notions of colonial and colonized cultures to identify and redeem the annihilated native culture.

### 3.3.1. The Cultural Reconsideration

Land, history, traditions and education have accounted Ngugi's involvement in his narrative cultural manipulation. The crises of colonialism, postcoloniality and the aftermath modernity have been primarily underscored in Ngugi's current writing. To confront the colonial hegemony, Ngugi damns the use of the European acculturation, as it is a mode of spiritual subjugation as colonialism in general is a process of physical subjugation. As a result of this view, in later works, Ngugi wrote in Gikuyu language as he realized the threat that colonization has put on the Kenyan indigenous languages and culture. This happens, of course, because the pre-colonial forms of traditions such oral literature, songs, dances and poetry were deliberately repressed by the imperial cultural practices. Furthermore, the imperial authority banned all these cultural practices as they realized their threats to the colonial hegemonic policy. English language and literature were given the superiority while the African languages and culture were marginalized. So is the situation in the post-independence; the ruling authority, in a mode of a bourgeois elevation, perpetuated the supremacy of the English language in the community. English language was still the deliberate means of education from primary school to university. Therefore, the cultural challenges kept on tension and sometimes fiercer than in the colonial era. Ngugi writes, "Language carries culture and culture carries (particularly through orature and literature) the entire body of values by which we perceive ourselves and our place in the world.", *Ngugi Wa Thiongo and*
However, the use of English language can be interpreted as mimicking the colonizer's means of the spiritual subjugation to subvert the colonial context and unmask the colonizer's ideology. Therefore, the novelist undermines the colonial and neo-colonial ideology by acting a resistance from within. In this way, the researcher finds Ngugi in Bhabha's terms—mimicry is able to disrupt the colonial discourse by doubling it. The occurrence of the colonized in colonial terms proves the ambivalence of the colonial context. In this respect, Bhabha [as quoted by Bart Moore-Gilbert et al., (1997: 35)] clarifies:

Consequently, mimicry is the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which "appropriates" the Other; mimicry also, however, constructs and depends upon a system of differences (or differentiations between colonizer and colonized) which poses an immanent threat to both "normalized" knowledge and disciplinary powers.

During the colonial rule, Kenyan literature and art were employed in the national movement as a means to fulfill independence. The various genres of literature, songs and traditional dance had been initiated to evoke the national consciousness. These forms of resistance were juxtaposed in an opposition to the foreign imperial culture. Nation, culture under colonialism, the neo-colonialism and modernity capture Ngugi's cultural manipulation in *Petals of Blood*. The plot takes place in a peasantry area where the very crisis of the cultural traditions is demonstrated.

Ilmorog is the major setting of the novel, which serves as a microcosm of the macrocosm. It is characterized by its agricultural nature and serves to mirror
the cradle of the national heritage and traditions. The area undergoes all the changes, which take place under colonialism and later neo-colonialism. More importantly, the novelist concentrates on the locality as it combines the pre-colonial narrated history, the colonial hegemonized policy and the post-independence modernization. All the former impacts put Ilmorog under successive changes in culture and traditions. Therefore, the national culture and traditions primarily underscore the amount of various alienating impacts. To highlight the clashing values, the opposing ideals can be engendered in such a dichotomy:

3.3.1.1. Tradition vs. Colonialism and Modernism

The dilemmaic scheme of culture has been manifested by Ngugi in a clashing dichotomy which can interpret tradition with peace, stability, human vitality, whereas colonialism and modernism with alienation, identity-loss and decentralization. Gikuyu culture is pivotal concern in Ngugi's narrative. Therefore, he celebrates it and laments its declined traditions under the effects of colonialism and modernism. Ilmorog is the ideal of this culture. The colonial estrangement has constructed boundaries between Ilmorogian man and his locality. The centralization of the locality in the narrative text incorporates the physical location with its spiritual domain. Consequently, the decline of the highly-featured locality has deconstructed the construction of the native later, while debating, people of Ilomrog argue, "Look at the white people: first took our land; then our youth, only later, cows and sheep" (Petals of Blood: 22).

The image of the colonized land is so central in the novel. Ngugi sets the ordeal of the raped land to interpret the sense of loss in the consciousness of the nation. Losing the land has consequently repressed the nation's identity. This loss has been expanded in reference and terms as it incorporates the colonial past with the neo-colonial present. In other words, Ngugi essentially associates the image of the physical infertility and barrenness of the land with
the loss of identity in the former historical phases of the nation. The colonizer has raped the land; suppressed and exploited the natives. The real owners turn into only labourers in their real land. In this way, the natives lose that sense of belongingness as they have been physically estranged out their land, "some of the herdsmen and peasants were turned into kipande-carrying labourers on lands that used to be their own to master and to rule." (Petals of Blood: 82). Thus, the land is no longer productive and meaningful in their terms. As a result of this bitter fact, the peasants rather set fire on the land, which once belonged to them, than being taken by a foreigner, "At night, on Ilmorog ridge, their leaders met and reached a decision. They set fire to the whole field and themselves ran to the outer edges of the plains, awaiting for deadly repercussion."

(Petals of Blood: 82)

Culture and national traditions have involved in an encounter firstly with the aftermaths of colonialization and later with modernization in its spiritual and physical aspects, which can be an extension to the encounter with the colonial hegemonic policy. However, the imperial cultural domination has vividly extended itself in a stage of neo-colonialism after creating neo-colonial elite who inherited the ex-colonial authority's ethos. The elite have perceived the world with the same colonial eyes. Thus, the strife between national culture and the neo-colonial cultural values keeps survived, as the colonial and neo-colonial authorities have associated the national heritage with backwardness and darkness. Ngugi attempts are to search for the rural and peasantry traditions where the national roots are underlined. He commits himself to a mode of a cultural nationalism in which culture is interpreted in its actual terms. Therefore, the artistic traditional modes are manipulated to serve as anti-colonial means and to regain pride and confidence in the indigenous culture. National culture expresses itself in myth, orally-based history, songs, dances, poetry. The local belief of the people town, which is a part of broad traditions, is highlighted orally by the elderly in the town:
The older folk told stories of how Rain, Sun and wind went a-wooing Earth, Sister of Moon, and it was Rain who carried the day, and that was why Earth grew swollen belly after being touched by Rain. Others said no, the raindrops were really the sperms of God and that even human beings sprang from the womb on mother earth soon after the original passionate downpour, torrential waters of the beginning. (*Petals of Blood*: 243)

The stories of the god Ndemi and his legend in mastering nature in Ilmorog have dominated old people folktale. These folktales celebrate the legendary historiography of the locality:

Ndemi: he fashioned a tool with which he cut some of the trees and cleared the undergrowth. The beast of the earth with their forked tongues spat out poison at him….he had made the earth yield to the touch of his fingers and the wisdom of his head, and he now had more wealth in cows and goats on top of his numerous crops. (*Petals of Blood*: 146)

The local legendary is associated with the glorious past of the nation, the African race and historiography. Karega, while converses with Wanja, exposes the place of the legend in the cultural belief and its national associations:

….I was thinking about Nyakinyua's story.
About Ndemi?
Yes.
Why. Do you believe in it?
It must be true. Why not? If not the details, then at least the idea What idea?
Of a past. A great past. A past when Ilmorog, or all African, controlled its own. (*Petals of Blood*: 151)
Nyakinyua, the old rational woman, plays a pivotal role in embodying the national heritage of the nation. Her presence in the narrative is highly connotative as she expresses the Kenyan traditional identity. Nyakinyua symbolically demonstrates the motherly love of the land, which is as old as history. Her narration of traditional and colonial history stories evokes a sense of postcolonial resistance in the narrative and contributes to the richness of the postcolonial Kenyan historiography. She leads the traditional performances such as songs and dances which the novelist deliberately incorporates in the narrative:

She sang of other, struggles of other wars—the arrival of colonialism and the fierce struggles waged against it by newly circumcised youth. Yes, it was always the duty of the youth to fight all the Marimus, all two-mouthed Orges, and that was the meaning of bloodshed at circumcision. She stopped at the dramatic call and challenge. Then the women applauded with four ululations. Nyakinyua had made them relive their history. (Petals of Blood: 250)

Through Nyakinyua's voice, Ngugi proudly mingles the present with the voice of the past, "The old woman, strong sinews forged by earth and sun and rain, was the link binding past and present and future"(Petals of Blood:252). She talks with dignity and pride of her dead husband who was a fierce fighter of the colonialism. While she is on deathbed, she recalls the bravery of the struggle against colonialism, which evocatively tells of the nation struggle history:

I'll never forget the hour …he dropped the jembe and pulled the secret from under his blanket and pointed it at Waitina trembled, we saw a white man tremble, and we all waited for the bang …You should have been there…I was proud, so
proud, I would now lift my head among other women...Well ...
It did not fire...It was too old ... He pulled and pulled...well they caught him and hanged him...but he never uttered a word of 'sorry' or cry for forgiveness... He was a man, my man... he was a man! She died of the same night...and I shall never forget her words of pride and joy..."I am coming to join you, my warrior...."(Petals of Blood: 386)

Ngugi regularly in the narrative evokes the cultural image of the African race and national identity which negates the colonial representation. He celebrates race, nation, remarkable history of resistance and love of land. Through this manipulation of the cultural image, Ngugi affirms that African history is not a blank page as the colonial construct designates but it is rich with heritage and moral construct. This can bring confidence to the masses and restore an identity which the colonizer attempts to erase and curb its idiosyncrasy and presence in the worldly context. Abudlla explains:

That Africa is one of the richest continents with finite possibilities for renewal and growth is a fact....That our people fought against the Arab slave traders is a fact: that the Akamba people built formidable defences against them even while trading with them in ivory is a fact. That our people resisted European intrusion is a fact: we fought inch by inch, ridge by ridge, and it was only through the superiority of their arms and traitorous actions of some of us that we were defeated. That Kenyan people have had a history of fighting and resistance is therefore a fact. (Petals of Blood: 294)

3.3.1.2. Africanism vs. Westernization

Ngugi critically reveals the dilemma of the African new generation who unconsciously absorbs the Western ideals. The alienating effects of
Westernization have installed a separating area which disrupts the native traditions' compatibility. Ngugi has set his critical tools of protest against the hegemonic acculturation which targets the national fabric, and further, he sets his encounter-part code. As an advocator of Linenian-Gramci thoughts, he weighs the situation on the basis of the bourgeois society in which the bourgeois ruling elite and political parties dominate the civil society and gain the concession in the state. As an interpretation of these thoughts, the ideals of the bourgeois class, which have been created under the ex-colonial authority, are reproduced in the cultural life through media, education, religious institutions to legitimatize the new situation. Ngugi has loaded his narrative critique with vivid manifestations of the Westernized hegemonic situation which basically master the post-independence setting.

The past and the present are highly manifested in oppositional terms in which the past and the present are associated with Africanism and Westernization respectively. He enthusiastically celebrates the concept of Negritude which figures out the African identity and culture as independent and deep-rooted forms of any culture. The targeted post-colonial situation keeps Africanism marginalized and suppressed while Western lifestyle is encouraged. Therefore, the Western hegemonizing policy has shaken the belief of the youths in every indigenous aspect. The new generation has not only given up the content but further the shape and even names. This considerably denotes the full submission to the foreign culture. Karega, while talking to Wanja, comments:

It is not that I don't believe in names. For what could be a more ridiculous caricature of self than those of our African brothers and sisters proudly calling themselves James Phillipson, Rispa, Hot-tensiah, Ron Rodgerson, Richrd Glusco, Charity, Honey Moon-snow, Ezekiel, Shiprah,
The new moralities that emerge in the newly independent Kenya have widened the cultural gap and imposed a mode of misunderstanding in the society. Modernization in its Western sense drops the negotiating terms that rule and maintain the social fabric. Accordingly, Munira is conscious of the alienating Western lifestyle that has broken the communal interaction. He depressingly questions the African sense of life amongst the new Westernized youths:

….young men in tight American jeans and huge belts studded with shiny metal stars, leaning against the walls by the juke-box or at the counter by the high stools, chewing gum or breaking matchsticks between their teeth with the abandoned nonchalance of cowboys in the American Wild West….To hell with Wanja and her stories. To hell with Abudlla, Nyakinyua, my family, everybody. We are all strangers…in our land of birth. (Petals of Blood: 120)

Likewise, the Western-based educational system, which has mastered the Kenyan schools, has reshaped the new generation's mindset. Education has been manipulated as an imperial instructive tool which is designated to erase the indigenous socio-cultural basics and impose the imperial construct and aspirations instead. The highly Westernized ideology has revealed itself in the educational system. Therefore, Ngugi has considered education as a part of the colonial and neo-colonial political game which attempts to misinterpret the basics of the colony and colonize knowledge. The ideological colonial policy, which constructs the colonial education, has reset the colonized mindset to approve his marginalized state and accept the colonizer's superiority. In this sense, the lawyer acknowledges the danger of the colonial educational
construct which moulds nations to approve their inferiority and the colonial patronage:

The education we got had not prepared me to understand those things: it was meant to obscure racism and other forms of oppression. It was meant to make us accept our inferiority so as to accept their superiority and rule over us. (*Petals of Blood*: 197)

Ngugi has critically exposed the theory that organizes the educational process in the colonial and postcolonial situations. He, quite noticeably, demonstrates how the imperial policy deliberately emptied the African schools of any value. However, what looks worse is the post-independent government which affirms the previous colonial values. Chui can serve as a practical example of the colonial productive education. He later seizes authority and becomes one of the post-independence ruling elite. Chui's schooling took place at a prestigious European school where he receives a highly based colonial education. He is prominently taken under the attention of the colonial settlers, "They used to take him for long rides in the country in their choking Bedford. They also took him to musical concerts and puppet shows in the city." (*Petals of Blood*: 34) Chui has emulated the western culture in shape and content:

He was neat with a style all his own in doing things: from quoting bits from Shakespeare to wearing clothes. Even the drab school uniform of grey trousers, a white starched shirt, blue jacket and a tie carrying the school motto, *For God and Empire*, looked as if it was specially tailored to fit him. (*Petals of Blood*: 33)

Chui leads students' revolt against the school authority. Paradoxically, when he comes to school as a leading authority, he enacts more oppressively than
the colonial authorship did. Chui is an archetypal colonial breed whose denial of the liberation ideals underscores how influentially the colonial hegemonic education has won over the national construct.

Ngugi broadens his narrative critique to target the global modernization which is instructed by capitalism. He outlines the ruthless and atrocious capitalism which devalued the humane concepts of its significance. Ngugi in the tongue of the lawyer, who is an advocate of socialism, criticizes the double standards that rule the capitalist world. The lawyer sets his criticism sarcastically. An African man is killed for throwing a white man's dogs, while Fraudsham calls for considering animal rights and being sensitive to animals. Human rights are crashed under the foot of the capitalist interests and the materialistic ambitions of the new worldly system. Racism, utilitarianism, economic exploitation and political hegemony become the dominant attributes in the new worldly system. The lawyer tells his observations of his visit to USA which is supposed to be the model of freedom and human rights:

> Then I went to America. I had read in a history book that it was a place where they believed in equality and freedom of man. While I was at a black college in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, I saw with my own eyes a black man hanging from a tree outside a church. His crime? He had earlier fought a white man who had manhandled his sister. (Petals of Blood: 198)

However, the lawyer questions the place of the African man in this racist worldly system. Significantly, the African man has lost his value even in his home where the racist imperial system perpetuates his presence there after-independence. The same colonial inequality and oppression are still valid. Only few, who inherit the colonial mindset, enjoy the gains and a widely section of people suffers. The ruthless capitalism is continuously ruling the
nations—the new government is no more than changing the ruling faces and identity. The African man is still marginalized by the same monster power which savagely dominates people's lives and destinies.

In a moderate and balanced perception, Ngugi constructs his encounter-part views which Karega stands for. Karega affirms the notion of the rich national past, which can be turned into tool to manufacture the present. However, this move to the national past should be not turned into a total identification with the present but a sort of a selective process, which mingles the authenticity with modernization. Karega's views reconcile the situation to reach a productive future, "...but I don't want to continue worshipping in the temples of a past without tarmac roads, without electric cookers, a world dominated by slavery to nature." (*Petals of Blood*: 384). Karega adds that only the past cannot manufacture the nation's present and future but masses have to work for better expectations. Karega, as Ngugi's voice in the narrative, exemplifies his views with China, a socialist-dominating country:

> And China was saved, not by singers and poets telling of great past cultures, but by the creative struggle of the workers for better day today. No it was not a people's past glories only, but also the glory of their present strife and struggles to right the wrongs that bring tears to the many and laughter only to a few. (*Petals of Blood*: 358)

### 3.3.1.3. False Religion

As a part of colonial agenda of dominance, the colonialist religion is devoted to justify the colonial actions and policy in the colony. The colonial gaze, which justifies colonialism as enlightening act, views Christianity as reforming spiritual force. In his code of interpretation, the colonizer has set his ideals of belief to rescue and bring liberation of soul to the colonized nations by sharing the Christian-based civilizations religion. Consequently, Christian
missionary accompanied colonialism wherever it conquered. Christianity is a part of the colonial assimilating agenda in the colony. Hence, Christianity as mental construct could fulfill the colonial desired ends in the colony where the indigenous Christian converts play a pivotal role in serving the colonial ethos. Therefore, Ngugi attempts to criticize the hypocrite agenda of the colonial false religiousity that justifies corruption, injustice, bloodshed and imperial interests in the name of civilization and liberation.

Ezekieli Waweru, Munira's father, is a Christian covert who represents the hypocrite and false priesthood. He gives up his past and identity to match his new belief. He benefits from his religious loyalty to the colonial authority to start a fortune of an agricultural land owning. He has been given with some other Africans the privilege to grow pyrethrum and, then, sell it to the white growers. He makes use of every possibility given to him by the colonial authority to seize power and property. His blessings are devoted to serve the Queen and legitimatize the foreign authority.

Ezekieli Waweru turns to be feudal landowner who employs his fellow citizen to work hard degradingly in his land. His opportunistic inclination and materialistic interests unmask the hypocritical motivation of those whose religious adaptation turns to serve the personal interests only, "Waweru seized all the openings so that under the role of the colonial regime, he was very powerful landowner and churchman." *(Petals of Blood: 108)*

The meeting with Kamau, and after being convert becomes Rev. Jerrod Brown, conveys the unsympathetic nature of the hypocritical religion. The visit identifies the luxurious life the clergyman leads. He settles in a big house with guardsmen who interact roughly with the miserable travelling town people. In spite of the fact that the travellers miserably appear to the clergyman for they are hungry and thirsty; he never shows the least possible
modes of sympathy that the real values of religion call for. Instead of acting cooperatively, he idealistically preaches them in way that can never satisfy their hunger and thirst.

However, Ngugi critically demonstrates the false religious institution which has been constructed under the colonial authority. It is no more than opportunistic and inhumanely based institution, which is constituted to serve the imperial ethos in the colony and aftermath. It is spiritually employed to subjugate the indigenous folk. The very idea is exposed in the way religion smoothens the human's perception towards any ideology it instructs whatever the ends are. In this way, even inhumane actions can be justified in the name of religion as the colonialist makes us of the term to serve his imperial interests:

   God save the Queen, they sang after every massacre and then went to church for blessing and cleansing: it had always fallen to the priest to ordain human sacrifice too appease every dominant God in history. (Petals of Blood: 108)

In the same respect, the religious notion, as smoothening power of the masses, can find an expression in the strife of the working class unions with a religious movement that is intentionally created by the capitalist institution to target the reformation movement. The new religious term calls for another fight which should be against Satan. They claim that one should not involve in as side encounter as on differences between the rich and poor, or disputes between the employers and employees. The only issue should be there is that the acceptance of Christ. As a result of that, many union members resign and some other workers are taken by the new views:
But the biggest threat came from a new charismatic religious movement which sprang up and spoke in very egalitarian terms. It opposed the hypocrisy of the organized church. For them, there was no difference between the poor and the rich, the employer and the employed...the only thing was the acceptance of Christ. Love was the only law that they needed to obey. There were to avoid the strife and struggle of this world. (*Petals of Blood*: 363)

In this way, Karega has to find a reconciling term to reduce the impact of the wave and restore the state of enthusiasm among the workers. He calls up to put a separating line between man's struggle for getting his just rights and the religious struggle:

Karega knew that this too was to be fought. He would often quote the versus 'Give unto Caesar' to show the separation between secular and religious struggles, that one need not exclude the other. But inwardly he knew that religion, any religion, was a weapon against workers. (*Petals of Blood*: 363)

Ngugi's views, therefore, never go against religion wholly but he sets his criticism which unmasks the profiteering terms of the colonizing powers that put religion as stumbling force against the masses' will.

**3.3.2. The Political Encounter**

It is quite remarkable that the text is highly socio-political critical narrative. Ngugi heavily stresses his critical manifestation of the Kenyan post-colonial situation and, of course, with regular reference to the colonial era. His manifestation is diagnostic and, at the same time, suggests a way-out of the
socio-political ordeal. The essential point Ngugi attempts to tackle is the ills of neo-colonialism and international capitalism. He unmasks the disguise economic and political domination of the colonial monster over the ex-colony via the indigenous elite. Ngugi, as mentioned earlier, expresses the common disenchantment of the masses after independence. Corruption, greed, oppression and the denial of the liberation achievements by the ruling elite class are exposed and criticized. The disillusionment of independence is manifested through portraying the miserable situation of Ilmorog. The very town denotes the real suffering of the nation because of the negligence of the post-independence authority.

Politics reflected in the narrative is of two types: one that rules, and second that resists and works for improvement and development. In this way, the ideological perspectives that rule the neo-colonial context set the political clash in the novel. However, Ngugi demonstrates the political clash in a comprehensive way which mingles the colonial past with the neo-colonial present.

3.3.2.1. Nationalism vs. Colonialism

The struggle of the nation against colonialism marks some episodes of the narrative context. The Mau Mau independence movement casts a shadow on the present life of the neo-colonial context. Its armed struggle against colonialism is interviewed with the present post-colonial actions. However, the novelist never condenses the anti-colonial struggle with only this movement but he refers through other characters' narration, such as Nyakinyua, to the other phases of the armed struggle. Ngugi significantly gives flashes of the national strife for achieving independence and conveys it as a political crisis that leads to dominate the land. This phase of the national history cannot be extracted as it forms highly significant history. It underlines the nation's nationalism and its politics in a way that incorporates with the neo-colonialism.
Consequently, the anti-colonial struggle marks significant episodes of nationalism in the narrative which is used to significantly highlight the neo-colonial phase. In a sense, Abudulla is an ex-fighter of the anti-colonial armed struggle in which he lost his leg in the fights. Abudulla's stories tell of the national struggle for independence in which resistance is the image Ngugi uses to express nationalism. Thus, the resistance movement is an act of pride exposed in the narrative and it is glorified to restore the national consciousness later in the text. Wanja is proud of her aunt as the latter participates in the armed struggle movement, she continued:

'She was very good to us children. Her husband was a hard-core Mau Mau. I was even more proud of her when later I learnt that she used to carry guns and bullets to the forest hidden in basket full of unga. (Petals of Blood: 78)

However, Ngugi has laid his views of the liberation struggle outcomes, which is reduced by devaluing the real warriors. The real fighters for liberation such as Abdulla, Nding'uri, Karege's brother, Dedan and others give with no return while the new political elite have captured the gain and turn everything for personal interests and gains. Therefore, the gains of independence have indirectly been restored to the imperial party that the neo-colonial elite represent.

3.3.2.2. Nationalism vs. Neo-colonialism

A reader of the novel can notice that the prime concern of the narrative is to examine critically the post-colonial situation when Kenya is ruled by the indigenous elite. The completely desired image Ngugi attempts to underscore is how nation and masses are betrayed and exploited by the new ruling elite whose rule commences a phase of neo-colonialism. His criticism attempts to
convey a political message which highlights an era and arouses a protest against the current authoritative elite.

The image of the nation under neo-colonialism is critically exposed through the agony of Ilmorog under severe conditions of negligence, exploitation and poverty. The town lives under a season of drought and famine which result into a shortage of food and other living resources. Consequently, a delegation of the town people decides to set out a journey to the government representatives in the capital, Nairobi, so as to complain the severe condition. The journey is interpreted as an exploration of neo-colonialism that considerably masters Kenya after independence. The four main characters and the old woman, Nykinyua, are the leading figures in the delegation. The journey enfolded the completely miserable condition which people encounter as it underscores the faces of exploitation in the post-colonial setting. The meetings with a European woman, who represents the imperialist agency, the Rev. Jerrod Brown, the convert, the local religious colonialist representative and lately the ex-activist of liberation, the ruling politician now, Chui identify the neo-colonial powers that dominate the nation.

It is quite remarkable that the luxurious life Chui leads gives the indication for his negligence of authorization the masses give so as to rule after independence. The quite betrayal and denial of the masses can be traced in the life of gay and extravagancy of the leading parties. This image is paradoxically set against ordinary people's image that are starving and suffering under severe conditions. The delegation encounters hardship, disillusionment and betrayal of the official personages they meet in the journey. However, the precise image Ngugi attempts to unmask is Nderi wa Riera, the MP of the Ilmorog. The encounter with Nderi wa Riera questions the place of nationalism in the new ruling elite and the amount of politics which is understood only as a means to serve the personal interests after independence.
The very bourgeoisie life of the politician and his preoccupation with the political race frustrate the delegation. The capitalist tone dominates the MP's talk which blames the masses for inadequate economy. He astonishingly expresses the idea that he has to be realistic towards the anti-colonial enthusiasm as slogans of independence are no more than slogans. The shift of the liberation ideals is quite vivid in his statements. The only assumption he praises is the colonial capitalist ideology. He comments on Karege's views which defies the Western capitalism:

But at what price has China been able to do that? No individual freedom…no freedom of the press… no freedom of worship or assembly and people wearing drab uniform clothes. Would you wish that for your country? You know when I was young I thought I could solve the problems of the world by shouting a slogan. But as I grow older I have learnt to be more realistic, and to face facts in the face. And we black people must learn not to fly against hard truths even if this means revising our dearly held theories. Take this population problem--! (Petals of Blood: 213)

Quite apparently, the quotation expresses the denial of the liberation struggle of the ruling elite in favour of the Western colonial ethos. The highly Western ideological adoption expresses itself in the Nderi wa Riera's economic and political remediation. However, Nderi wa Riera's apprehension of any political loss is his prime concern. Fearing the other politicians' conspiracy, he absurdly and unrealistically recommends the Ilmorogians to buy their cattle to avoid loss, get singers, motivate the national spirit among the town people and let the elderly give speeches to gather the sense of patience. Disappointingly and bitterly, the masses recognize the betrayal and denial of the freedom prospects in his response. Thus, the crowd hopelessly protests:
Somebody in the crowd shouted: 'These are people who are misusing our freedom,' and this was greeted with general murmur of protesting assent. Suddenly a stone flew and hit Nderi on the nose. (*Petals of Blood*: 219)

As a form of profiteering, the ex-protesters for liberation turn into leading tradesmen in Ilmorog. The profiteering capitalist structure is dominating the town through prominent authoritative heads. Ilmorog is turned into Ilmorogs under the new ruling system, in which the ruling personages capture the new profiteering structure:

> The breweries were owned by an Anglo-American international combine but of course with African directors and even shraehlders. Three of the four leading local personalities were Mzigo, Chui and Kimeria. (*Petals of Blood*: 334)

Further, of those big heads is Nderi wa Riera himself whose property is allocated in the new Ilmorog. The post-colonial MP owns a residential property which gives him thousands shillings a month:

> 'Yes, he charges a hundred shillings for this one room. So from the block he makes a thousand shillings a month….But he comes…he earns more than sixty thousand shillings a day from transporting sugar and hardware for the McMillan sugar works. And this on the top of his official government salary!' (*Petals of Blood*: 336)

In these modes of greed and profiteering, Ngugi critically unmasks the real neo-colonial leading elite whose new profiteering ideals construct the political image of the post-independence situation. However, Karega's and the lawyer's
socio-political views enliven and maintain the national spirits and prospects in the post-colonial situation.

3.3.2.3. Capital Construct vs. Social Construct

As it has been stated earlier, the socio-political ideologies dominate the clash in the novel. Ngugi presents a revolutionary treatise of his socio-political remedy of the neo-colonial situation. A clear-cut portrait of capitalism is manifested through the newly designed economy of the nation. The global capitalism has firmly constructed its system and clutches over the post-independent nation. However, Ngugi's views are an attempt to awaken the nation of the amount of the White exploitation which is disguised under the black skin representatives. In this way, the conflict is depicted in arousing the oppressed masses' consciousness against the oppressing ruling bourgeoisie for achieving the desirable emancipation of the capitalistic clutches. As stated earlier, socialism is set against capitalist construct of the post-independent nation. However, Ngugi's deep exploration of the situation, of course, identifies that the current ideological strategy cannot fit the modern Kenya:

Imperialism...can never develop a country or a people. This was what I was trying to show in Petals of Blood; that imperialism can never develop us, Kenyan. In doing so, I was only trying to be faithful to what Kenyan workers and peasants have realized as shown by their historical struggle since 1895. (As quoted in Olutola, Akinwumi." Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood* as a Mirror of the African Revolution." *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*. April 2013 Vol. 4 Issue-II. Web. 5 Dec. 2013.)

Ngugi is aware of the masses' defeat in their struggle against colonialism which it has restored its clutches under a mask called capitalism. Therefore, Ngugi constructs his critical image of the capitalist by portraying the various financial
capitalistic modes which dominate the nation. The imperial finance has settled itself on the post-independent economic system of Kenya. Finance investment, Banking, taxes involvement, the centralization of the city have characterized the dominance of the Western economy upon the nation's economic destiny. As a result of that, these modes of capitalization have marginalized the labourers and the working class people. The system has come out with a lot of evils that are reaped only by the working class while the ruling elite enjoys the finance. In this respect, the small towns such as Ilmorog, and their settlers gain the bitter fruit of capitalism as the latter exclusively fits to flourish cities. Thus, the miserable scene of Ilmorog portrays the ordeal. Ruoru comments upon Muturi:

'I don’t understand young men these days. In our time we were compelled to work for these oppressing Foreigners. And even then, after earning enough to pay tax or fines, we would run back to our shambas. Now take my sons… I don’t even know where they are. One went to work in Nairobi, another in Kisumu, another in Mombasa, and they hardly ever come back. (Petals of Blood: 98)

Thus, with only ten years Ilmorog turns a different city under the feet of capitalism and modernization. The lawyer and Karega are the spokesmen of Ngugi's point of views. The lawyer, whose name keeps unknown, is the vivid voice of the revolutionary course of the socio-political reformation. His views of the imperial capitalism, diagnoses the unfulfilled African dream of self-rule. Against the monopoly of the capitalists and their exploitive agenda, Ngugi has put his encounter ideology with the remedial views in the mouth of the two characters. Karega is the educated fellow, who is involved in strikes, embraces socialistic views to reform the misery of the nation. He is more convincingly the voice of the novelist and his shadow in the text as his constant appearance in the novel. With his revolutionary enthusiasm, Karega expresses the tone of
protest that rises against the ongoing situation of Kenya. However, Ngugi ends the narrative with an optimistic tone that inspires reform and the desirable changes. The emergence of unionism to defend the workers' rights against the exploitive capitalist institutions marks a way out. Ngugi impliedly evokes such a move among people, as it can be their salvation formula. In his socialist terms, he prospects unionism as an influential step to preserve the working class's rights.

With this manifestation of the text, the researcher finds out that Petals of Blood is a post-colonial survey of the socio-political setting with a remedial treatise, of course, as per the novelist's adaptation, of the neo-colonial ordeal of the nation. Ngugi's postcolonial text is a mixed narrative fabric which brings various colours into one comprehensive portrait. He is able to mingle the past, the present and prospects of the future, the Western rightist with the Eastern leftist ideologies, colonialism and neo-colonialism, culture and politics. He turns his narrative into a comprehensive treatise of criticism and reformation. However, Ngugi manipulates typically the postcolonial themes as he involves in the cultural reconsideration with the political diagnosis and a recommended remedy.

3.4. Conclusion

The manifestation of the two African narrative texts discussed and analyzed in the chapter provides a wide spectrum of the postcolonial situation of Africa, as the two texts exhibit the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial scenes.

Things Fall Apart introduces an image of a Nigerian village before and after colonization. It is an archetypal African novel which presents a definitive form of the African identity. The tribal world where a minute detail of the cultural milieu comes to be the central exhibition of the narrative. The novelist's intention centres on the home of the culture, i.e., the tribal life in which he
portrays reality and, consequently, negates the colonial image. The cultural and traditional manifestation is the focus of the first part of the novel through which the novelist expresses his counterpart view of the African image depicted in the Western colonial discourse. Therefore, the cultural construct of the village such as traditions, life-style, religion and customs are exposed in a wide spectrum. The manifestation also includes the ruling system of the inhabitant tribes. The image Achebe delineates about the native culture is that of a well-systemized way of life that adheres to sets of social, cultural and political rules. The village life prior to colonization enjoys the authority of the social and political institutions, which organizes people's life in the village. These organizations are patriarchal in the sense of the rule. The coming of the colonizer has put an end to that cultural structure and style of life. The new cultural modes and policy of assimilation have destructed the native culture and initiated dispute.

*Petals of Blood* is a post-colonial survey of the socio-political setting with a remedial treatise, of course, as per the novelist's adaptation, of the neo-colonial ordeal of the nation. Though *Things Fall Apart* and *Petals of Blood* belong to different African settings, but still, *Petals of Blood* can be considered as continuation of the African postcolonial scene after independence in Africa in general. The novel centres the action and focus on the disenchantment of the nation after the self-rule of the elite. It is a mingling narrative fabric which brings various colours into one comprehensive portrait. Ngugi is able to mingle the past, the present and prospects of the future, the Western rightist with the Eastern leftist ideologies, colonialism and neo-colonialism, culture and politics. He turns his narrative into a comprehensive treatise of criticism and reformation. However, Ngugi manipulates typically the postcolonial themes as he involves the cultural reconsideration with the political diagnosis and recommended remedy. Therefore, the selection of the two novels can provide
the analysis with considerable manifestation of the entire postcolonial situation that gives an adequate formula for the cultural and political crises.