
The Myth of Resurrection in Ngugi's a Grain of Wheat

¹Moise Katenga Ngombua

¹Department of Human Resources Management of the Higher Institute of Social Studies (ISES/KGa).

doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/bjmas.2022.04134>

Published July 13, 2024

Ngombua M.K. (2024) The Myth of Resurrection in Ngugi's a Grain of Wheat, *British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences* 5 (4),39-51

ABSTRACT: *Our paper deal with 'The Myth of Resurrection in Ngugi's 'A Grain of Wheat' in this, we have described the analysis of the myth of resurrection in the novel under criticism. This analysis has been achieved through the description of mythical aspects under mentioned. Apart from that, we have tried to brief down the cultural meaning of the myth under analysis. A Grain of wheat may be considered as novel tracing back the resurrection myth. Because it involves the idea of birth, death, and rebirth of Kenya. The imagery used by the author proves us that Kenya was a land given by MURUNGU (creator), invaded by the British, and reborn thanks to the sacrifices made by the local people. We can understand that Kenyan country is considered as symbol of all Africa land that is why African must arise and decolonizing their mind for their freedom from colonialists. Our readers will found same propositions which can be give us our liberation from the colonialist or others neocolonialism forms.*

KEYWORDS: Myth, Resurrection, Ngugi, Grain, Wheat, etc.

RESUME : Dans cet article intitulé " *The Myth of Resurrection in Ngugi's A Grain of wheat*", nous allons démontrer et analyser les mythes de la résurrection contenue dans le livre écrit par l'écrivain ' *Ngugi wa Thiongo* ', cette analyse nous permettra de comprendre les différents aspects des mythes utilisés par l'auteur dans son livre, et nous allons montrer le sens de la civilisation et de la libération utilisé dans un langage biblique par " *Ngugi*". Ce présent article est considéré comme un chef-d'œuvre qui trace la résurrection dans cette graine de blé, étant donné qu'il nous montre la pensée de la naissance, de la mort, et de la renaissance du pays de Kenya. Cette réflexion consiste à nous prouver que la terre de Kenya est considérée comme un bien que dieu: surnommé " *MURUNGU* ", le créateur avait donné à leur ancêtre mais qui était envahi, confisqué par le colonisateur Anglais, disons mort, qui ensuite revient à la libération ou à la résurrection suite aux sacrifices de son peuple. Ainsi, nous considérons Kenya comme l'échantillon du continent d'Afrique qui à son tour doit se réveiller et se libérer dans leurs mentalités face à toutes les formes de colonisation. Nos lecteurs trouveront dans cette étude quelques propositions pouvant nous aider à nous libérer.

Mots-clés : *Mythe, Résurrection, Ngugi, Graine, Blé, etc.*

INTRODUCTION

This analysis deals with the Myth of resurrection in A Grain of Wheat, we are going to demonstrate why and how Ngugi uses the Mythical Bible of resurrection in his works, particularly in the novel

under analysis. In this respect, we are going to deal with this matter in with regard to the myth reconstruction, and mythical aspects. The latter comprises the following points: style (figures of speech, symbols, and images), characters, themes and the cultural meaning of the myth will also be pointed out same proposition followed by a general conclusion.

As, each scientific work is made according to a given technique with regard to a given procedure i.e. a given method. As far as this work is concerned, we have adopted library desk research, we have resorted the documentary method reading from other critics to support our ideas and the critical books were the solutions.

MYTH RECONSTRUCTION IN A GRAIN OF WHEAT

Inspired by VUUREN (2000:9), our focus will be put on Ngugi's treatment of the Christian faith and its text, the Bible, particularly in the light of post-colonial ambivalence about Christianity and its role in the advent and theological rationalization of colonialism. We will examine the criteria by which Christian theologies and practices are judged as well as Ngugi's appropriation and reconstruction of Biblical narratives and symbols in the novel, in which the gospel, takes root in Africa, as dictated and changed with time by the author. The ideological shift reflected in the later alterations to the original text impacts on Ngugi's use of the Bible as interest as well. In other words, it was not only the Bible but also the written word itself that was at issue for the colonized conscious that, they were playing a catch-up game. Alternatively, simply we may see that with this Bible the colonialists and missionaries were not scientific. However, as they used it, it was the word of God in scriptures. Nevertheless, the colonialists used the Bible it as a means of imposing Western civilization on the Africans. This paved a way to many African writers to find subjects and themes to discuss in their respective works. In general, we may assert that most of these African texts drawing upon this western religion do not side with it. Ngugi is one of those African writers whose narratives are inspired by biblical texts regarded as myths.

In *A Grain of Wheat*, we may find that the Christian text survives into the post-colonial era, not only in the events of the novel, but also more significantly in the very fabric of Ngugi's text. *A Grain of Wheat*, as the title suggests, it is rich in biblical allusions and has at its heart the titular reference to the death and resurrection of Christ. Ngugi's appropriation Bible is that he takes it out of the hands of the missionaries and places it in those of the freedom fighters. It is the appropriation or transgresses inscription of a work central to the Western tradition. By the way, Ngugi focuses on a deliberate recontextualisation of passages from the Old and New Testament; he transforms a text, which serves as a vehicle for their liberation from British imperial rule. As we may gather, biblical references are used either directly or indirectly in this novel. They serve as primary elements to the myth reconstruction we are presenting in the lines below. These references read as follows:

I.DIRECT BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

1. *1 Corinthians 15:36 (p.1)*
2. *Exodus 3:1 (p.37)*
3. *Exodus 3:7-10 (p.16)*
4. *John 12:24 (p.230)*
5. *Revelation 21:1 (p.230)*

II. INDIRECT BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

One the other hand, indirect biblical references presented refer to the following books:

1. *Ruth chapter 1-4 (p.92)*
2. *Esther chapter 1-16 (p.29; 89)*
3. *Genesis 4:9 (p.113)*
4. *Matthew 5:39 (p.185)*
5. *Matthew 10:38-39, Luke 9:23-24, Mark 8:34-35 (p.103)*
6. *Matthew 26:14 (p.252)*
7. *Psalm 72:4 (27, 77)*
8. *Psalm 27:1-3 (p.23)*
9. *Psalm 22:16 (p.12)*
10. *Genesis 4:10 (p.113)*
11. *Isaiah 40:31 (p.32)*
12. *Exodus 19:3 (p.143, 214)*
13. *2 Corinthians 1:5-6 (p.82-83)*

In fact, A Grain of Wheat, as the title indicates is a sacrificial death for the sake of community. This title is from the passage of the Bible taken from John (12:24) as quoted in the novel: ‘*verily, verily, I say to you, except a grain of wheat falls in the ground and dies, it abides alone but if it dies, it brings fourth much fruit*’ (230). The reference to the organic image of Christ’s life, giving death, contrasts the refusal of sacrifice and its fruit remaining «alone» with the rich harvest of sacrifice and the plurality of «much fruit». The sacrificial ethic is contrasted with the view of the collaborator, Karanja; every man in the world is alone and fights alone, to live (128). This parable of *A Grain of Wheat* is an allegory on resurrection given by Jesus-Christ in the New Testament. The seed, A Grain of wheat, is the image of the resurrection of Jesus or Jesus himself; in short, we assert that the title of this novel is «Jesus who accepted the sacrifice for his people».

In the Kikuyu context, we may explain this with COOK and OKENIMKPE (1983:70) who write :’*stirring of the demand of social justice? But the grain must die in order to be reborn. Ngugi insists that all of us as members of a community must individually and collectively accept responsibility for its growth and well-being...This is the sole foundation on which moral order can be built. Individualistic, messianic leadership is respected*”.

Similarly, BRANHAM (1962:3, 11-14) provides this story: ‘*I remember one time a man named Moses. Those people constantly aggravated, him just constantly kept him on the move. Everything was a murmur, or complains and so forth. But Moses, when it came to the showdown, when God said «separate yourself from them, because I’m going to take you and start a nation, Moses thrower himself in the part of God’s wealth, said: take me, and not the people» that he’d called rebels yet, he loved them so much till said, take me and save them. «That was Christ in Moses*’.

All these texts imply that the spirit of Christ was in Moses, the sacrificial spirit for his people. He accepted death for them and in the New Testament after the death of Jesus, the seed, the blood of Christ continued with the Apostles to produce other Christ. All this considered, we find that with the death of Waiyaki, his blood was a seed, the germ of the life was in seed, of the mustard seed, was not hybrid so that every seed must be brought forth of its kind. In this way after his death, there were many Christ, many heroes like Waiyaki, who accepted the sacrifice, the painful, the death in such a way that Kenya got resurrection, that is the independence or «Uhuru» life requires that we

should accept the sufferings, sacrifices, so that comes the resurrection or the liberation as we are going to see in the following passage, quoted by the author. MATTHEW (5: 39) says that: *''But I say to you, do not resist one who is evil, but if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also''*. (185), or else MATTHEW 10: 38-39, LUKE 9:23-24, MARK 8:34-35 say that: *''and he who does not take his cross and follows me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it''*. (103)

Ngugi is also calling the Kenyan's people to accept, to give their life in sacrifice to achieve their freedom. This could help repossess their considered land, regarded as cultural heritage. All this, we dare believe, presents the link there is between man and the land. In other words, we may see that man was made from the land to which he is bound, and which he will become of after death. An early patriot, Waiyaki and other warrior leaders took up arms, but their efforts met with disaster when «Waiyaki was bound hands and feet, and later buried alive with his head facing into the center of the earth» (P.12)

The reference to the binding of his hands and feet is reminiscent of the passion of the messianic of Psalm 22:16: They have pierced my hands and my feet». Although Waiyaki does not experience a literal resurrection, we may agree that his blood contained within was a seed, a grain, which gave birth to a political party whose main strength thereafter sprang from a bond with the soil (P.13). The voice of WAIYAKI'S blood like that of ABEL's crying from the ground reads as follows in Genesis 4:10: *''The Lord said what have you alone? Listen your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground''*. (113)

A national patriot named HARRY THUKU, a MOSES figure who refused to eat the good things of PHARAOH, heard this voice. Instead, he chose to cut grass and make bricks with the other children of Israel (P 16). Our reader can realize that Kihika's use of biblical language for carrying the cross can be interpreted as either profoundly, not the former inspired of its echo of the concept that «The sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ» (2 cor 1:5), since KIHKA has declared that: « Jesus had failed... because his death did not change anything» (p. 110) in terms of its reverence. Let us assume that Kihika appears to be a voice for Ngugi who is here depicting Christ's mission in political rather than religious terms: *''All oppressed people have a cross to bear: the Jews refused to carry it and were scattered like dust over the earth...In Kenya, we want deaths which will change things...''* (p 110)

In any case, Kihika's willingness to carry his cross, to be tortured and to lay down his life for Kenya's freedom inspired his fellow collapsed, as we can read: *''The party...grew... on the wounds of those Kihika left behind.''* (p. 21)

Besides, let us mention that the kind of society Kihika omissions is one in which the poor receivers justice and need receives help, as suggested by the messianic passage from Psalm 72. Underlined in red, this includes the clause "he... shall break in pieces the oppressor" (P. 27). To repeat ourselves, God of Isaac and Jacob and Abraham who also created GIKUYU and MUMBI, and gave them children, this land of Kenya (P.189). They claim that the land they have fought for is divinely ordained. Our reader can realize that the resurrection myth is bound to the myth of creation of the land now invaded by the serpent (Whiteman), who should be put out of the area thinks to personal sacrifice. However, the epigrams preceding chapter one of this book is taken from the book of 1 Corinthians and it is from this epigram that the novel takes its title. *''You fool, when you saw a seed*

in the ground, 'it does not sprout to life unless it dies. And what you saw is a bare seed, perhaps a grain of wheat or another grain'. (1Cor 15:36)

In this text, Paul tells the Corinthians that they are fool because they worry about the form of the body after death. He uses grain of wheat as an example; our physical body is like the soul. This covering must die (change the form) so that the new life inside the covering the seed can begin to grow, in similar way, our physical, earthy bodies must die (pass away), so that our resurrected bodies, our souls, can take a new and glorious shape. This holds the same for Kikuyu presented in this novel as fighters for their freedom.

We assert that in this allusion to the «A Grain of wheat», Ngugi suggests that old things must pass away, or die, before new and greater things can come into being. He uses this metaphor to show that people should be willing to sacrifice their lives, if necessary for the cause such as the struggle for freedom from oppression. We are introduced to many early heroes of the struggle, who suffered and sometimes died for their cause. Such people became martyrs. Their sacrifice inspired people to continue to fight for freedom: *'Wrings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, and they will walk and Will not become tired'* (P.32)

In the Bible God he is compared to an eagle, the strong bird, which Ngugi associates with his people to follow their struggle against their British colonialist. The eagle must will run and not get tired; he will walk and not become tired; it is also the sacrifice for their resurrection about of the new land, new life, "the Jerusalem", that is Kenyan's independence. Everything considered, we pass to the second point of this article which tackles the "mythical aspects" in the story".

MYTHICAL ASPECTS

A Grain of Wheat as a myth, presents features related to orality through language, characters and themes exploited. This makes it a myth like story from which Ngugi refutes his disapproval foreign forces and their influences on the post-colonial Kenya, say Africa.

FIGURES OF SPEECH

As one considers the elements of fiction, i.e. plot, character, setting, theme, he tends to forget one thing which makes all of them possible: «language», yet it is only through words that he receives a story and form an impression of it. If he stops and thinks about it, it is not his/her first reaction to other words, it is a reaction to their style, their choice and arrangement of words on the page. Largely, he likes and dislikes certain stories, not because of what their author says, but how they say it. (<http://www.c.s.bedfordstmartins.com/vistualit/fiction/elements.asp.htm>) (2010). We may assume that a figure of speech is a word a please used in a different way from its usual meaning in order to create a particular mental picture or effect.

According to KIMMEY (1976:222), before looking at the style of a story, it might be well to explain briefly an often-confused aspect of style, "figures of speech". Although there are hundreds, only two need to be mentioned: metaphor, and allusion, as they provide meaning(s) to the text. From this standpoint, our analysis will be based on them, especially as we deal with the biblical language, which is a metaphorical language and the allusions the author uses to convey his message. A metaphor is, according to KIMMEY (idem) as an indirect comparison between two things without the use of « like » or « as » Example « you are a summer day ». In *A Grain of Wheat*, we can see this when MUGO is described as true hermit (p.36) to mean he is a person who *is*

isolated from the others. On the other hand, allusion is an indirect reference to a historical, literary or mythical person, place or things.

METAPHOR

Generally, we may see that the book *A Grain of Wheat* as a whole is a metaphorical language. Through this novel, Ngugi uses so many evidences of it that, for the sake of economy, we cannot analyze in this paper. Our exemplification of metaphor is drawn from the book of Corinthians which makes the title of the novel. «*You fool! When you sow a seed in the ground, it does not sprout to life unless it dies. And what you sow is a bare seed, perhaps grain of wheat or another grain*». (p.2). In this way, Paul tells the Corinthians that they are foolish to worry about the form of the body after death. He uses the grain of wheat as an example. In the context of the story Kihika seems to be that seed whose life sacrifice would redeem the Kenyans from the colonial oppression. «*Kihika was tortured... Kihika was banged in public: ‘one Sunday, at ring’ ei market, not far from where he had once stood calling for blood to rain on and water the tree of freedom’*». (p.21). in this allusion to the «*A Grain of wheat*», Ngugi suggests that old things must pass away, or die, before new and greater things can come into being. He uses this metaphor to show that people should be willing to sacrifice these lives, if necessary, for the cause of their liberation from the British oppression on their land.

ALLUSION

As far as allusion is concerned, he provides these details: “*and the lord spoke into Moses, go into Pharaoh, and say into him, thus saith the lord, let my people go*”. (p.37). our reader can find this text makes allusion to the Biblical text of Exodus 8:1. Reading from this Holy Scripture, we find that Ngugi refers us to role played by Moses when he was sent to liberate the people of Israel from Egyptian yoke. As it can be noted, this is mythical in so far as the reader is bound to believe the story as it is with its references to mythical persons such as Moses and Pharaoh.

SYMBOLS AND IMAGES

From to <http://www.answers.com/topic/symbolism> (2009), symbolism is regarded as the practice of representing things by means of symbols or of attributing meanings or significance to objects, or relationships. Imagery on the other hand is the use of vivid or figurative language to represent objects, actions, or ideas, or the use of expressive or evocative images in art, literature or music.

In *A grain of Wheat*, we may see that Ngugi has used too many symbols and images. Here is a list of what to look out for:

1. The grain of wheat.
2. the land
3. visions and dreams
4. Moses
5. heaven and new earth
6. Jesus with the cross
7. Cain and Abel.

In the next lines, we are trying to analyze each of the images and symbols above mentioned:

GRAIN OF WHEAT

It is the big symbol in this novel taken from the John 12:24: «*Verily, verily I say to you, except a corn of wheat falls in the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit*». (p.230) Since Kihika and the like died, both physically and spiritually, it appears that their deaths had not been in vain. These deaths were intended to bring forth harvest for those who had survived the affliction.

LAND

The symbol of the land is seen as a younger MUGO who finds comfort: «in the very act of breaking the soul» (p.3), here the land symbolizes hope. However, «on this day the country appeared sick and dull, (p.8). This image foreshadows the feelings of disappointment following Uhuru, and should remind us that ideals and dreams are hard to be transformed into reality.

VISIONS AND DREAMS

In this novel, Ngugi uses evocative diction, when he describes Mugo's dreams, and we realize that Mugo is a soul in distress. He is nervous with drop of water painted of his heart. He feels powerless, as he is chained to the bed. Words like «despair» and «piece» adds to these impressions of Mugo as man who feels threatened ever in his dreams. When he meets WARUI on the way to his Shamba, we see Mugo as he tries to avoid a conversation (p.5). Falls in the first chapter, Mugo feels «naked», even «rejected» by the eyes of the old woman, and is frightened and angry when the visitors arrive (p.6). In the some range, some important symbols emerge in the first chapter as well. Dreams are important symbols in the novel, so it is significant that we first see Mugo while he is dreaming (p.3).

MOSE

Like Kihika, he identifies like Moses. After working in the field one pleasant day, he lies down at noon and receives a vision. «*Moses too was alone keeping the flock of Jethro his father in-law... and the angel of the Lord appeared into him in a thin voice, Moses, Moses, and Mugo cried out, here am I, lord*». (p.143). We may see that later, after a consuming of jealousy of Kihika, he secretly divulges Kihika's whereabouts to the authorities. In its ignorance, the community regards Mugo as a hero of the British detention camps and a reincarnated Kihika; and he himself thinks that he has survived that camp to play a special role. But Mugo may be seen as false Moses considering that he betrayed Kihika, the leader of the movement.

HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH

Considered that he expresses optimism and hope and goes further to proclaim the birth of a new land as we read: «*And I saw heaven and new earth: for the first earth was passed away*». (p.230).

Instead, the old world of Robsons, Thompsons and Karanja has passed away and the new world of Kenya as an independent nation has been ushered in. In this respect, we may ascertain that all the sufferings were not in vain and that Kihika and the others were «grains of wheat». Despite the optimism contained in and expressed by these epigrams, doubts and pessimism dog those who had believed that bloodshed during the struggle would create a new human earth.

JESUS WITH THE CROSS

In addition, we may assert that images from the Bible are used by Kihika to underline the necessity of the struggle against colonialism. Here are details from the novel: *“Take up the cross, is what Jesus told his people Kihika resumed in a more light heated tone» if any man will come after me, him denies himself, and take up his cross and follow me; for whoso ever will save his life shall lose it: it and whoso ever will lose his life for my sake will find it. Do you know why Ghandi succeeded? Because he made his people give up their fathers and mothers and serve their one mother-India? With us. Kenya is our mother”*. (p.103)

It is apparent that in this and other instances, KIHKA uses what he considers as authoritative unquestionable power of the Bible to rely people around the struggle for national liberation. In other words, he uses the Bible and its images to support the cause of humanism. He is not, however, averse to demonstrate how the Bible has been used to mislead the people and pave the way for the alienation of land.

CAIN AND ABEL

From Genese 4: *“Cain and Abel were son of Adam and Eve, Cain was jealous of his brother Abel because God rejected his sacrifice in preference to Abel’s. Cain killed Abel. When God asked where Abel was, Cain said: « am I my brother’s keeper? ”* (p.113) .In this text Cain was not responsible of his brother; this means that, when Kihika says that he is his brother’s keeper, he is fighting for all the Kenyans, not just for himself. Cain denied any responsibility for his brother, but kihika takes personal responsibility for the future of all the Kenyans.

CHARACTERS

KIMMEY. J. (op.cit: 37) “points out that the most memorable feature of the story for many readers is the characters in it, the people the author creates to act, to speak and to represent the significance of what is narrated”.

Furthermore, in order to understand the nature of a fictional character, we should consider several things. First we need to recognize the different types of characters found in the story. Second, we need to know something about characterization, the way in which the author presents the people that make up his world. On the other hand, BONAZZA.B. (1971-56) «points out that characters and characterization are closely related but essentially different concepts are contained in the term «character» and «characterization». The term «character» refers to one of the persons in the story, the product to the writer to create a distinct personality. ‘Characterization however, refers to the manner the author uses to create the sun of traits and actions which constitute characters». From this assumption, we are going to analyze some characters viewed as the most important in the novel: KIHKA, MUGO, MUMBI, GIKONYO, KARANJA with British (JOHN THOMPSON, ROBSON).

KIHKA

VUUREN (op.cit:9) sustains that Kihika preaches Christ like self-sacrifice, according to the message of the first missionaries: «greater love hath no man lay down his life for his friends». This giving of the self is communal: «I die for you, you die for me, and we become a sacrifice for one another. So I can say that you... are Christ. I am Christ; everyone who takes the oath of unity to change things in Kenya is Christ (p.110) ».

This means that for Kihika, martyrdom has meaning only if it «changes things historically,» this is his definition of a true sacrifice» (p.110). He appears to be the Jesus of Kenyans for their liberation, at the same their Moses. However, the British in what is called a «cruxifixion» (p.11) publically hang Kihika, «the high priest of their freedom» from a tree, and his betrayer is referred to as a Judas. His death is not «failure», but it provides a center for resistance which gives birth at last to freedom and autonomy.

In short, he is the dead hero of the struggle, Kihika is also a passionate young man totally committed to the freedom struggle; he is a seed, figure of Jesus, an inspired leader who models himself on the Biblical leader. He does not enjoy violence, but is prepared to do what is necessary for the struggle. He has integrity and stands by his beliefs even when they cost him his life.

MUGO

VUUREN (op.cit: 2000) says that «the two Biblical figures for heroism are JESUS and MOSES, as NGUGI explores the “let my people go” theme. Significantly, however, the Moses model is connected mainly with Mugo’s early dreams of individual heroism, the valorization of the savior figure, while he remains isolated from the community denying his treason. Ngugi treats the community’s natural longing for a saviuor figure with some circumspection. Yet the villagers long for a hero. They weave legends about Mugo, ignorant of his treason. »

We assume that Mugo is a strong old man. At the beginning of the novel, he is described as a man without house or family. Yet, he is compelling. He is aware of his surrounding and is a hard worker, and an unlikely hero. The reader grows to over his humility and self-doubts. These flows are familiar to him. He also feels the same inadequacies and the same consciousness. Through Mugo we are given the early history of Thabai as well as the present day circumstances. For instance, his interaction with Warrui informs the audience. Warrui had given MUGO the land before his own property had been confiscated by the government (p.5).

MUMBI AND GIKONYO

GIKONYO and MUMBI are two separate characters, but they, we dare believe, must be reconciled as one. They are connected in experience, both culturally, politically, and historically. GIKONYO exiled as a mere baby by his father is an honorable man. He decided, respected and supported that his father rejected and aborted his mother. He is a master carpenter, market entrepreneur, and political activist. But he is multifaceted and thoughtful. Besides, through Gikonyo we become aware of the world of A Grain of Wheat. He is the cultural sounding board for us reader. We are instantly made aware of his political prowess, in the beginning pages of the novel, and this continues through the remainder of the novel. As the organizer of Uhuru he asks Mugo to speak. Thus can follow his life from childhood, his vacations and his relationships with his wife.

Moreover, we also experience his love for Mumbi; and we understand the decisions he has made because of her. We are also able to see the human struggle through the life of Gikonyo. Mumbi provides the intimate character of Gikonyo as she alone has the power to cause him pain. That is why we believe Gikonyo and Mumbi are the heart of the story.

KARANJA, JOHN THOMPSON AND BRITISH

It seems that Karanja presents us the image of a collaborator who loses his soul to violence and the illusion of power. He is friendly with Gikonyo and loves Mumbi. He loses Mumbi to Gikonyo but does not accept this. He becomes a member of the home guard so that he can remain with Mumbi. As we may gather, he is submissive to the whites and treats black Kenyans harshly. He helps Mumbi during the emergency. He sleeps with her to assert his power to Gikonyo. He is saved by Mugo's confession, but is unredeemed as he does not take responsibility for his actions.

As for JOHN THOMPSON, is presented as originally very passionate with the British Empire: figure of Pharaoh in Egypt and the role he could play in Kenya, he becomes brutalized following the Rira incident. It is said that Mugo betrayed Kihika to him. As a result, he leaves Kenya disillusioned with the feeling of failure and personal betrayal. To repeat ourselves, Thompson reflects the image of Pharaoh in Egypt. In their land, the Kenyans have become Israel in Egypt. They are ill-treated and God decides to send them Moses (Kihika), to liberate them. We also find that Kihika becomes their Jesus who sheds his blood for their redemption (independence).

THEMES

According to <http://www.org.../theme> I. (2009), the theme of a piece of fiction is its views about life and how people behave. In fiction, the theme is not pretended to teach or preach. In fact, it is not presented directly at all. We extract it from the characters, actions and setting that make up the story. In other words, we must figure out the themes ourselves. The writer's task is to communicate on a common ground with the reader. Although the particulars of your experience may be different from the details of the story, the general underlying truths behind the story may be just the connection that both you and the writer are seeking.

We may see that theme and character are more tightly linked in Ngugi's writing (<http://www.geouties.com/pairis/arc/2009>). The same site claims that themes find their context in the Kenyan environment and relate to relevant contentious social issues. Characters tend to symbolize powerful social forces in play in the country during the colonial period preceding independence and during the period after independence. In general, we find that some important recurring themes in his writings include the importance of «education» and the «acquisition» of knowledge; the encounter between «religion» and other traditional «beliefs», «displacement and alienation from the land», «the struggle between the slave and the master», «the native and the colonizer», «the pagan and the Christian», «the savage and the European», black and white, etc... up on which colonial and imperial rule were predicated.

Hence, endorsing <http://www.answers.com/q/themes> (2007), we realize that themes in *A Grain of wheat* include: «religiousness», which may be the main theme in the novel portraying self-sacrifice by one for others like Jesus who died for our sins; there is also «unity» where Ngugi highlights the need for the Kenyans to unite against the British, there is also «corruption» where by some Kenyans are given a little incentive to privilege there in tersest and those of their British colonial masters. These are, unlike Kihika, traitors as they ignore their noble cause for which they are fighting.

In short, we may classify the themes exploited in this novel as follows: *The theme of betrayal; The theme of guilt and redemption; The theme of heroes and heroism; The theme of sacrifice; The theme*

of violence; The theme of confession; The theme of the outsider; Mumbi and the theme of love; The theme of colonialism versus struggle for freedom, to mention just a few.

We cannot analyze each if then in such a paper for the sake of economy. But we may provide the general ideas they develop. Our readership may agree with us that all the above-mentioned themes are bound to the main theme, «religiousness». Mythically, we may see that the resurrection for Jesus was preceded by various incidents. He should first be born, arrested, tortured, condemned, and then crucified.

All these sufferings, which led to his crucifixion, are the same as those witnessed by the Kenyans before achieving «Uhuru». All this calls for a self-sacrifice for the common interest. That why Kihika died, like Jesus, as the seed of power whose resurrection is found in the independence of Kenyan. The theme of «love in the couple Mumbi and Gikonyo» testifies unity of the land, after a long period of sufferings from the colonialists. It symbolizes the restoration of harmony in the area, no matter it cost life to Kihika and the like who died as sacrifice to achieve the New Jerusalem (Uhuru).

CULTURAL MEANING OF THE MYTH

Reading from www.tamu.edu (2012) we may assert that: ‘‘*Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of Knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meaning, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concept of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generative through, individual and group striving* ‘’. Paraphrasing the above source, we may see that culture is related to symbols in communication. The meaning of these symbols are learnt and perpetuated in the society. That is why the essential care of culture consists of traditional ideas achieved by the human groups and including their embodiment in artifacts.

From this stand point, myth as part of the culture, is deeply and intensely emotional in so far as it involves gods and creation with the essence of a belief system. It may be seen as the imaged embodiment of a philosophical system, of a human group. To put it otherwise, mythic imagery is the embodiment of significant emotions, hopes, fears, dreams and nightmares of people. As we may gather, the latter are viewed through the hero who may be considered as the representative or embodiment of his culture. As such, the hero is every man moving through a change, a transformation which can help him change or transform his milieu and restore its history. This is the case of Kihika in the novel under criticism. Throughout the text; he is viewed as a man with myth inside him. In telling his story, Ngugi uses metaphors as transformational process which moves the story from the mythic to the real and from the real to the mythic for a given purpose.

From the outset, we may find that the question of tradition is a central issue in terms of kikuyu values as Ngugi is concerned with in this novel and in others. This helps him make what he calls «The foundation of a truly national sensibility», as assumed by KESSELER (1994: 78). As it can be noted, the story begins with a critical rethinking of the past which arises the mythical question of reconstructing the national identity. That is why in this narrative Ngugi resorts to ancient stories of WANGU MAKERI and WAIYAKI and with the heroism of anti-imperialist activists like HARRY THUKU and JOMO KENYATA. To achieve all this, the author focuses on the historical moment of Uhuru, the day making the inauguration of Kenyan independence from British colonial rules. (Paraphrasing ours)

In addition we realize that, this novel presents a world which calls for historical and cultural repositioning; it tries to deny what GIROUX, quoted by KESSELER (2000: 75) calls «comfortable sense of place and history». To achieve this cultural meaning of the myth, the author moves through associations with JUDEO Christian tradition referring to the imagery and language of EXODUS. In this history of MOSES, Ngugi associates the history of Kenya with that of Israel in Egypt, and for which Moses was sent to liberate the people of God from Pharaoh. More than that, he makes associations with the protagonist/antagonist pairs like ESTHER and HAMAN, CHRIST and JUDAS. These characters viewed in Kenya context respectively symbolize MUMBI and GIKONYO, on the one hand, KIHKA and MUGO on the other. All this considered, we may assume that this novel ties to «examine the meaning of individual and collective commitment to cultural and political revolution». (KESSELER, *op ct.*: 82). That is why Ngugi's renovation of cultural history, in this narrative, involves a story related to characters of important political figures like: JOMO KENYATTA. This summary may provide the reader with an idea about the cultural meaning of text we have been analyzing.

PROPOSITION:

African people or African leaders must accept the self-sacrifice and decolonizing the mind for our freedom to the all forms of slavery or colonialism.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Our work was about the analysis of the myth of resurrection in Ngugi's A Grain of wheat which, according to what we have read in the site <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/a-grain-of-wheat-by...> (2010) is a classic tale of Kenya's struggle for independence as seen through the lives of people in THABAI, a small KIKUYU Town. It is a replete with political, religious and social observation alongside its crystallization of mid Twentieth country history.

However, the final message of A Grain of wheat is not of unmitigated suffering and frustration, but of challenge and hope. The epigraph to the whole book from Corinthians that which «thou so west is not quickened, except it die...» is reinforced by the quotation from HOLY JOHN which prefaces the last part of the novel: «except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit» (p.229/175). The death of KIHKA and the agony of Mau Mau have not been sterile, though the true rebirth, resurrection is still awaited. In the first instance, perhaps, the Biblical quotation following that from HOLY JOHN is ironic. The new earth of Uhuru is a vast confidence trick played by the power elite upon the peasants and works of Kenya. But this is only in the short view. Ngugi looks beyond without irony to the real Uhuru, resurrection when the revolution will become a reality. The paramount needs in bringing this about are solidarity and the strength that grows out of solidarity.

We have tried to analyze this work by interpreting the myth of resurrection used in the novel, hoping that our reader will understand the use of Biblical myths to depict the new Kenya or resurrection, which means Uhuru or independence. It is through the lives of the characters the novel traces back the history of the country.

REFERENCES

- BONAZZA.B. and ROY.E. (1971) Studies in Fiction; Second ed. Harper
- BRANHAM.W.M. (1962). Spoken works is original seed. Jeffersonville Indian, USA.
- KESSLER.K. (2000). Rewriting History in Fiction Elements of Post modernism in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Later Novels, Pennsylvania. USA.
- KIMMEY. J.L. (1976) Experience and expression. Scotland. Foreman
- NGUGI.J. (1965). A Grain of Wheat. London: Heinemann Educational Book.
- OKENIMKPE. M. and COOK.D. (1983). Ngugi wa Thiong'o an Exploration of his writings. London: Foreman.
- VUUREN.M. (2000). Kihika's Bible: The Recontextualisation of the Gospel in Ngugi's A Grain of wheat. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- <http://www.answers.com/topic/symbolism> (2009)
- <http://www.c.s.bedfordstmartin.com/vistualit/fiction/elements.asp.htm>(2010)
- <http://www.org...:themeI> (2009)
- <http://www.geouties.com/pairis/arc/2009>
- <http://www.answers.com/9/themes> (2007)
- www.tamu.ed (2012)
- <http://www.buzzle.com> articles /a-grain-of-wheat by (2010)