THE AESTHETICS OF SEMANTIC INCONGRUITIES AND LEXICAL DEVIATIONS IN NGUGI WA THIONG’O’S MUKOGI WA KAGOGO.

WAIGANJO CHARLES THIONG’O

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university

Signature ___________________________ Date____________________

Waiganjo C. Thion’o

Department of Literature

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors.

Supervisors:

Signature ___________________________ Date____________________

Dr. John Mugubi

Department of Literature

Kenyatta University

Signature ___________________________ Date____________________

Dr. Wallace Mbugua

Department of Literature

Kenyatta University
DEDICATION

To my daughters, Maureen Nyambura, Doreen Lucy, son, Collins Waiganjo, and all marginalized people everywhere, for whom I have reasons to struggle.
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OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

African literature: Literature written in Indigenous African languages with form and content loaded with African cultural setting. In this study it assumes literature should be accessible to indigenous African masses in terms of linguistics and cultural appeal.

Semantic incongruities: It is a term that denotes the use of features in which words are collocated in odd ways to denote certain complex meaning. In this study, this term will be used synonymously with the term semantic absurdity.

Lexical deviation: This refers to the act of going against the norms of language in regard to usage of words or lexicons in a language. Within this category we shall look at neologism, archaism, taboo words, big and foreign words.

Subversion: This is acting against the rules, changing the expected order or style. It is challenging the established norms.

Social vision: This comprises a literary writer’s set ideas of how life should be. Vision is normally positively inclined referring to a writer’s wish we reap from the aesthetics or moral ideal of the work of art. A writer’s vision can be deduced from the issues he explores and how he explores them.
ABSTRACT

The study focused on aesthetics of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s text Múrogi wa Kagogo. The study is premised on the knowledge that style is a vital element especially for the purpose of delivering the message of a literary writer. The study therefore sought to investigate the rationale behind Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s employment of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in his text Múrogi wa Kagogo. In an environment where scholars seem to dwell on texts written in foreign languages, few critical works have been done to texts written in vernacular. We endeavoured to critique the text Múrogi wa Kagogo as a way of opening up the field for more studies. The study was motivated by the wide gap we saw in the African literary scene where researchers shun vernacular texts, and mostly focus on texts written in foreign languages. Our first objective was to identify and analyze examples of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in the text. Secondly, we sought to establish the significance of using those elements as communicative tools. Finally, we attempted to establish the writer’s social vision. The study employed stylistics and post-colonial theory. Stylistics guided us by not only identifying semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in Múrogi wa Kagogo, but also displaying the end to which they have been applied. Post-colonial theory helped to analyze what Tyson refers to “the ideology forces that on one hand, pressed the colonized to internalize the colonisers’ values and, on the other hand, promoted the resistance of colonized peoples against their oppressors”. (Tyson 365). Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o is one of those who prefer their pre-colonial culture to that of colonialist’s system. He opted to write in his own mother tongue rather than the colonizer’s language. Postcolonial theory therefore guided the study by establishing how the author resists the colonialist system through negative portrayals of the colonized. We are able to establish the unfavorable effects of colonialism on the colonized as depicted by the writer. The study adopted a qualitative approach. It utilized library research which involved textual analysis of primary text and use of secondary data. Purposive sampling was used to select the text Múrogi wa Kagogo which was seen to be rich in the above named aspects for analysis. The findings of the study show that Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has used both semantic incongruities and lexical deviations as powerful tools to both embellish his work and project his social vision. Criticism therefore must continue with its role of mediating between the reader and the writer by helping readers appreciate the manipulation of language as a means of enhancing social vision.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION.

1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background to the study and presents the statement of the problem. The section also contains the objectives, questions and the assumptions that guided the research. We also justify the study as well as its scope and limitation. The chapter also covers the literature review and theoretical framework as well as research methodology.

1.01 Background to the Study

Literary writers choose to use language with great care for literary communication. The choice of language and use, to which it is applied, is central to peoples’ definitions in relation to the entire universe. Ngũgĩ for instance, advances the idea that African writers should write in their mother tongues. This is well elaborated in his influential texts: Writers in Politics, Decolonizing the mind, and Re-membering Africa. Consequently, he uses Gĩkũyũ language, his mother tongue, in Mũrogi wa Kagogo as a way of demonstrating his commitment in using the mother tongue as a medium of writing.

Ngũgĩ’s return to Gĩkũyũ language represented a commitment to change of language use. As Raymond (1989) reminds us the way we see the world, our values, tastes, beliefs, and the language in which we express ourselves represents our deepest alignments to a certain social environment. For Raymond (1989:86), to be committed
is precisely to be aware of “our own real alignments”, which we might deliberately
decide to confirm or to alter.

Raymond (1989: 87) contends with respect to the writer, that this signifies “a very
high kind of freedom”: “This is when you are free to choose, or to choose to try to
alter, that which is really pressuring you, in your whole social formation, in your
understanding of the possibilities of writing”.

Ngũgĩ’s line as a writer ought to be understood, I believe, in the light of such a notion
of commitment, which, in his case, amounts to a relentless effort to question and alter
his affiliations with the metropolitan culture and to promote a more inclusive politics
of language on the African continent.

Critics have usually agreed that Ngũgĩ’s early fictional works, such as Weep Not
Child, The River Between, and A Grain of Wheat are saturated with images,
descriptions, and characters that echo a literary tradition which is essentially Western
in character whereas in his later works, such as Cuitaani Mutharaba-ini and Matigari
ma Njirũũngi, Ngũgĩ reassesses that paradigm in order to incorporate elements and a
narrative structure closer to Gĩkũyu oral traditions. For example, Christine Lofin in
Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's Visions of Africa, argues that the description of landscape in
Ngũgĩ’s novels has undergone considerable changes from his early works to the more
recent ones. From such changes, it is possible to "trace a development of his fiction
from a limited acceptance of Western techniques of description to a rejection of these
techniques as implying a view of nature that Ngũgĩ no longer shares". Also, Mazrui
and Lupenga (1995) assert that the use of orality in Ngũgĩ’s early works assumed a
"non-dynamic" character as they were aimed at a Western audience. This "museum-
type" of orality was changed into a creative and dynamic aspect of his later works once he managed to redefine his public and began to write for a Gĩkũyũ audience.

Gikandi (1967) however contends that Ngũgĩ’s proposal for a rethinking of the language problem in Africa should be read as a form of nativism. For the critic, Ngũgĩ’s return to Gĩkũyũ, and "his nativist or idealist notion of language was yoked to a Marxist or materialist theory of language that Ngũgĩ had been promoting for over ten years", that is, Ngũgĩ’s perception of language as an instrument of social transformation disregarded the class divisions inherent to society, so that language could be taken as a vehicle of unification of unequal social strata.

In summary, Ngũgĩ’s path has often been understood as a successful effort to improve the people's level of education, to recuperate the peasants’ oral history, and to produce a literature that would be closer to the people's reality and to which they would have access. It has been taken, in other words, as an attempt to empower the people. However Ngũgĩ has failed to consider that there is cropping up, in African nations, an educated class of people but who can reasonably be called workers and peasants owing to the extraordinary heights of unemployment that have reduced them to manual and unskilled professions. Without belaboring the language debate and the African Writer, this study aimed at investigating the effects of semantic absurdities and lexical deviations employed in Ngũgĩ’s Mũrogi wa Kagogo, showing how and why he has employed them.
1.02 Statement of the Problem

Literary works in indigenous languages remain largely unexplored field in Africa. This is because most of literary studies have concentrated on works written in foreign languages. Moreover, literary studies have dwelt more on themes and characterization than style, yet style is fundamental to the understanding of the message of a work of art. The researcher felt that this is a gap that needed to be filled. We sought to study Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s text because there has not been any comprehensive study of his Gĩkũyũ works in relation to semantic incongruities and lexical deviations.

Since a literary writer is free to choose from a vast repertoire of linguistic resources at his /her disposal, this study endeavoured to study the rationale behind Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s choice of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations as his communicative tools to highlight social issues. In so doing, we hoped to establish their significance in unearthing the writer’s social vision.

1.03 Objectives of the Study

The current study is based on the following objectives to:

1. Examine how Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has used semantic incongruities in *Mūrogi wa Kagogo*.

2. Examine how Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has used lexical deviations in *Mūrogi wa Kagogo*.

3. Evaluate the use of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in projecting his social vision.
1.04 Research Questions

1. How has Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o employed semantic incongruities in the text *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*?

2. How has Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o employed lexical deviations in the text *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*?

3. How do semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s *Mũrogi wa Kagogo* project his social vision?

1.05 Research Assumptions

1. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has employed semantic incongruities in his work *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*.

2. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has employed lexical deviations in his work *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*.

3. Semantic incongruities and lexical deviations are useful tools in projecting writer’s social vision.

1.06 Justification of the study

The selection of the writer is subsequent to the presumption that he may be the leading or one of the leading writers in terms of literary texts in Gĩkũyũ as the language of dispensation. We therefore presuppose unique advantages for the African writer in an African Indigenous language.
Secondly, inspite of all the concern to come up with the appropriate language for African literature, there has not been commensurable critical effort to analyzing the works written in indigenous languages. The immediate witness to this neglect is the small number of critique written about Gĩkũyũ novels.

Thirdly, despite the critical attention that Ngũgĩ’s works, especially those written in English, have received, there is little scholarly acclaim to works written in his native Gĩkũyũ language. Works written in Gĩkũyũ language are: *Ngahika Ndeenda*, *Maitũ Njugũra*, *Caaitani Mũtharabainĩ*, *Matigari ma Njirũăngi* and *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*. These works have been ignored, almost condemned to the junkyard of irrelevancies. This has been a limitation on the part of critics since writers have their own motives in choosing the language of dispensation. It is also worth noting that Ngũgĩ’s Gĩkũyũ works have not received adequate critical analysis, more specifically, his use of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*. As such, our study sought to bridge this gap.

Lastly, *Mũrogi wa Kagogo* is wider in scope than Ngũgĩ's previous Gĩkũyũ text. This gave the study a room for a wide area of stylistics analysis of semantic absurdities and lexical deviations than his other Gĩkũyũ novels, *Matigari ma Njirũăngi* and *Caaitani Mũtharabainĩ*. More also, the novel links the end of twentieth Century to the beginning of the twenty first century. This necessitated capturing recent ideologies in the gendering of the society, the call for democracy and unemployment in relation to political corruption. Thus, an ideal choice for stylistic analysis that seeks to investigate the aesthetics of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations.
Scort (2004) has demonstrated that themes such as colonialism and anti-colonialism, the analysis and critique of missionary activity, the civilizing mission, and negritude, the challenge to Islam, anti-apartheid activism and the questioning of occidental superiority have now been partially displaced by:

“Concern for the environment immigration, democratization, civil conflict, genocide, the National Conference, child soldiers, the disintegration of the nation state, AIDS, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and globalization – sociopolitical factors reconfigured in the imaginative landscapes of writers whose works exhibit a profound engagement with the most demanding ethical issues of our time.” (230)

The above is echoed by Milton Style in African Literature: Essays on Literary stylistics and Narrative Styles (2012) when he says “a good book is the precious life – blood of a master’s spirits.” But it is more than that. “It is the result of the circumstances of the age playing upon a mentality and the circumstances of people who are central to it”. Mũrogi wa Kagogo demonstrates all the above.

1.07 Scope and Limitation

It is evident that Ngũgĩ has written many works in Gĩkũyũ. Even though these works have been translated into many world languages, this study has limited itself to the author’s Gĩkũyũ fiction Mũrogi wa Kagogo which has served as the representational sample owing to the study’s choice of topic.
The study focused on how Ngũgĩ engages semantic incongruities and lexical deviations. Through the use of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in the text, it is easy to ascertain the predicament befalling the society and suggest the way forward. The study analyzed the use of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in Mũrogi wa Kagogo and investigated how the two aspects contribute to the effective communication of intended message(s).

Our study concentrated on the three volumes of Mũrogi wa Kagogo for us to have a comprehensive analysis. We conducted an extensive reading of Ngũgĩ’s works and critical commentaries on the text. The researcher adopted stylistics and postcolonial as the theoretical framework.

1.08 Literature Review

1.08.1 Introduction

The literature review was premised on three issues: one, question surrounding Ngũgĩ’s resolution to embrace Gĩkũyũ language as his means of communication; two, critical contributions to the language debate and Ngũgĩ's stand point. Lastly, critical examination of books and articles that are closely related to this study.

1.08.2 The question of Language in African Literature

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has established himself as a literary icon in the continent. He has attracted critical attention from scholars both locally and internationally. This study embarks on his usage of style especially in a bid to demonstrate how he has achieved his social vision. Considering the scope and limitations of this study, this review focuses on studies on language and style especially with regard to writing in Gĩkũyũ.
A study that deals with language in Ngũgĩ’s vernacular texts cannot avoid responding to some issues raised in the language debate concerning African literature. The second Stockholm conference for African writers held in 1986 brought together a number of African writers who deliberated on the question, among others, of language in African literature. There appeared a great difference in their emphasis, as some preferred the use of African languages while others preferred European languages.

Margulis and Nowekoski (1996) are among many scholars who have addressed themselves to the language dilemma in post-colonial societies. They have echoed the observation that the choice of African language vis-à-vis Western languages made them raise several questions, which are appropriate to this study:

> The issue of language raises several polemical questions for consideration in the study of literary texts: Does the author choose to work in a local language or a major European one? Finally, what does the use of language imply about an implicit theory of resistance? (3)

Ashcroft, Griffins and Tiffin (1980) have also addressed themselves to language in post-colonial societies. In their book *The Empire Writes Back*, the writers provide a theoretical paradigm for looking at the textual strategies in the use of language in post-colonial writing. The three concur with Ngũgĩ’s view that colonialists have imposed European languages on their subject as part of imperialism:

> One of the main features of imperial oppression is control over language. Language becomes the medium through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetrated and the medium through which conception of ‘truth, order and reality’ become established. Such
power is rejected in the emergence of an effective postcolonial voice (7).

Ngũgĩ in an article, “On writing in Gikuyu” categorically states that "An African writer should write in a language that will allow him to communicate effectively with peasants and workers in Africa, in other words, he should write in an African language" (151).

In an interview with Research in African Literatures, Ngũgĩ explains that when he used English, he was targeting English speaking audience but has decided to change the audience to Gĩkũyũ speakers who are conversant with the language. To enhance his ideas of the appropriate language, Ngũgĩ has written several books and essays: Writers in Politics (1981), Decolonizing the Mind (1986), Moving the Centre (1993) and Re-membering Africa (2009).

In his latest essay Re-membering Africa (2009) the writer terms language as a communication system and a carrier of culture by virtue of being simultaneously the means and carrier of memory. Ngũgĩ goes further to assert that indeed, to starve or kill a language is to starve and kill a people's memory bank and that it is also equally true that to impose a language is to impose the weight of experience it carries and its conception of self and otherness and indeed the weight of its memory, which includes religion and education.

He concludes that "Re-membering Africa is the only way of ensuring Africa's own full rebirth from the dark ages into which it was plunged by the European renaissance, Enlightenment, and Modernity" (67). His call is for the usage of African languages by writers as tools to decolonize the human mind and perpetuate the African renaissance.
Soyinka and Ngũgĩ in particular differed on the choice of language where the latter was for African languages’ advancement.

As mentioned in his books and essays: *Decolonizing the Mind*, *Moving the Center*, *Writers in Politics* and *Re-membering Africa*, Ngũgĩ portrays languages as the real players in world history and persisting through the ages, visibly and objectively alleged by their speakers as symbols of identity. In trying to arrive at a distinctly African culture, Ngũgĩ (1989) states:

> Only by a return to the roots of our being in the languages and cultures and heroic histories of the Kenyan people can we rise up to the challenge of helping in the creation of a Kenyan patriotic national literature and culture that will be the envy of many foreigners and the pride of Kenyans. *Titi la mama litamu lingawa la mbwa, lingine haliishi tamu* (65).

For Ngũgĩ, a language determines the culture and life of a community. He states that we cannot develop our literatures and cultures through borrowed tongues and imitations (64).

African writers, such as Achebe, Mphalele and Okara who take Africanization of English as the best option, worry Ngũgĩ. Achebe (1988) asserts that “…English language will be able to carry the weight of African experience” (30) is taken by Ngũgĩ as a self-defeatist position that only contributes to the impoverishing of African languages. On the same note, Ngũgĩ goes further to mock Okara’s in *Okara’s Interview* admission:
In order to capture the vivid images of African speech, I had to eschew the habit of expressing my thought first in English. It was difficult at first, but I had to learn. I had to study each expression to bring out the nearest meaning in English. (44).

Okara (1963) advances the view that it is imperative for African writers to utilize African ideas, philosophy, folklore and imagery to the fullest extent possible. However, writing in English means only the elite will easily engage and identify with the work.

In his response to Okara’s interview, Ngũgĩ (19860 uses a rhetorical question to interrogate why a fellow African would be fixated to promoting foreign languages by use of his native tongue. He asks, “Why, we may ask, should an African writer, or any writer become so obsessed by taking from his mother tongue to enrich other tongues?” (8). Through this, Ngũgĩ echoes Fanon (193) who foresaw the evolution of a writer in the formerly colonized nations from the military writer of protest literature who addresses oneself to the oppression of a people to one whom; “progressively takes on the habit of addressing his own people. It is from this moment that we speak of a national literature”. To this effect, Ngũgĩ regards peasants as the “strongest source of stamina and blood for African Literature” (59). For Ngũgĩ, there is no better way to speak directly to his own people than by writing in the Gĩkũyũ language. A national literature therefore entails writing in a language that the workers and peasants understand.
Achebe (1988) is for the view and defense of the appropriation of European languages by African writers in their creative works. Achebe (1988:63) asserts that European languages have ultimately become the national unifying languages in the formerly colonized nations. For him, people may consider English, French and Portuguese as African:

> There has been an impassioned controversy about African literature in non-African languages. But what is non-African language? English and French certainly. What about Arabic? What about Swahili even? Is it then a question of how long the language has been present on African soil? If so, how many years should constitute effective occupation? For me, it is again a pragmatic matter. A language spoken by Africans on African soil, a language in which Africans write justifies itself. (63).

Achebe strongly believes that the choice of a language of expression by African writers is driven by their own African experiences and a call for a commitment to an African destiny; thus making their literature “African” in spite of Western languages in which they write. In this presupposition, he differs with Ngũgĩ on the appropriate language of African literature where Achebe regards all the languages in the world as appropriate so long as they are comprehensible on African soil. He (Achebe), however, fails to shed light on less privileged Africans who have not received the Western languages.

It is evident that the question of going back to African languages still remains. Ashcroft, Griffins and Tiffin (1989) evoke Ngũgĩ when they argue that:
The crucial function of language as a medium of power demands that the post-colonial writing defines itself by seizing the language of the Centre and replacing it in a discourse fully adapted to the colonized place...the abrogation...the appropriation and reconstruction of the language of the Centre (38).

It is clear that the above mentioned three post-colonial writers refute categories concerning imperial culture, aesthetic and illusory standard and the subsequent considering language as the carrier of one’s own cultural experience is lacking. This is because they failed to provide models to deal with absolute rejection of imperial languages and consequent adoption of African languages as media of expression in writing, especially in the case of Ngũgĩ. We however need to borrow their idea on the metonymic as opposed to the metaphoric functions of language. While elaborating their point on Metaphor/Metonymy, they borrow Homi Bhabha’s position on the importance of the metaphor/metonymy distinction in post-colonial texts. They observe that:

His point is that the perception of the figures of the text as metaphors imposes a Universalist reading because metaphor makes no concessions to the cultural specificity of texts. For Bhabha, it is preferable to read the tropes of the texts as metonymy, which symptomatizes the text, reading through its features the social, cultural and political forces which traverse it (52).

In his article “Ethics, Ideology and The Critic: Criticism and Ideology”, Soyinka (1988) has dwelt much on European languages. He observes that many spheres of a
people’s lives use languages, such as in the judiciary, in commerce and even in road signs. In an indirect reference to Ngũgĩ, he expresses his aversion to the “coming homeness of certain writers” (35). He notes that the phenomenon of languages dominating others exists not only in Africa but also in other continents:

I for one, anyway, refuse to accept the artificial ‘angst’, which either Africans themselves or outsiders attempt to impose on users of a foreign language. An element of a foreign language, an element of irrationality in it, the refusal to accept the socio-political reality of which the affected users are part, an attempt to make the stand outside their own national structures(35).

It is evident that Soyinka dismisses the call to adopt African languages as the medium of communication. He argues that the many African languages will bring discrepancies in politics and divisions along the dialect lines among various societies.

Soyinka, however, does not reflect on the question of African tongues being the custodians of indigenous culture and that writing in Western ones may amount to tacit glorification of Western culture. Omotosho (1988) supports Soyinka in his paper, ‘The Language of our dreams or the dreams of our Language’ where he criticizes Ngũgĩ and other scholars by stating that: “Some critics…support Ngũgĩ’s advocacy of the use of indigenous languages without making the breakthrough in writing in them.”

Ngũgĩ while championing for African languages in African literature, has received support from critics such Wali (1963), a Nigerian critic who dismissed African writers writing in Western languages. In doing so he believed, “they would be pursuing a dead end, which can only lead to sterility and frustration”. He goes further to assert:
“The development of a truly African sensibility in African literature could only be achieved through writing in African languages.” Still, the question would be; what is the appropriate language for African literature? Ngũgĩ (1981:59) hails Wali’s assertion especially with regard to “peasant/worker audiences as the strongest source of stamina and blood of African literature. Ngũgĩ (1981) therefore sees harmony of language choice with the audience as fundamental to the creation of national literature.

Kamoche in a Sunday Nation article: “Can Ngugi Ape and Hope to promote Vernacular?” raises two questions: One: Are African vernacular languages sufficiently equipped to deal with the challenges of our times? And two: Are vernacular writers like Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o really nurturing or eroding African languages? Kamoche refutes that there are many words Ngũgĩ has used in vernacular which are derived from English in Mũrogi wa Kagogo, right from the first page where Ngũgĩ makes his dedication. He highlights such words as 'humwaka' [homework], ‘Bamiri’ [family], 'Njanuari' [January] and miriniamu [millennium]. Kamoche further argues that it gets strange Ngũgĩ talks of 'riunioni ya bamiri' [family reunion], 'bathi thibeco' [special pass], and so forth. Kamoche concludes that one does not have to be a Gĩkũyũ speaker to recognize that this is not Gĩkũyũ. It is Pidgin. Apart from identifying the borrowed words however, Kamoche did not elaborate the reason why the writer has done so. Our study is founded by Kamoche’s questions whether vernacular languages, specifically Gĩkũyũ, are really well equipped to handle the world of science, technology and all forms of modernity and whether Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o is really nurturing or eroding African languages.
Muhia in his PhD thesis: “Towards Indigenous Poetics: Orality and Stylistic Nuances in Ngũgĩ wa Thion’o Murogi wa Kagogo studied realistic representation for the world of fairly tale and day dream. He argues how magic and fantasy are employed in Mũrogi wa Kagogo as a means of resisting tyranny, and also the way that the novel conflates the neocolonial dilemma by use of existing myths. He demonstrates for instance, Kamĩtĩ, (one of the protagonists in Mũrogi wa Kagogo) ability to leave his body and soar in the air freely.

Muhia demonstrates how Ngũgĩ embraces the art of magic realism to interrogate the despotic rule of Mwathani, the president of Aburĩria. The stature of Mwathani, the president of Aburiria rise to that of a god. Mwathani is depicted “mtukufu” which means ‘holy’ in Kiswahili. He is given god like status and elicits awe and great respect from his subject. Through the myth, Muhia demonstrates how the writer embraces the art of magical realism to interrogate Mwathani’s despotic rule.

Muhia’s findings are that the anarchic story of postcolonial leadership in Africa is at the heart of Ngũgĩ's Gĩkũyũ novel Mũrogi wa Kagogo. He further argues that in it, the writer tries to come to terms with a leadership that is characterized by greed and evil of insurmountable proportion. The mythological world, to him, attempts to go into the roots and explain the nature of this evil that has diseased Africa's leadership.

To further the functionality of myths, Muhia argues that the activities of women in Mũrogi wa Kagogo are anchored around two major myths: The Gĩkũyũ creation myth and that of Wangũ wa Makeri, the famous female leader. The leading female protagonist, Nyawĩra, is cast as an agent of change. Her sense of agency revolves
around the need to change the consciousness of fellow country women and men into fighting for amore just and fair society, both for the family and the nation.

In his conclusion, Muhia demostrated Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s application of oral traditional art forms as a way of representing reality. He noted that the Agĩkũyũ’s myths of the old have been used both as means of resisting tyranny and offering a society that is more humane and tolerant.

As mentioned earlier, Muhia has demonstrated in details how myths and fantasy are manifested in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o Mũrogi wa Kagogo. His study fell short of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations which are of our concern in this study.

Kuria in his article “Speaking in tongue”: “Gift of workers and peasants through Mũrogi wa Kagogo” argues that Mũrogi wa Kagogo contains within it seeds of destruction of the very ideological values that Ngũgĩ seeks to endorse in addressing the peasants and workers. The article attempted to study the extent Ngũgĩ manages to reach his targeted audience of workers and peasants in his novel Mũrogi wa Kagogo. His finding was that Ngũgĩ has borrowed so heavily from English even when there are clear options from the Gĩkũyũ language. To Kuria, Ngũgĩ ought to have borrowed from Kiswahili which is closer to Gĩkũyũ than English.

His article is intelligible in the sense that it sheds light on the kind of language Ngũgĩ has adopted. His study however failed to account for the reason(s) Ngũgĩ has adopted the style. The article was also limited in looking into semantic incongruities lexical deviations in relation to the social vision projected.
Our study is therefore founded on the ground that Ngũgĩ has a reason for employing semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in his Gĩkũyũ text *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*. We found Macharia’s relevant to study. In his comparative analyses of *Caaitani Mūtharabainĩ* and *Devil on the Cross*, Mwangi demonstrates how Ngũgĩ has manipulated Gĩkũyũ language to generate aesthetic effects. In his study, he specifically focuses on lexical choices, the use of figurative language and the appropriation of the oral tradition as communication tools. He concludes that *Caaitani Mūtharabainĩ* has intrinsic literary aesthetic merits. Emerging from his study is a recommendation that Ngũgĩ’s other Gĩkũyũ works need to be investigated to find out how the writer has applied language to achieve his intended message. Our study set out to provide a critical analysis of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*.

The above review formed a background from which our study emanated. It is evident that the language debate follows in the territory of literary polemics, which is of use to an appreciation of a text as an aesthetic object. The debate bears the fact that literary texts are primarily works of art and cultural products in whose creation writers strive to exploit the aesthetic potential of the material at hand to the maximum.

It is worth noting that most studies have ignored the issues of lexis and semantics in Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo’s works. Our study was therefore unable to interrogate the same due to inavailability of of such studies.

1.09 **Theoretical Framework**

The study has used both stylistics and postcolonial theory. In order to meet the objectives (i) and (ii) of this study, there is need to adopt an approach that relates style
to meaning. This leads to embracing of the stylistics approach. There is also the need to adopt postcolonial theory which helped to place the writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o within postcolonial historical Kenya.

Proponents of stylistics articulate the importance of language in the exegesis of literary works. The main proponents, who include such scholars as Roman Jacobson of the Russian Formalist school of 1920s’, the Prague Structuralist of the 1930s’, Mukarovsky, Chapman, Halliday among others involve stylistics in describing how a particular piece of writing functions and discussing what words are used and why.

This study adopted stylistics as a mode of analysis. This is due to its relevance as the main descriptive theory of literary text. Wellek and Warren (1973) postulate that “stylistics conceived in a wide sense, investigates all devices which aim at some specific expressive end” (178). Stylistics enabled to describe the identified expressive devices used in the text in terms of their aesthetic function and meaning. Leech and Short (1981) observe that a study of style is rarely undertaken for its own sake but that critics do so because they want to explain something; the relationship between language and artistic function (13). Indangasi (1988:8) echoes the same by stating that “the critic therefore interrogates how a writer has idiosyncratically manipulated language to achieve aesthetic effects in a literary text.” The two theorists point out that “Style is the way in which language is employed in particular contexts by a particular person, for a particular purpose” (34). This implies that a writer’s linguistic idiosyncrasies, the social context of language use and the goal to be attained influence style.
Ngara (1982) sums up the argument of many proponents of the stylistics by emphasizing that stylistics criticism is not merely concerned with the aesthetic and formal aspects of a work of art as it does not disregard the political, social and moral issues raised in contemporary literature. What this leads to is recognition of the fact that sociological and aesthetic issues are of equal importance in literary criticism. On his part, Ngara (1982:35) argues that language use in creative works of art is important since its usage determines all other aspects of a story. This conforms to Leech and Short (1981) who, contend that style is the way in which a particular person employs language. This illustration of style assisted us in identifying forms of semantic absurdities and lexical deviations Ngũgĩ has employed in his work. Toolan (1998) approach to stylistics informed this study. His advancement is significant in the sense that it incorporates the idea of earlier critics such as Welleck and Warren (1942), Leech and Short (1981) as well as Ngara (1982). The concept is we looked at stylistics in literature as means with which the understanding of a text is enhanced.

Mugubi (2005) argues that the definition of style ought to incorporate all core components, which are: language, period, genre and intentions of the writer. Consequently, he defines literary style as:

the personal and creative fashioning of the resources of language and extra lingual aspects which a writer’s/artist’s chosen dialect/language, period, genre and his/her purpose within the genre offers him or her (6).
In this study, stylistics enabled the researcher to describe the semantic incongruities and lexical deviations as employed in the text *Mũrogi wa Kagogo* in terms of their aesthetic function and meaning.

Postcolonial theory is used in an attempt to place the writer within a particular historical setting. This study borrows Scort (2004) idea that “in order to ascertain new writings and themes, one must take into consideration the historical context, but also acknowledge the significant decentralization that has occurred to the idea of Africa itself as a topographic territorial entity.” (230).

Said, Bhabha, and Spivak are important exponents of postcolonial criticism. We find Bhaba’s concept on postcolonial criticism relevant in this study. Bhaba (1994) focuses on the politics, emotions, and values that exist in the space between the colonizer and the colonized. In other words, cultures are more than 'us' and 'other'; they are the sum of their histories. Bhabha likes to use the word 'hybrid', meaning composed of mixed elements, to describe post-colonial people with their experiences.

Bhabha (1994:368) focused on the collective effects of colonization on peoples and cultures; a concept he refers to as ‘unhomeliness.’ This is “ a feeling of being caught between cultures, of belonging to neither rather than to both, of finding oneself arrested in a psychological limbo that results not merely from some individual psychological disorder but from the trauma of the cultural displacement within which one lives” (368). We borrow Bhabha’s idea of analyzing world literature “not in terms of national traditions which is how it generally has been studied, but in terms of postcolonial themes that cut across the boundaries” (375). Just like the way Bhabha suggests; “world literature might be studied in terms of the different ways have been
experienced historical trauma … political mass murder, oppressive military regimes, the loss of cultural identity and the like” (375).

In many works of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, we meet characters who are struggling with their identities in the wake of colonisation or the establishment of colonies in nations. For example, the British had a colonial presence in Africa in general and Kenya specifically, Kenya gained its independence in 1963. As we can imagine, the people of Kenya as well as the characters in Kenyan novels deal with the economic, political, and emotional effects that the British brought and left behind. This is true for Mũrogi wa Kagogo that comes out of a colonized nation. In many cases, the literature in that kind of a text stemming from these events is both emotional and political.

The post-colonial theory helps us to enter the text Mũrogi wa Kagogo through a specific critical lens. That critical lens asks the reader to analyze and explain the effects that colonization and imperialism, or the extension of power into nations, have on people and the nations.

As mentioned above, postcolonialism helped subject Mũrogi wa Kagogo through the postcolonial lens. As a researcher, I looked for the effects of colonialism and how they are addressed through the application of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations.

1.10 Research Methodology

1.10.1 Research design

We applied qualitative research design, since it entirely relied on descriptions for data analysis and presentation. As Denzin and Yvonne (2003:5) state, the importance of
qualitative methodology has been to enable researcher employ a wide range of interconnected interpretative practices in order to get a better understanding of the subject matter. The study was library based. It involved textual study in which data presented for analysis was collected from primary text and other secondary sources to evaluate and scrutinize literature that is closely associated with this study.

1.10.2 Population and sampling

Purposive sampling was used in the choice of the primary text for this study. This is appropriate because as Kombo and Tromp (2006:82) point out that, purposive sampling helps in “selecting information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to central issue of the study” Having published three Gĩkũyũ novels, our study preferred Mũrogi wa Kagogo to the other two due to its voluminous nature that gives a room for a wider scope of study and the writer’s conscious use of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations.

1.10.3 Primary data

This was obtained from reading of primary text mentioned in 1.10.2. The study was guided by the objectives of the study. The three volumes of the Mũrogi wa Kagogo are read concurrently and dominant forms of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations identified critically analysed for the writer’s social vision.

1.10.4 Secondary data

Library research was utilized in gathering secondary data. This involved readings obtained from secondary materials from libraries, journals, critical works and the internet. Critical works that touch aesthetics in Africa literature especially in relation
to the use of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations are consulted. More also, what has so far been written about aesthetics and works of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o aided the researcher to put across a convincing arguments.

1.10.5 Data analysis

Both primary and secondary data were used simultaneously in this study. The selected text was subjected to close reading. The data was presented in form of descriptions analysis and use of literary arguments. We identified semantic incongruities and lexical deviations and subsequently subjected them to analyses to determine the writer’s social vision. The data was presented in form of descriptions, analysis and use of literary arguments. This involved giving a clarification of the interpretation of the findings from the selected text, supported by secondary sources.

1.11 Organization of the study

This thesis has five chapters. Chapter one consists of the background of the study, the statement of the problem, justification of the study, research objectives, assumptions, scope and limitations, literature review and theoretical framework as well as research methodology.

In chapter two, the study tackles the first objective of the study where semantic incongruities are identified and subjected to critical analysis. In chapter three, the second objective of the study was examined where lexical deviations are identified and analysed. The writer’s social vision as projected by semantic incongruities and lexical deviations is examined in chapter four. Chapter five is summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.
CHAPTER TWO

AESTHETICS OF SEMANTIC INCONGRUITIES IN *MUROGI WA KAGOGO*

2.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by describing the term semantic incongruities, identifying the various forms and subsequently, exploring how they have been applied in *Mũrogi wa Kagogo* to highlight the various social criticisms of the writer. This study considers semantic incongruities as having the same meaning as semantic absurdities. Mugubi in *Stylistics and Literary techniques* defines semantically incongruent statements or expressions as either contradictory or ambiguous. At the surface, they are illogical, dull-sounding and nonsensical, but at a deeper level, such expressions are loaded with huge semantic implication. The various forms of semantic incongruities our study tackles in this chapter are: hyperbole/exaggeration, ambiguity, paradox/irony, juxtaposition and metonymy. Each item is covered separately, in terms of definitions, how and why the author has applied it, as a sub chapter with significant illustration from the text under study.

2.2 Exaggeration /Hyperbole as Subversion

Chapman (1973:78) defines hyperbole as “a conscious overstatement which foregrounds the theme by paradigmatic choices that would normally seem excessive in the context.” Mugubi (2005:176) refers to hyperbole “as a statement that entails extravagant exaggeration.” For example; an expression like “I am so tired I could sleep for a whole year” is hyperbolic. There is no way someone can sleep for a whole year. The speaker of the statement uses exaggeration to give us a picture of how tired
he is. It is worth noting that sometimes, metaphors and similes are used to bring out the hyperbole effectively. For example, in the expression ‘the skin on her face was as thin and drawn as the skin of an onion’ gives exaggeration by use of the simile ‘as thin and drawn as…’ that gives a vivid picture of the face.

In our analysis of how Ngũgĩ uses hyperbole in his text Mũrogi wa Kagogo, we focus on how it is realized at different stages. The fictional Republic of Aburĩria registered in this extensive text is an exaggeration of disgusting African dictatorship. The writer has applied hyperbole to reveal dictatorial government. This is where absolute power is exercised by an individual. Ngũgĩ portrays the nation of Aburĩria being ruled by one ruler called Mwathani [Ruler] for a long time. The Ruler is painted as someone who has a definite way of achieving his goal. He arbitrarily creates his own year calendar without any consultation:

*Karenda thĩinĩ wa Aburĩria yarĩ rungu rwa Mwathani na mĩeri kuma Januari nginya Ndithemba yarũmanagĩrĩra kũringana na wendi na itua rĩa Mwathani. Aarĩ na hinya wa kũgarũra mweri o wothe ũtuĩke mweri ũrĩa ũngĩ (vol.1.13)* [The yearly calendar in Aburĩria was under the control of the Ruler. He controlled how the months followed each other- January for instance trading places with July- he therefore had the power to declare any month to replace the other one.]

The Ruler is portrayed as having seized power in a coup de’ tat and has been in power for so long that he does not remember how long his reign has been. The writer through the above exaggeration depicts a Ruler who is capable of arresting time and postponing indefinitely the duration he remains in power.
The reaction of crosses and churches’ walls upon the arrival of the Ruler is exaggerated:

\[ Mwathani atatia magūrũ make thĩini, thingo ciothe cia gathindūrũ nĩ cianjirie kūnanina ta ici irathingithio, na ningĩ marũūri mothe ma mútharaba harĩa hothe maarĩ nĩ mambũte kwĩgũthagũtha na kwĩyonania ta mendaga kũmbũka methiĩre (vol.1.31) [as soon as the Ruler set foot inside the cathedral, the walls shook as if moved by an earth tremor. Crosses on the walls its walls, danced strangely, as if struggling to flee.] \]

The protest symbolised by the walls reveals a rejection of the Ruler in church. This emanates from the Ruler’s sins and misdeeds. Ngũgĩ’s novel offers scathing condemnation of African leaders who exploit workers and peasants, while pretending to be Christians. To him, leaders ought to show a high degree of integrity in serving their subjects. Through the protest of the crosses, therefore, Ngũgĩ highlights relenting criticisms to the rot in the leaders. He seems to suggest that God detests evil and unless the leaders are morally upright, they cannot share a dining table with him.

In Mūrogi wa Kagogo, the Ruler has a number of sycophants who would go all the way to pledge their loyalty to him. The writer portrays these sycophants as the most privileged in the society. Everything they need, as long as they are loyal to the Ruler, is within their reach. By use of hyperbole, Ngũgĩ shows a power structure where power effectively rests with a small segment of members of society distinguished by their loyalty to the ruler:
O na akorwo maarĩ na ciũria nyingĩ ngoroinĩ, othe makihũra rũhi rũnene nĩ kūigua Mwathani wao akiuga nĩ amũkĩra carenji ţyo aikirio nĩ mandairekita a Bengĩ ya Ngĩrũbu (vol.3.33) [Even though they had many unanswered questions, they all gave him a thunderous ovation. This time, he told them, he would not write a paper; he would press the case in person through an oral argument with the Global Bank].

The hyperbole rests in the clapping of hands by the loyalists. It is laughable for them to clap in a situation where, western donors have challenged their boss. This goes against democratic governance where a cabinet should hold a meeting, deliberate on issues affecting the nation and subsequently advise the ruler on the way forward.

Ngũgĩ uses hyperbole to reveal the sycophancy the ruler enjoys due to his decisions. For example, Ministers are portrayed as receiving their Ruler’s decision to appeal against the Global Bank verdict with a standing ovation. They all clap as a sign of loyalty:

*Hau akĩamba gutithia, o na ndarĩ undu ungi angẽekire tiga ţugo, tondũ Mbunge yothe yarĩ magũrũ igũrũ kũmũhũrĩra rũhi na gũtirĩ Emubii kana Wathiri wendaga kuoneka arĩ wa mbere gũtĩga kũhũra rũhi* (vol.3.261). [He paused; in fact he had no choice, because members of Parliament were giving him a standing ovation with no end in sight because no MP or minister wanted to be the first to stop.]
The posture of parliamentarians as they clap is exaggerated. Their action is laugable. Worse still, it is ridiculous that no member of parliament wanted to appear as first one in stopping the clapping. In this, Ngũgĩ reveals how followers, to some extent, compete to please their master rather than advise him or her accordingly.

To underscore their sycophancy, the writer depicts two of the Ruler’s ministers going abroad to modify their eyes and ears to make them bigger for the welfare of their Ruler. Machokali flies to England to have his eyes enlarged. The hyperbole reveals absurdity of the action:

No múthenya āmwe akūmbūka nginya Randani, Kwangeretha, kuria aingirire thibitarī nene, ti ṭindū wa kūrwara, aca, atī, kuringana na ūrīa eerire magathīti, nī getha maitho make mathinjwo manenehio matuíke Macho Kali mahote kuona thū cia Mwathani o na irī kūraya atīa (vol.1.15) [Then one day he flew to England, where under the glare of publicity he entered a major London hospital not because he was ill but because he wanted to have his eyes enlarged, to make them ferociously sharp, or as he put it in Kiswahili, Yawe Macho Kali, so that they would be able to spot the enemies of the Ruler no matter how far their hiding place.]

The enlargement of eyes is an exaggeration. A member of parliament risks his own health for the sake of his boss. However, the writer singles out this kind of sycophancy and castigates it by showing how leaders risk their lives with an aim of seeking favors from the powers that be.
The Ruler’s illness is also exaggerated. People associate his illness to his long stay in power: *andũ angĩ mokire na thiorĩ ya gatatũ atĩ ndwari ũyo yaciarirwo nĩ ũkũrũ wa wathani wake* (vol.1.15) [people came up with a theory that the ruler’s illness came up due to long stay in power.]

The writer succeeds in revealing the period a Ruler has remained in power. It is incongruous when the subject assumes the Ruler’s illness is caused due to staying for long in leadership. Through the exaggeration, Ngũgĩ hints that not only does the Ruler stay in power, but that he has also become senile. Ngũgĩ reveals the extent to which dictatorship in African states has prevailed at the expense of democracy. No one dares to challenge the ruler’s long stay in power in fear of consequences that will befall him. The writer, through hyperbole, castigates totalitarian regimes in Africa that maintain political power through an all-encompassing propaganda.

Ngũgĩ also exaggerates the way the ruler’s birthday is celebrated. He lays bare how Ruler’s sycophants decorate the ceremony. The question which can be asked here is whether the writer mocks the Ruler or ridicules the organizers who would please the Ruler to be in his good books:

*Nĩ kwari na keki ya mwanya būrūrini yarugūrwo mwathani na atĩ keki ũyo yahota kwenyorangūrwo kiriindī na yumithie keki ingũ nyingũ ta mīgate īrĩa ītano tene yenỹūrangūrwo kiriindī nĩ Njisū hūgūrūrinĩ cia Gariri na ikīhūnia andũ makiri na makiri* (vol.1.13) [there would be a special birthday cake, which the entire country had made for the Ruler and which he might make multiply
and feed the multitude the way Jesus Christ once did with just five loaves and two fishes].

The concept that a birthday cake might be multiplied as that of Biblical Jesus Christ’s is hyperbolic. The hyperbole lies on the notion that the cake would multiply and feed masses of people. Contrary to Jesus Christ’s intention, the ruler wanted to show his might and glory. He knew that the subject would come out in great numbers on hearing of something to swallow, an illustration that they starved. Through the hint of feeding the multitude, Ngũgĩ intends to bring to light starvation that surrounds most of African states. Most leaders take advantage of the situation to entice the hungry masses to attend political meetings.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o portrays the extent of unemployment as well as corruption through exaggeration of queues:

*Mũhari wa kerĩ wambũrĩrie kĩbaũĩĩ TEMPA JOBS: APPLY IN PERSON. Naguo warĩ kuma arĩa maarĩ na nguо ciĩ na maraka ngĩnya arĩa maarĩ na tũthuti twa mĩtumba. (vol.1. 160)*

[The second line started at the billboard TEMPA JOBS: APPLY IN PERSON. It was composed of people in parched-up clothes and worn-out suits in all colours of the rainbow.]

Through the queues, Ngũgĩ is able to reflect the two classes in the society, the haves and the have-nots. The writer explores the status of the unemployed. Through their attire, a reader is able to learn their financial status; people who are helpless. In a sense, it implies that African states have a history of unemployment.
The level of corruption has reached monumental heights as shown in the text in that officers accept bribes to an extent of accumulating three bags of dollars. The report that Tajirika collects three bags full of dollars is exaggerated:

‘Ngũnia ithatu cia ndora o múthenya,’ Mwathani agičokera ta atareţika. ‘Atũ ithatũ o múthenya? Uga ithatũ maita merĩ kana matatũ o múthenya.’ (vol.3.72) [three big bags of dollars a day, Repeated the Ruler slowly. That makes it at least six or nine bags of dollars every day.]

What is exaggerated here is the amount of treasure accumulated from bribery. “Three sacks full of dollars”. As mentioned earlier, the incongruity is on the extent of accumulation of many dollars through bribery. Ngũgĩ portrays how some leaders misuse their positions in government to embezzle funds.

On the same, the writer suggests a ruthless way of how to deal with the rampant bribery in public offices. Ngũgĩ, in Mũrogi wa Kagogo makes known that this money is “rotten” and should be buried in the ground to be devoured/ destroyed by ants. This is symbolic of a true leader.

Nevertheless, the fact is that, not only does Ngũgĩ rebuke any ill-gotten wealth, but he also suggests that not everyone in society is scandalous. He however contrasts this to the feelings of some who hold power: Nĩngũkũhe thigari ũgacionie mbĩrĩra ĩyo ya ngũnia ithatũ cia ndora (vol.3.82) [I will give you police officers to show that grave of three bags of dollars.] The leaders are portrayed as hungry for dollars besides power.
The number of police officers who come to capture Nyawĩra is exaggerated: One thousand soldiers surround her office: *Matũ, maitho na maniũrũ* (vol.1.262) [all the ears, eyes and noses of the Ruler were alert.] Nyawĩra succeeded in escaping the arrest. It is absurd for an unarmed secretary hunted by one thousand soldiers to escape under such circumstances. Through this, Ngũgĩ mocks the loyal security system.

Further, hyperbole is inherent in the rumour that the congregation had seen Martha and Mark in the air with their hands looking like feathers of a dove sent to bring good news of peace and happiness to both “Santalucia” and “Aburĩria;

> *Angĩ moigaga ati nĩ moonire Maritha na Mariko marera rũerainĩ Moko mao mahana ta mathagu ma ndutura igĩrĩ itũmũtũwo irehe ūhoro wa thayũ na gĩkeno Santalucia na Aburĩria guothe.* (vol.2.11) [Some claimed that Martha and Mark flew in the air with their hands like wings of two doves sent to deliver a message of peace and happiness to the whole of Santalucia and Aburĩria.]

The exaggeration lies in the couple’s action. Despite the fact that they are old, the couple is able to soar high in the air like doves. Through this hyperbole, Ngũgĩ is able to portray a kind of tranquility enjoyed by the old couple. He suggests that as one grows old, he/she should portray a high level of integrity and set a good example to the youth.

In an exaggerated manner, the writer portrays someone in cell as capable of holding the whole police station at ransom by the use of a bucket full of his excrement. Worse still, Tajirika, the culprit, demands to be handcuffed! This is self-defeatist: *Njĩkĩrai mabĩngũ mwenda. Kana Ndũkĩre nĩ getha muone ti kũũra ndũroro. Mwaga ūguo,*
Handcuff me or I do it myself to show you that I am not trying to escape, failure to which I will pour the entire contents of this bucket onto your heads.] The bucket that he refers to is full of his excrement. The incongruity lies on the notion that an arrested person can command security personnel to handcuff him. Through the hyperbole, Ngũgĩ succeeds in depicting the inefficiency of security personnel in a totalitarian government.

The description of the Ruler’s portrait hung on the wall is hyperbolic. The writer portrays Mũrogi as seeing some dirt oozing from the Ruler’s portraits: *Nĩguo onire kĩndũ ta gĩko gĩgĩthithina kanuainĩ, maithoinĩ, maniũrũinĩ na matũinĩ ma mbica īyo* (then he saw some seemingly dirty spots on the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth of the portrait.) A portrait hanged on the wall ought to illustrate authority and the best-set examples. This is not the case and hence laughable. Dirt that comes from eyes, ears and nose suggests that he is not clean. He can be associated to bad leadership and governance. Ngũgĩ portrays those leaders who misuse their power and engage in corrupt deals just to mention a few.

The writer has also highlighted the patriarchy in traditional African societies and therefore the discourse of protest against the cultural injustice on the girl child in traditional societies. His writings, in other words, draw serious attention to the brutalities, subordination and other oppressive realities and manifestations of the trammels of tradition on women in Africa. And his aim is to warn modern African men towards putting a halt to the negative experience of patriarchal brutality of women in Africa. Women are revealed fighting in solidarity to guard their rights: *ithuĩ nĩ ithuĩ nyama nj eru ya atumia a matukũ maya.* (We are a new order of justice created by today’s modern woman.) The writer, through hyperbolic
presentation, portrays his female protagonist as industrious, pursuing with seriousness of purpose and determination whatever she has set her mind on. For example, Nyawĩra opposes the construction of the building through a symbolic protest. The members of the movement scatter plastic snakes and embarrass the government whenever they can, performing obscenely, for example, as dancers at a state ceremony: *Matheca itu nĩ kırĩma kãa mai, Matheca itu nĩ mai biũ!* (vol.1.303) [The house of babel is a hill of excrement.] In this, Ngũgĩ’s principal point of view is that modern African society must change its attitude towards the woman, and women, when given the chance, can tower over men in mental and material achievements.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o utilizes hyperbole when he states that all women in the country including Nyawĩra hear the cry of Virginia “*Gũtuĩkaga mbu īrĩa yoigirwo nĩ Vinjinia nĩ yaiguirwo nĩ atumia othe bũrũri mũgĩma, nginya īgĩkinyĩra Nyawĩra*” (vol.2.175) [it was claimed that women all over Aburĩria, including Nyawĩra, could hear Vinjinia’s screaming.] A mere scream of one woman being heard all over a big town by the rest of women (and not men) is a hyperbole.

Ngũgĩ through exaggerating the screaming has a message to men who do not recognize the rights of women. The author further illustrates this through the reaction of women against their colleagues’ predicament in the hands of men. This action is further exaggerated as “*Tajirika akĩambĩrĩria gũthuria, nginya mũthandũko wa ndore ya mbere ākinyagĩre Vinjinia kĩhungoinĩ kĩa mũcũi wao thĩini wa Golden Heights*” (vol.2.191) [he started farting to an extent of it being heard by his wife at their gate in Golden heights estate.] *Gũthuria* [farting] as illustrated by the writer is after women subject Tajirika to great pain. To a patriarchal society, one would consider it incongruous. Nevertheless, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has applied the hyperbole to shed
light on alienation women have undergone. They have however realized their rights that no man should go against. They deal with whomever goes against those rights accordingly.

Machokali and Sikiokuu also offer the ruler immoderate glorification even in his absence. Their praise is as well exaggerated:

\[
Sikiokuu akiuga, tondù rĩria ũtarĩho nĩguo nĩ njiuguaga burii mũno kũina ikeniĩ iheyo ciaku. \text{(vol.3.83)}[\text{“I too, share that sentiment, your Mighty Excellency,” said Sikiokuu. “oh, you should hear me when I am not in your presence, for that’s when I feel most free to sing your gifts.”}]
\]

\[
O naanĩĩ Mwathani nĩ ngoragwo ngĩgũkumia hingo ciothe ndĩ handũ hothe, Machokali akiuga (vol.3.83), [\text{“I too, praise you all the time, whenever I am, Machokali said not to be outdone.”}]
\]

Both Sikiokuu and Machokali’s pledges above are incongruous. Instead of waiting for recognition from their superior due to hardwork, they are just loudmouthed people who cannot decide on anything concrete. Through these two characters, the author satirizes sycophants who seek favors from those who appointed them for much recognition through praises. They forget the citizens they ought to protect at the expense of their selfishness.

The capacity that Mũrogi wa Kagogo has on the treatment of diseases is exaggerated. He is portrayed as having superpowers to handle any ailments:
Gwatuĩkaga gūtiři o na mùrimũ ūrikũ atangĩhonia; atĩ mùrimũ yamuonaga ǐkaigĩriru ndira ciande; atĩ mùrimũ ūngĩehithire ha kana ha, nĩa aumbũragia, akiugaga, ta arĩ kwĩyarĩria, ūgwĩciragia wĩ mwara ni gūkĩra Mũrogi wa Kagogo! Naguo ūkoima woete moko merĩ na igũrũ (vol.2.2) [it was believed that there was no a single bodily ill he could not heal. Some, swearing by whatever was sacred to them that they had witnessed with their own eyes the drama, claimed that the Wizard of the Crow could ferret any disease out no matter where it hid all the while murmuring mockingly, “So you thought you are cunning than the Wizard of the Crow!” The illness, sensing ignominious defeat, would flee the body of the victim, it was said.]

The exaggeration above is well understood through personification of the illnesses. The image of the illness raising its hands up to surrender after seeing Mũrogi wa Kagogo is hyperbolic and so incongruous. We have read that Mũrogi wa Kagogo uses just a mirror as the medicine to treat those illnesses. This is also incongruous. The fact however is that the mirror reflects what is in the mind of the victim, the person who is ill, and is brought to the lime light through playing around with the victim’s psychology. Though incongruous, the supremacy of his character Mũrogi wa Kagogo, Ngũgĩ suggests an alternative. Mũrogi can be considered as a savior who has an ability to heal any illness, of body or of soul. He is one of those who purify the rotten society.

The comfort that is associated with state houses is also exaggerated:
Kĩongo kĩa mwathani gĩathiũrũrũkĩirio nĩ njata na riũna na mweri, kĩonekage ta arĩ gĩũthiũ kĩa Ngai arorete thĩ kuma matuinĩ. Kĩũndũ kĩu kĩrĩ giothe kĩaheyanaga mbica ya Ngai aikarĩire gũĩ gĩa gũcirithania arĩa ehia gũkũ thĩ (vol.3.228) [A staircase spiraled from the carpet and disappeared in a mist that also enveloped the head of the seated figure. The lamps that lit the stairs and the mist generated by a hidden smoking machine had turned the Ruler into a righteous deity looking down from the sky in judgement over a sinful earth.]

The notion that the stars, the moon and the sun can be found in the Ruler’s residence is exaggerated. This is like attributing the Ruler with the Heavenly King, who in the Bible is portrayed as surrounded by the same. Through the exaggeration, Ngũgĩ mocks the leaders who behave like small gods. Once in power, they shift to state houses at the expense of the taxpayer. They execute their duties while in there and those who visit are below them. Stars, sun and the moon are applied hyperbolically to suggest that the leaders are autonomous in the statehouse and have informers who update them on what is happening outside. There are judges inside there who give judgments against those who contravene the ruler’s commandments.

Through One Global Bank official who is portrayed packing some goggles as he prepares to visit Africa, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o exaggerates the attitude of western people towards Africa:

\[ \text{Aatũire etuũrũre ați Abirika gũkoragwo nduma ũtukũ na mũthenya na kwoguo nĩ eyukiũre na macicio ma kuona ndumainĩ} \ (\text{vol.3.234}) \]

[Since his childhood, the electrician had heard so much about darknes Africa]
that, despite the images of new cities of steel and concrete he had seen on television, he still assumed that the continent was dark night and day and had brought goggles with night vision.]

The exaggeration rests on the officer’s notion that Africa is a dark continent surrounded by darkness day and night. This becomes incongruous in that in packing the glasses the official depicts those who only read the status of Africa in books. He has never visited the continent but assumes how and what it is. The exaggeration castigates those who come to Africa from western countries with an attitude of ignorance towards Africa. He suggests that they ought to research on Africa and learn the true Africa with its weaknesses and strengths.

2.2.2 Ambiguity as Subversion

Ambiguity occurs when an expression conveys more than one meaning. This sub-title is delimited to showing how ambiguity is suitable in communicating messages on dictatorship, sycophancy and unemployment. Rankin (1972:74) defines ambiguity as “any feature in a text which could be interpreted more than one way.” Mugubi (2009) argues “an ambiguous statement/ word allows for more than one possible interpretation” “A unit, which a majority would take as one word, therefore has a number of meanings, by association with certain contexts.” (Ibd: 66) Ngũgĩ has indeed relied on the context to distinguish the meanings of words. Gray (2010) defines ambiguity as “the capacity of words and sentences to have a double multiple or certain meanings” This has helped in emphasizing uncertainties of daily usage and point out a commentary on best possible direction of society.
One approach to the diagnosis of ambiguity relies on finding, for two occurrences of a word form, different relations of meaning with other items. These relations may be of the paradigmatic variety (e.g. oppositeness, synonymy etc) or they may be of these called patronymic sorts (that is to say, involving identity of root but difference of syntactic category, as for instance with act: actor, race: racy (55).

The following three ‘tests’ for ambiguity will serve to illustrate the approach: First, if there is a synonym of one occurrence of a word form which is not a synonym of a second syntactically identical, occurrence of the same word form in a different context. The two occurrences exemplify different senses. (55).

Second, if there is a word expression standing in a relation of oppositeness to one occurrence of a word form, which does not stand in the same relation to a second, syntactically identical occurrence of the same word form in a different context. The two occurrences exemplify different senses.

Lastly, if there is a word which stands in a patronymic relation to one occurrence of a word form, but does not stand on the same relation to a second syntactically identical occurrence of the same word form in a different context. The two occurrences exemplify different senses (55).

The title Mũrogi wa Kagogo is ambiguous because it attracts different interpretations depending on the context. First, the title suggests a Gĩkũyũ name of a person: Mũrogi wa Kagogo. In this case, Kagogo is the father/mother of Mũrogi. Secondly, the title can be interpreted as a specific Wizard who is talented in bewitching a specific Crow.
In the text, ambiguity is applied when an old man is invited to address the citizens. His inability to utter the real name of the ruler is self-contradictory and thus, causes confusion. Firstly, he addresses the ruler as “Mtukutu Rahisi”, “Rahisi mkundu”, “Mtukufu mtakatifu”, “mkundu takatifu”.(vol.1.20) [cheap and notorious, cheap asshole, his excellence the holy one, holy asshole] Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o satirizes the master of ceremony in appointing a speaker who could not address his Ruler honorably. The names he uses are offensive when taken literally. In reality, the words are a form of insult, and that turns out to be a satire, since the ruler himself is portrayed incomprehensible of the content of the words. It is also absurd that the old man goes free despite the tight security that ought to have detected the insult. The writer therefore depicts the stupidity and recklessness of such security which despite high regard by the leaders, is not at all efficient.

There is ambiguity in the mood surrounding the room after Sikiokuu narrates the arrest of Tajirika’s wife who is assisting them with investigation: ‘Ngiria ĩrĩa yarĩ rumuinĩ ĩyo nĩ ĩngĩatemekire na kanyoi’ (vol.2.290). [The silence in the room would have been cut by a razor blade]. Ambiguity is in the word “Ngiria” which could be referring to either an insect called cricket or silence. The statement therefore is ambiguous. It however has an effect of allowing the writer settle his scores by portraying the Ruler as a feared master. This portrays how ministers fear that even when they go for a cabinet meeting, no one would dare question him. They only attend meetings to report what is on the ground and take orders.
The note written by Murogi reinforces the above: Wimenyerere. Bururi wına ihu. Kiria āričiara gitiūo (vol.3.49) [Take care. The country is expectant. What it will give birth to, nobody knows]. The ambiguity is on Burūri wō na ihu [the country is expectant].

The writer starts by personifying the country. This is by describing it as pregnant. Further reading reveals that the writer could not be referring to the country, but the Ruler himself. Since the Ruler does not consult anyone, everyone has resolved to better keep quiet for nobody knows what can crop up out of him. The writer is able to pass his point home in an indirect manner by pointing out that the Ruler is about to come up with a policy that might affect the subject including his ministers. Consequently, everyone is warned to be careful with him. He thus substitutes the term burūri [country] with Mwathani [Ruler]. Hence, Mwathani ena ihu, (vol.3.54) [The Ruler is expectant.] This is also ambiguous. It can be interpreted to mean that the Ruler is about to give birth, the Ruler has some information he is withholding and sooner or later, it will be revealed. Alternatively, the ruler could be having a tummy.

Ambiguity is enhanced when part of the crowd starts shouting: Nyoka! Nyoka ya thumu! (vol.1.24) [snake, a poisonous snake!] it is however not clear whether the crowd refers to the ruler at the dais as the snake, or there was a real snake among the crowd. Subsequently, part of the crowd heads to the platform. The reader wonders whether the snake was at the platform or amongst them, and how they reached a conclusion that it was poisonous. Ngugi in an orthodox manner causes ambiguity that a transparency and accountability lobby group can apply such a strategy to utilize and ensure that their plights are addressed to.
There is ambiguity on the nature of illness affecting Tajirika. Upon interrogation about his illness that has taken him to Mũrogi wa Kagogo, he refers to the illness as *Wakorwo* (vol 3:73) [you will be caught]. This brings ambiguity in the sense that Njoya, the probing officer, on hearing the two words runs away. The victim also takes to his heels on seeing the probing officer bolt to the door “*Njoya kũigua ciugo ‘Wa korwo’... no ndira aigĩrĩre ciande arorete ya mũrango. Tajirika ona ũguo onake akĩoya magũrũ arorete ndiricainĩ*” [Njoya on hearing the term “wakorwo” bolted to the door. On seeing his reaction, Tajirika follows him but towards the window]. The term *wa korwo* has two meanings. Firstly, it means, “If at all…” a condition for something to happen. Secondly, it is an alert of danger.

The advertisement: *MŨROGI WA KAGOGO: KWENDERWO KĨHEYO* (vol.3.140), [THE WIZARD OF THE CROW: WANTED FOR A PRIZE] is ambiguous. The advert would either mean Mũrogi is envied for his talent or the prize was meant for whoever turned him in. In real sense, the writer portrays the Wizard of the Crow hunted by the state. Government officials, including the Ruler himself, have recognized his dedications to his work. Evidently, leaders would like to lay their hands on him, either openly or secretly so that he can be ‘silenced’ for his eloquence in criticizing the government.

Nyawĩra’s warning to the two intelligent officers against torturing the Wizard of the Crow after his arrest is ambiguous:

* Mangĩgagũcokia gũkũ ũtarĩ na rũcuũrũ ona rũmwe nĩguo makamenya atĩ marakara makwa nĩ marũrũ (vol.2.167) [Should
they bring you back with a single hair missing, they will suffer the full extent of my wrath."

Due to their failure to interpret the message correctly, the inspectors make sure that the cell in which Mūrogi is locked in is swept every day and before sweeping, they would search for the strands of hair. There is ambiguity in the statement since Mūrogi wa Kagogo’s colleague meant that no one should harm him. However, the two inspectors take it literally. When the sweepers are asked why search for the hair they respond: *matirenda gacuũři o na karĩkũ gaku kore* (vol.2.167) [they do not want any strand of your hair that may have fallen from your head get lost.]

### 2.2.3 Paradox as Subversion

Mugubi states “A statement is said to be a paradox if it is seemingly self-contradictory and opposed to common sense and yet perhaps true” (106). The statement therefore puts the reader into task of making out the meaning in the contradiction. Gray (2010) refers paradox as an apparently self-contradictory statement, or one that seems in conflict with all logic and opinion; yet lying behind the superficial absurdity is a meaning or truth. An example of paradox is when Leaders expect Kanyori and other politicians, as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o portrays, to accept to be workers in the bank and the citizens to be humble depositors of taxes. After the revelation that Kanyori contributed in helping Kaniũrũ to keep the stolen money, it is paradoxical that she is elevated to a senior position whereas her husband is placed in the Ministry of finance:

*mûtumia waku Mrs. Jane Kanyori Kaniũrũ ahatûrwo handû “strategic” thiĩnĩ wa Bengi ya gatagati* (vol.3.286) [your wife, Jane Kanyori be placed in a strategic position in the Central Bank.]
In reality, anyone found embezzling funds in public offices should be sacked and prosecuted. Nevertheless, this is not the case. The more an officer is capable of committing fraud, the more he/she is promoted. This goes against the rule of law.

Aburĩria’s Ruler is portrayed as a love- to- hate leader. His assumption that he is invited to America depicts this. The reality is that according to the narrator, the only leader invited from Africa is Mandela from South Africa. Machokali’s supposition is that the new president of America is the one who had invited the ruler to America and subsequent acceptance of the Ruler to go to New York to discuss about the funding of Matheca itu with global bank: Nǐndetĩkīra mūkaribithio ʊrīa wĩ haha marūainī kuma kūrī Bengī ya Ngīrũmbu (vol.2.296) [I have accepted an invitation in this letter from Global Bank.] The ruler wishes to visit America but the Global Bank’s order is for the leader to go there as a tourist. This reveals that despite the assumption of being honored by western countries, and that their decision suggests that he is not invited there: Ngaribithanio ya bengī yarǐ o Kīndū gīa kwēruta ho no thuthainī wa māario nīrio gwatuṅkire Mwathānī athī ta mūtarīi, (vol.2.309) [The invitation was just a scapegoat after a lengthy talk and thus the resolution for the Ruler to visit as a tourist.] Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o describes the place most of African Rulers are placed in western countries. This is due to their malpractices and bad governance. Mandela, an African leader who fought against racism and subsequently, bequeathed power willingly, is respected worldwide.

On a different level, the state commemorates the death of prominent people particularly in line of duty. Ngũgĩ unearths that apart from according the dead a distinguished send off, there is a relationship between spacio- temporal reconstruction and the politics of the dead body. For example, the ruler decides to award his dead
personal doctor after the fracas that left some people dead in his country. This is revealed through an article in the daily newspaper:

“Njamba gūtūgūrio” Marehemu Ndāgītāri Wilfred Kaboca ūrīa atī warathirwo hīndī ya mbaratha akīgitīra abiyā ya būrūri na o na e mūkuū, nī aratuirwo “posthumously”, memba wa kīrabu thibeco kīa “Golden order of devotion”, (God) (vol.3.268) [“A hero Honoured” The late Dr. Wilfred Kaboca who was shot dead in defence of the nation, now posthumously appointed into the company of the Golden Order of Devotion (GOD).]

Ngūgī suggests that it is fruitless for the doctor to be appointed into the “Golden Order of Devotion” because there is no way he will benefit from it. This way, the writer reveals that the most common way in which African political regimes honour their fallen favorites is through marking spaces by placing statues of those particular followers. The death of the Ruler’s personal doctor, as portrayed above, is more significant to the state and must be commemorated in a special way like being inducted into the company of Golden Order of Devotion.

Ngūgī brings out today’s system of governance where when the master appoints a colleague in the system, the others become envious and suspicious that the master might be looking out for someone to inherit the leadership. This is revealed by the way Sikiokuu reacts after learning that a letter instructing him to assist Mūrogi get travel documents is signed by his colleague, Machokali.
Paradoxically, when Sikiokuu receives the e-mail notifying him of ruler’s illness, his concern is not the sickness, but who had signed the e-mail: *Thaĩri yarĩ ya Machokali. ï Machokali angūigirwo unene?* (vol.2.170) [The one who had signed the letter was Machokali, what if the Ruler was to anoint Machokali as his successor?] Ngũgĩ satirizes power hungry leaders who envy any move of their master in allocating duties to their colleagues. They feel that a responsibility from the master means a preparation for succession.

Junior officers are portrayed struggling to ascend to power. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o portrays them doing anything possible to remove their seniors from power and subsequently, take over. Kaniũrũ, Tajirika’s deputy, overshadows the office of the boss by the design of his billboard to his office:

*Office of the deputy Chairman of Matheca itu, no kiugo Deputy gĩkandĩkwo na tūtemwa tūnini ... No kiugo chairman kāri na ndemwa nene, ndeme wega na ng’emie.* (vol.3.33) [Offices of the deputy Chairman of Matheca itu....But the word deputy was written in such tiny letters whereas the word chairman was in big ones and in colour so as to be easily read from far].

Ngũgĩ has a mission of portraying the deputy’s competition to outshine his chairperson. In African states, many leaders scramble for power and instead of dedicating themselves to serving the masses, they contemplate on how they can outwit their colleagues politically. Kaniũrũ is portrayed exercising his power as a chairperson of the enquiry commission. The way he handles his boss Tajirika of *Matheca itu* [The house of Babylon] after ignoring his summon shows this.
Tajirika is picked in the middle of the night by plain-clothes policemen and bundled into the boot of a Land Rover: *Aiyĩrirwo gwake mucii ũtuku gatagatĩ nĩ borithi...agĩkio thutha wa randiruba ta rũtungu* (vol.2.34). [The police came for him at midnight...They shoved him into a Land Rover like a log of wood.] The fact that Kaniũrũ is the Chair, to inquire how the queues came about, is able to take advantage and harass his boss Tajirika.

Ngũgĩ depicts an unreliable security force. A force is shown pleading with Tajirika while in the cell: *Thigari...ikĩmũthaitha ndageke ũguo* (vol.2.130) [the police officers implored him not to do so.] Worse still, instead of the culprit going ahead of the security force, they are seen leading him: *Thigari igĩrĩ irĩ mbere, Tajirika nake acirũmũriire* (vol.2.130) [Two police officers lead as he follows.] Asking for reinforcement due to only one criminal is paradoxical: *Ona borithi ya kũimbaimbia mbũtũ ĩgũtio* (vol.2.130) [Police reinforcements were requested for.] Tajirika’s torture though unarmed is self-defeatist. Through this, Ngũgĩ reveals the kind of security force that follows order blindly. Any move by their victim that suggests defiance amounts to great crime.

Kaniũrũ is portrayed as a wolf in sheep’s skin when he visits Nyawĩra’s parents. He pretends that he is there to assist them yet we are made aware that the government is looking for Nyawĩra for her involvement with lobby groups that oppose its policies. It is also a lie that he wants to help Nyawĩra, considering the fact that he is the one who had betrayed her to the government: *Ndoka gũkũ tondũ thirikari nĩ ũharĩirie Kũnyita Nyawĩra e muoyo kana e kũmba.Ndírenda kũmũteithia na inyuũ no mũhaka mũndeithie ndĩmuteithie* (vol.3.18) [I came here to tell you that the government is
determined to get Nyawĩra dead or alive. I want to help you, but you must help me to help you.]

However, Kaniũrũ’s plan is to investigate the whereabouts of Nyawĩra and subsequently, tell on her to the state. This is evidently indicated by the way he exercises his might. He points out that his ex-in-law either reveals Nyawĩra’s whereabouts or he loses half of his shares to him: ūngaĩre share imwe nĩgetha ūtonga waku ùkorwo ūnyitũrũrwo nĩ marĩtwā merĩ; riaku na ūnakwa. Kana ūnengere Nyawĩra (vol.3.19) [Give me some shares in your business. Through joint ownership, my name shall shield your wealth and property or hand over Nyawĩra.] The writer depicts a situation whereby, a position of influence becomes the position to benefit oneself rather than serving the people. This apparently, is the case with most African leaders who misuse their power by oppressing common people.

Ngũgĩ portrays those in power as Jacks of all trades but masters of none. He enhances this through Kaniũrũ. Kaniũrũ assumes that the way they are fond of involving themselves in corrupt deals is the same way Wizard of the Crow does; that he will do as instructed when promised money and leadership: Gũtirũ ūthũire gũkuruhana na ūnene na ūtonga (vol.3.105), [nobody loathes rubbing shoulders with money and power]. Through this, Ngũgĩ exposes the inefficiency of leaders who capitalize on other people’s misfortunes, further criticizing selfish leaders.

Another level of paradox is eminent when Kaniũrũ signals the “Nyakĩnyua” to start the song. Instead of the women singing to his tune, they castigate the leadership. The leaders assume that they are honored, but the fact is that the people they represent disrespect them. This is due to their misdeeds as leaders.
Ngũgĩ depicts the women who were to praise the minister and other guests acting on the contrary as they had their own agenda: *Kaniũrũ akĩrũgama ahenagĩrie nyakĩnyua. Õrĩa Vinjinia, Kaniũrũ na Sikiokuu matiamenyaga atĩ Nyawĩra nĩ we watongoragia rwĩmbo.* (Vol.3.41-42) [Kaniũrũ stood up to beckon at the women. However, Vinjinia, Kaniũrũ and Sikiokuu were unaware that Nyawĩra was the soloist and the leader of the song, actions and the insults.] This helps to show the character of leaders reflected. They are depicted as ignorant as they assume respect is necessary, only to get the hatred that the masses hold towards them. The stupidity of the above-mentioned leaders is enhanced through their ill-intentioned actions.

Paradoxically, Minister Sikiokuu gives Tajirika a lot of brandy with the hope that he will gather full information from him: *Nĩ kĩo oonaga atĩ kahinda gaka Tajirika emũtondorie kĩongo na mwĩrĩ nĩ njoohi kaarĩ kega ga kurĩkia umbũri.* (vol.2.88) [The minister got a chance to intoxicate Tajirika with alcohol so as tell him all.] By this, the writer portrays African leaders who assume they are experienced in gathering information from their victims. They however fail terribly and at the end as they become the hunted rather than the hunters.

Kaniũrũ’s information to Sikiokuu as regards to what he has gathered from Mũrogi is paradoxical. Initially, we are aware that Mũrogi had earlier warned Kaniũrũ against revealing anything he learnt when he visited Mũrogi: *Ndikanaigue kunu kana cere cia wonire kana waigua kwa Mũrogi wa Kagogo* (vol.3.100) [I must never hear that you have repeated to the ears of another what you have seen or heard from the Wizard of the Crow.] However, the writer portrays Kaniũrũ contravening the warning. He said what he was cautioned against Mũrogi; *ũhoro wa magegania nĩ ūyũ mũrogi ūcio nĩ aramenyire rĩtwɑ na wĩra wakwa* (vol.3.104) [You know the most amazing thing
about this sorcerer, he knew my name, and career]. Worse still, Kaniũrũ lies to his boss and fails to give what has transpired between him and Mũrogi: *Aranyingata na aroiga ndakananyone kũu rĩngĩ* (vol.3.104), [He dismissed me from his presence and told me never to be seen there again.] This is self-defeatist since Kaniũrũ had been cautioned as we have seen, not to mention anything he saw or heard from Mũrogi wa Kagogo. Paradoxically, Kaniũrũ escapes from being sent to Mũrogi’s place again by pretense that he does not know how to lie much, yet we know that he has not given Sikiokuu all the content he had discussed earlier with Mũrogi wa Kagogo.

The women’s interpretation of the minister in the dance is paradoxical: *nĩ ndiramerire na mareṭिकia, o ũrĩa wageragia kwĩra andũ othe, atĩ ĕyo yarĩ ndaci ya mwanya na ᵱnagĩrwoo arĩa atĩe mũno*, (vol.2.293) [I informed them and they believed that what the women did was a special dance meant for the most honored.] The writer portrays the women questioning the viability of some of the government policies. Instead of the minister, informing the Ruler the reason behind the women’s’ strange behavior, stripping naked in public as a form of solidarity against bad governance, the minister fails to explain the situation. Instead, he tells the opposite.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o illustrates a kind of sycophants who do not explain to their bosses the problems on the ground but instead, give their master what they feel is pleasant to their (master’s) eyes and ears.

Paradoxically, Tajirika believes that Mũrogi has come to rescue him from the cell. He therefore narrates the ordeal he has gone through in the hands of state security: *Tajirika akũmbiriria gũtahĩka marĩa mothe oonetio kuma thamaji ya Kaniũrũ ... na rũu kũreũhwo thero ĕno ya nduma* (vol.3.119) [Tajirika spilled what he had experienced
since the time of Kaniũrũ’s summon up to the time he was locked in a dark cell.] With this, the writer portrays the hopelessness of the tortured by the way they plead with any one close to them for help. Tajirika is seen pleading for help from a fellow inmate: *Mũrogi wa Kagogo ndeithia nyume njera īno na ndikariganĩrwo nĩwe* (vol.3.121) [Wizard of the Crow, help me out of this cell and I will not forget about you.] The thing is that this is not Tajirika’s first time to meet Mũrogi. He should have not forgotten him because he helped him when he was sick and paid for the treatment with three sacks full of money. As such, the writer suggests that leaders are fond of pretending when in problems and can even promise heaven. But once out of problems, they no longer remember those who helped them.

Tajirika’s allegation that *Mũrogi wa Kagogo* is the pioneer of queues is self-contradictory. His claims that the origin of the queues started where Mũrogi wa Kagogo stood at the time of seeking for a job is self-contradictory: *nayo mĩhari īkĩambĩrĩria o harĩa Mũrogi ũcio arũngiĩ agĩthoma kĩbaũ* (vol.3.39) [and then the queuing started at the very spot where the Wizard of the Crow had stood as he read the sign.] The allegation that Mũrogi was sent by a minister to start the queues is also self-contradictory. The reality is that Tajirika is not aware of the Wizard and neither does he know anything about the queues nor did he have an intention to start the queues.

Paradoxically, Tajirika refers to his adversary, Sikiokuu, ‘a friend in need’. He feels that the removal of Mũrogi from his cell was done for his own safety, and so a great favour. His declaration that he would pay back for the honour is self-contradictory: *Ndũũ ngakũrĩha atĩa ciiko ici ciaku cia tha* (vol.3.141), [I do not know how I will repay your kindness.] Tajirika is not aware that Sikiokuu is the one who subjects him
to all the torture he undergoes. It is therefore paradoxical that Sikiokuu even recites an English verse in honor of Sikiokuu:

The quality of mercy is never strained

It droppeth as the gentle rains from heaven above (vol.3. 141)

Tajirika feels that his friend Machokali misleads him into believing Sikiokuu is an enemy. He is amazed when he has to conclude: Mũrata wa thĩna akĩrĩte mũrata wa ndĩa na mũrata wa ciĩko akĩrĩte wa ciugo (vol.3.168) [A friend in times of trouble is better than a friend in times of feasting and so, a friend by actions is better than a friend by words.] This is paradoxical. As observed earlier, Tajirika believes that Sikiokuu has helped him when he was in danger. It is self-defeatist not to differentiate who is the true friend. The fact is that Sikiokuu appointed Tajirika as the chairperson; a friend he now feels is meant for the times of feasting and so a “bad” friend. At the same time, Machokali, the friend he now glorifies as a friend in times of trouble, subjected him to torture and so, a “true” friend.

In a contradictory manner, Sikiokuu plans alter the statement given by Tajirika on the origin of queues. He at the same time arranges to exonerate himself from it: Nĩndakwĩra niĩ ndigũkorwo ho ūkĩandĩkithia thiĩtimeti icio tondũ ndikwenda thuthainĩ ūkoigaga atĩ nĩ ndatũmire uge ūũ kana ūũ (vol.3.149). [I will not be there when you write the statement for I would not want you to claim that I coerced you to do so.] The fact is Sikiokuu guided Tajirika what to write about.
Foolishly and with a notion that the minister is his true friend, he falls into his trap. It is illogical for the two to share some whisky in celebration: ‘Mr. Tajirika, a toast to your health. Cheers.’(vol.3.149). It is also paradoxical for Tajirika to accept the invitation and thank the ‘host’: ‘Cheers and Thengĩũ maita ngiri’ (vol.3.150). [Thank you a thousand times.] The way they “have fun” is also contradictory: Makĩnyuaga ta aya maatũire manyuithanagia (vol.3.150) [They drank like the best of friends].

The concept that a wife is just a “homemaker” is paradoxical. Tajirika is proved wrong by his wife’s action. This is when he orders her to go back to the kitchen. On the contrary: ũndũ ũrĩa wambire kũgegia Tajirika nĩ gũkora Vinjinia aigũte mbiacara ciake ciothe wega mũno. Ona nĩ aanenehetie wĩra (vol.3.171) [Tajirika was surprised to find that Vinjinia had run all his businesses efficiently] He would therefore not get any excuse for a quarrel: Tajirika ndoonaga handũ angĩmũrutia (vol.3.171). [Tajirika could not get a loop hole to trigger a grudge.] The incongruity is portrayed when Tajirika fails to initiate any conversation to express his ordeal in the cell. This means that Virginia could not find an appropriate way of informing him of how she suffered in trying to rescue him: Mũthuriwe ndaaragia cia kũu aarĩ na kwa ũguo o nake ndonaga kamweke ga kũmũrũa ũrĩa athĩnĩkire akĩmũcaria… (vol.3.172) [Her husband did not want to talk about his experience in prison. She also did not get any chance to inform him of her ordeal as she searched for him.] The writer portrays how families after a disagreement fail to discuss it. Ngũgĩ highlights the feelings of men towards women in a patriarchal society. And upon realizing those women’s potential, they plan on how to subdue them physically.
Machokali’s idea to construct “Matheca itu” was only meant to please the Ruler. He did not imagine that many problems, even an illness could be caused by proposal to build it:

*Machokali ataraga akona ati Mwathani ndangĩgwatĩra ũndũ wa kĩnyumba kĩa mbamberi* (vol.3.8) [Machokali was calculating and felt that the Ruler could not take the idea of building Matheca itu seriously.]

It is therefore paradoxical that an illness caused by lack of funds to build “Matheca itu” has compelled the followers’ call to Mũrogi to take over the treatment of the Ruler as all the doctors in New York had been unable to treat his illness.

It is thus contradictory that the Ruler believes teaching the students his philosophy, will make them learn and accept his doctrines:

*Njĩra īyo īgũciara arutwo marĩ na meciria moimĩte hamwe; kĩongoinĩ kĩa Mwathani na kĩa andũ arĩa mareciria ta Mwathani* (vol.3.111), [Such an education system is bound to produce students with a uniform knowledge streaming from the same source: the Ruler or those imbued with his thoughts.]

The writer attempts to reveal that, there is nowhere democracy can be more deficient than in Africa; a region where economics determine politics of the day. For instance, there are states in Africa that extensively define democratic opportunities for the youth. The youth are misused for leaders to climb to power and when the goal is achieved, they are forgotten forever. Even the few opportunities of democracy are
economically conditioned especially during elections. This is because of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. Additionally, Ngũgĩ in a paradoxical manner depicts how African leaders politicize education systems in their states:

Memoranda ya Kaniũrũ ya mūtaratara mweru wa gǐthomo gĩa kũnyorotha meciria ma mũmo na atumia nĩ getha matwarane na mĩoroto ya būrũri na birothobĩya Mwathani witũ (vol.3.111-112), [The Kaniũrũ Memorandum on New Educational Initiatives for Youth and Women to Make Their Minds Conform to National Ideals and the Ruler’s Philosophy.]

The writer mocks the memorandum of education and suggests that democracy in African states can be surplus or balanced to address both personal and social concerns like poverty, access to scarce national resources, education, pandemics and inequality. This is possible if a fine line is drawn between giving the executives (democratically elected presidents) sufficient powers to do the job and at the same time, limiting that authority to prevent a dictatorship. This will make the presidents lead through their political skills, establishing a framework of co-operation with the legislature and above all, with the people. The citizenry will consequently feel secure and assume that the presidents are always servants and not economic parasites.

Ngũgĩ has also portrayed the masses turning against their leaders in a paradoxical resolution:

Gǐtige gũita maithori nĩ ũndũ wa njaguti; Therũka ngoro gĩkeno nĩ ũndũwaitungati.(vol.3.244), [Do not despair at those who sold the heritage; smile with pride at the achievements of freedom fighters.]
The fight among the followers of the ruler is portrayed by the way they advertise the wanted Mũrogi wa Kagogo:

*Kahiga akĩongererwo wĩra wa kwambithia imenyithia icio na kwambũrithia cia Sikiokuu. Nake Sikiokuu agĩatha Njoya ambũrage icio cia Kaniũrũ na kwamba ciake* (vol.3.121), [Kahiga was given more work of overseeing the demolition of all Sikiokuu’s posters, replacing them with Kaniuru’s. Sikiokuu retaliated by ordering Njoya to pull down Kaniũrũ’s posters and replaces them with his.]

After realizing that the queues have extended beyond expectation, the government resolves to send an ambassador to dismantle those queues. The plan was to disperse those who queued but the informant contradicted himself:

*No ningĩ nũndũ wa thibiti ya nduthi o na kĩo kũ kiugo gĩgĩtuika thirambu, tũcunjĩ twa kiugo. Rũ...ũ...ci....ũ Amwe makaigua ‘rũ’ angĩ makaigua ũ angĩna o “ci” angi makaigua ‘ũ’ ya mũico.* (vol.2.186). [Due to motorbike’s high speed, the message which was shortened to one word Tomorrow, turned out to be only syllables; to…mor…row, some catching /to/, others /mor/, and yet others /row/.]

The message was perplexing. The informer is announcing they disperse but, could not comprehend his information. The shortening of the message to one word and its subsequent disintegration into syllables renders the announcer’s mission ineffectual. Ngũgĩ alludes his actions to politicians who ought to advise people, but deliver empty
rhetoric’s *Andũ makĩona o nake ta aarĩ mũnyitũkie nĩ ngoma cia atetĩ arĩa matũūraga mahũhũtaga maũndũ o maiguo nĩ mararia* (vol.2.186) [Those who queue concluded that he must be possessed by deamons that usually force politicians to spew out words for the sake of hearing themselves talk, whether or not they made any sense.] The imagery of politicians ridicules those leaders who normally believe that their speeches make sense, yet they are full of empty promises to the masses.

The writer depicts a kind of government that does not reward its employees for a job well done. Instead, one is sent packing. This is demonstrated through a compulsory leave without pay for the officer sent on a mission to disperse the queues. He is considered sick and thus had to be taken to hospital for that matter: *Agĩwarwo thibitarĩ ya ciongo na thuthainĩ ũcio akĩheyo ribu ītarĩ mũcara na rĩrĩa atĩ igathira ambe ahurũkie meciria mathenge mĩhariinĩ* (vol.2.188). [He was referred to a psychiatric hospital for treatment, and subsequently given an indefinite leave without pay for his mind to forget the queues.] This reveals the leadership in Africa. There is no motivation at work and those who are in power compel their juniors to do controversial tasks that benefit them (seniors) and consequently abandon them (the juniors).

It is also paradoxical that the state resolves to use the queues to show Global Bank missionaries that they do support the funding …*na mĩhari īyo no ūthuũrwo kuonia arekio acio a Bengi ya Ngirũmbu atĩ andũ othe nĩmanyiitũte mbaru ũhoro ūcio wa matheca itu* (vol.2.190). […]and the queues can be used to show representatives of global Bank that the citizens support the construction of “Matheca itu”.[* This contradicts the reason that brought about the queues. First, we are aware of how the queues came about - out of unemployment. Second, well-connected rich people make
themselves “known” to the chair so that they can be favored when time for awarding
tenders come. It is therefore illogical to get the initial objective of employment
diverted to a falsehood of appeasing the donors. The paradox is heightened when the
minister Big Ben Mambo proposes the queues to be termed as “The Queuing
Referendum” yet the truth is that those who are on the queues are looking for
employment.

The writer depicts the status of the state’s workforce after being sacked: after the
escape of Mũrogi from state house, police guards, Attorney General, Kahiga and
Njoya are dismissed. Paradoxically, all have nothing after serving the government for
long: 

\[
\text{Ngāria hakwa, taniĩ ndiarĩ o na kamūgūnda kana kanyūmba ingīa gakwa (vol.3.189)}
\]

[I do not know about the other two, but I had no land or house or any
property that I could call my own.] Worse still, it is contradictory that the only sector
they can seek employment is the security sector since in the government’s economy,
the only jobs that offered possibilities were the private security firms that were
mushrooming throughout the country:

\[
\text{Nĩ ūndũ wa ūtonga wa būrūri gūkorswo wǐ mokoinĩ ma gakundi kanini, mīciĩ ya itonga būrūrinĩ rīu yahanire o ta njera cia rūthingo rwa thahabu (vol.3.189),} \]

[Due to the wealth of the country being
confined among few peple, the houses of the rich had become
luxurious/ golden-walled prisons.]

The writer reveals the fact that the economy of the country is in the hands of a few
individuals, and security firms are meant to train personnel who can safeguard the
properties of the “haves”. The “have nots” have to train as security personnel to serve the “haves”.

The government’s policies on education are paradoxical. It is also inordinate for the ruler to decree that his philosophy be entrenched in the education system of the country: Marĩthomithagio cia Mwathani kuma thitanda wanu nginya yunibathiti. (vol.3.111), [The philosophy of the Ruler would be the pace setter of the system of learning.] The enthusiastic sycophants are oblivious to the fact that by adopting a project associated with their Ruler’s name, they are making a mockery of these high-held names. These people believe that their Ruler is “god” who can never go wrong.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o additionally shows what African leaders consider as democracy in a paradoxical manner since for most of African leaders, elections are only acceptable if they do not disrupt their stay in office:

\[Kĩrĩa kĩrĩ bata ti ciama nyingĩ kana kĩmwe bũrũriini, ta nũũ ũnyitĩte kĩongo.\] (vol.3.269) [What is important is not the number of political parties but who leads them.]

The writer waters down the fact that the fundamental African problem is that states and governments are not required to be legitimate. Power is an end in itself. In other words, states need not be agencies of creating wealth, enlightenment and securing dignity for citizens in order to exist.

The ruler’s expectation about the masses is self-defeatist: Mwĩhoko wake warĩ atĩ andũ mekwaria macoke manoge nĩ kũnyota na kũhũta, (vol.3.195) [The masses will demonstrate and surrender due to hunger and thirst.] Paradoxically, most of those
queuing had carried food with them, so the queues continued to grow in strength, confidence and courage (vol.3.196). This way, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o depicts how spontaneous but organised youthful protests pose a new kind of challenge to a state security system. This compels the Ruler to call in the military to restore order. Paradoxically, instead of the army shooting at them, they started greeting one another;

Eendaga kuona thakame barabarainĩ. Rĩu oonire thakame njĩthĩ, ya mwena wa raiya na ya mwena wa mbirarũ, ikĩgeithania ngeithi cia ũrata... (vol.3.200)[He wanted to see massacre in the country, instead the army boys and young civilians were greeting one another in a friendly manner…]

Tajirika’s reaction to the queues is paradoxical. The writer portrays him shocked when he sees them. He was the one who had instructed the setting up of the poster announcing vacancies for temporary employment and yet doesn’t seem to remember it thus the surprise: Niĩ? Na marenda atĩa, a demonstration or what? (vol.2.227) [They want me? What do they want? A demonstration or what? ] His decision for Tajirika to call the police to deal with the queues is also self-contradictory. Firstly, he was part of the advertisement process. Secondly, for all the time he had been sick, the government had sent emissaries to deal with those queues. Tajirika erroneously believes that the poster that he and Nyawĩra had planted had borne fruits of which the Ruler is eating some: …kĩbaũ kĩrĩa twahandire na we haarĩa thome nĩ gĩakũrire na gĩkĩgĩa na maciaro maratũma nginya mwathani we mwene atambũrũkie moko agethe mamwe. (Vol.2.229). […]the billboard that we placed outside the office has borne fruits that have made even our Ruler himself to stretch his hands to pick some.] The
queue holding job seekers is accidentally interpreted in a manner beneficial to the leaders but to the detriment of the job seekers.

2.02.04 Irony as Subversion

Mugubi (171) refers to irony “as entailing a reality that is incongruous, inconsistent with the appearance”. There are various types of irony but our study embarks on situational irony. This is with a reason that it is effective in unearthing follies of members of society in a humorous manner.

Situational irony, according to Mugubi (2005:171), occurs not at the level of grammatical utterances or pronouncement but seen when there are certain discrepancies or inconsistencies in particular situations. Wallace Mbugua, in his definition of terms, refers to irony as “the incongruity between appearance and reality, words and meanings or between meanings and actions and their results” (xvii). Gray (2010) refers to irony as “saying one thing while you mean the other. Harris (1992) on the other hand gives an elaborate classification of irony: Behavioral/Socratic, verbal, situational, unresolvable but stable and existential/cosmic all of which have different kinds of meanings.

As mentioned earlier, irony manifests itself as the contradiction between what we expect and what we get, even between appearance and reality. In literature, as in life, things are not what they appear; human beings are not always what they seem to be. Often, appearances deceive.
In Ngũgĩ’s *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*, irony is present in various levels. The conflicts and the problems that he deals with in his work are ironical at the level of words, phrases and at the level of overall presentation.

Irony is an important tool in highlighting ills committed by leaders in the society depicted in *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*. Dramatic irony manifests itself when Njoya and Kahiga visit Wizard of the Crow’s house in search of Nyawĩra. The audience is aware that the person they are looking for is in the house. He/she marvels with the idea that Nyawĩra is able to outwit government experienced investigation officers and subsequently, warn them of hurting her colleague Wizard of the Crow. They are even taken on a “ride” that a woman’s witchcraft is worse than that of a man: *Meetĩkĩtie atĩ ĕrogi wa mũtumia nũ mũrũrũ gũkĩra wa mũndũrũme* (vol.3.166) [They believed that a woman’s witchcraft was more potent and deadly than a man’s portion.] Ngũgĩ is able to depict the folly of the state’s intelligence through the way they are handled by Nyawĩra. She notices the intelligence officers who picked her colleague ought to be cautioned in advance because she is aware that the officers can be torturous as usual. She therefore fools around with their mind: *Mũthaiga wakwa ũĩ o acio marakũiyirire* (vol.3.166-167). [My medicine will only ask those who came after you.]

The writer succeeds in his portrayal of African states’ intelligence as inefficient. The reader’s eyes are opened through the application of a dramatic irony whereby they are made to know who the intelligence is talking to, their victim, yet the intelligence is oblivious of what is happening despite their claim that they are experienced.
Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o portrays African leaders who took over political positions deriving pleasure from such political positions at the expense of the masses in one way or another. By application of irony, the writer paints such leaders as sadistic: ruler expected to safeguard his citizens in time of peace, order and security is at the forefront in creating and encouraging conflicts amongst families,

*Gũtuĩkaga atĩ kĩrĩa oĩ makĩria ... nĩkũhũrithania kabira ĕno na ĕrĩa, ndini ĕno na ĕrĩa...* (Vol. 1.4) [The citizens believed that he was skillful in creating conflicts between tribes, religions…]

The practice above goes against qualities of a good leader as a good leader ought to be arbitrating between feuding families and leaders. A good leader should preach peace. It is therefore absurd for a ruler who ought to advocate for peace, love and unity be at the forefront fuelling hostility among his subjects. Ngũgĩ therefore castigates those leaders who appear to delight at their subjects’ mess.

The disappearance of a minister in the Ruler’s government is ironical. Though directly or indirectly involved, the government pretends not to be aware of the minister’s disappearance. It announces officially the disappearance of Minister Machokali seven days later and that anyone that may be having any information about him can volunteer:

*Atĩ mũndũ o wothe ũngĩkorwo arĩ na ũndũ ũngiteithia thirikari kũguũria kĩu kĩhithe atenge’erie ũhoro kwa borithi (vol.3.155-156)*

*[if anybody had information about the minister’s whereabouts, he or she should report it to the nearest police station.]*
The governments limelight in its involvement with assassination of the minister comes thereafter with an excuse that: *Machokali nĩ abangaga kuoya thirikari na hinya* (vol.3.156), [Machokali was implicated in a plot to overthrow the government.] The writer portrays how leaders, just like the one in the novel *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*, outsmart political rivals for decades. They find ways of suppressing rebels by assassinating them and restoring political control. This is evident from the testimony of the Ruler himself: *ũreciragia wĩ mugi mũno nĩ, ũndũ wa ndingirii icio ciaku Mukungi aakorire mucemi* (vol.3.156) [so you thought you were more cunning than me just because of your degrees; a cunning robber met his match in a stealthy thief.]

The Ruler’s statement betrays his government. He was aware of the plot to murder his minister long before.

The Ruler’s speech when he stands up to address his citizens is ironical as his words are not true at all. As noted above, the Ruler is a sadist. He is depicted amused when there is tribal war, religious conflicts and wrangles among leaders. The speech is therefore contrary to his actions:

*Ciana ciakwa nyendete mũno, akiuga, nĩi, ngĩaria ndĩ ithe wanyu inyuote nĩnguga mûrathimwo nĩ ũndũ wa rĩciria rĩu rĩa kunjakĩra giĩkarĩ gĩa thubawanda*… (vol.1.24). [My children I love most, as I speak as your father, may you be blessed due to your idea of building me the super wonder house.]

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o mirrors African leaders rising to the stature of a small god. Visiting rural villages in their countries, the leaders pamper the villagers with colorful
words and the villagers are eager to listen to their empty rhetoric. In reality however, there is no love accorded to them as the leaders are just playing politics.

The misuse of power also means the exploitation of women. It is mocking and at the same time antithetical, that a leader who should safeguard welfare of young children-cum-girls exploits them sexually. A responsible leader ought to embrace virtues and safeguard the young ones since they are leaders of tomorrow. Contrary to this, he exploits them sexually. This can be termed as destruction of future generations. His wife echoes this when she asks rhetorically: *Githĩ acio a thukuru ti ciana iria ūraciara, Ciana citũ?* (vol.1.6) [Are those not school children as young as the kids you have sired?] Ngũgĩ blames those leaders who have affairs with youthful girls. He portrays the wives of such leaders annoyed by among other things, their spouses’ relationship with young girls: *Tondũ ndikũragia cia acio othe mwakwaragĩra marĩrĩ rĩ o na wagĩa ciana cigana atũ na o rĩ, aĩrũtu a thukuru ūramoria kĩĩ?* ”(6). [I do not complain about all those women who make beds for you no matter the number of children you sire with them, but why an intimacy with schoolchildren?]. Besides serving as their bedroom toys and play things, the leaders are also shown to use the girls to win favors.

The behaviour of the Ruler, riding on a donkey as he attends a church service, is ironical. Biblically, the donkey, on which Jesus rode, symbolized humbleness; *Ndigiri nĩ yo ruithi ruithi ya ūtarĩ* (vol.1.30) Meaning, a donkey is the “Rolls-Royce” of the poor. According to the Bible’s teaching, Jesus set a good example of a humble ruler, identifying with the low social class or position by riding on a donkey. It is therefore contradicting to get “Aburĩria’s” Ruler riding on a donkey that is always associated with poverty. This can be termed bizarre, bearing in mind that his followers had
resolved a while ago to build for him “a super wonder” that economically would siphon all national wealth at the expense of the citizens. It is ironical therefore for him to be associated with a donkey. Ngũgĩ thus castigates those leaders who only humble themselves on Sabbath day whereas when in their line of duty, they are completely different; committing any crime with impunity.

The announcement in Eldares Times, a daily newspaper in Aburĩria, that Nyawira’s father urges his daughter to come out of her hiding place and if not, he will disown her is a verbal irony: Kĩrĩro kĩa mũthuri kũrĩ mwarĩ; Coka mucĩi (vol.2.29) [Father’s plea to his daughter: Come back home.] It is a hoax that the father wants the daughter home. He acts in cahoots with the minister Sikiokuu in investigating and getting hold of Nyawĩra whether dead or alive.

Further irony is enhanced when the father threatens to disown Nyawĩra once more yet he had disowned her when she married Kaniũrũ. Nyawĩra is baffled: Kaĩ awa e kũngana maita maigana? (vol.2.29)[How many times will my father deny me?] The rhetorical question reveals that he had disowned her there before. This irony is sharpened by the fact that her mother is not there when the father and minister declare their stand together; ...Kĩndũ gĩatũmaga ekũwe kwarĩ ūndũ ūtarathera nĩ kuona atĩ nyina ndaarih ho mbicainĩ ūyo na mawoni make matiagwetewo. (vol.2.29)[That her mother was nowhere in the picture or the story made her feel that there was more to this plan than appeared.]

The arrest of the Wizard of the Crow and subsequent lock up in the cell creates an irony. Tajirika, who is in the same cell, feels that the person who has been brought and locked in his cell is a murderer: Ndũkanjũrare nĩ ndagũthaitha (vol.3.118) [I beg
you not to kill me.] It is only the next day that Tajirika gets to know he is the Mūrogi wa Kagogo and not a murderer. Through this, the writer depicts the state of African cells, portrayed as horrible, having no light. Additionally, we learn all kinds of criminals are locked up together.

Ruler’s expectation about the masses is ironical: *Mwīhoko wake warī aṭi andū mekwaria macoke manoge nī kūnyota na kūhūta* (vol.3.195) [the masses will demonstrate and surrender due to hunger and thirst.] Most of those queuing however had carried food with them: *Kwa ũguo mūrūrūngano wathiyaga o ũkīyenjagīra mūrī na ũkīonanagia ũrūme na ũrūmwe* (vol.3.196) [so the assembly continued to grow in strength, confidence and courage.] Ngūgī wa Thiong’o depicts how spontaneous youthful protesters pose a new kind of challenge to a state security system in an organized manner. This compels the Ruler to call the military into the streets to restore order and enforce a national curfew. Ironically, instead of the army shooting at them, they started greeting one another:

_Eendaga kuona thakame barabarainī. Rīū oonire thakame njīthī, ya mwena wa raiya na ya mwena wa mbirarū, ũkīgeithania ngeithi cia ũrata..._ (vol.3.200), meaning, he wanted to see massacre in the country, instead the army boys and young civilians were greeting one another in a friendly manner...

Ngūgī depicts an uprising whereby the young generation together with security force joins hands against the dictatorial regime. The streets battles unfold where thousands of people stream out of homes. Whatever the fallout from the protesters- be it change that comes suddenly or unfold over the years- the upheavals at the heart of African
world has vast repercussions for the status quo in the region including tolerance for secular dictators by a new generation of frustrated youth, the viability that had been kept mute or locked up for years.

2.2.5 Juxtaposition as Subversion

Juxtaposition is an act of putting things or people together in order to show contrast or a new relationship between them. It is an act or instance of placing close together or side by side especially for comparison or contrast. Juxtaposition which means lacing side by side is usually done with the intention of bringing out a specific quality or creating an effect, particularly when two contrasting or opposing elements are used. The viewers’ intention is drawn to similarities or differences between the elements. Our study considers that the writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o places characters, concepts, ideas and places parallel to each other either in a direct or indirect manner in order to highlight contrast between the two.

The poster to advertise temporary jobs attracts a long queue outside. The queue that attracts people seeking for temporary jobs at Eldarers Modern Construction and Real Estate headquarters is contrasted with another queue that attracts those who wanted to “congratulate” the chair for his appointment at the headquarters:

*Mūraini ûmwe wambîrïirie mûrangoinî wa wabici na andû othe a mûhari ücio mehumbïte mathuti ma mîtumîre mîthemba mîngî... mûhari wa kerî wambîrïirie kîbauinî TEMPA JOBS APPLY IN PERSON. Ene guo, kuma arîa maarî na ngu o ciî na maraka nginya arîa maarî na tûhuti twa mîtumba.”*(vol.1.160) [One queue started from the office’s door and comprised of people in suits of
different fashions….The second queue started at billboard TEMPA JOBS: APPLY IN PERSON. It comprised of people in patched clothes and second hand suits.]

The two lines parallel the two classes in the society. Ngũgĩ explores the status of the unemployed. We have people without work and are available to take up any employment. The queue comprising the unemployed is symbolic: reflecting what the occupants wear and as such, their economic status revealed, which depicts hopelessness. In contrast, occupants of the second line portray people who own the means of production in the society. They are presented as powerful individuals who manipulate the development of socio-economic policies. It is absurd therefore, that after just a few hours of the advertisement of the temporary jobs, the narrator wonders:

*Wĩra wamoko ũgucie andũ aingĩ ũguo? Ningũ kĩbaũ arekũrũre ira hwaĩnirũ, wakũ ũgũkorwo ũhunjite tauni ng’ima atũa?* (vol.1.160)[How could temporary jobs attract so many people? Worse still, how could she put the billboard just yesterday evening and its news spread throughout the town like that?]

The length of the queues, for temporary jobs reveals an immense unemployment and so everyone is ready to work in any capacity where a vacancy exists.

What the occupants of each queue hold in his/her hands is juxtaposed: *Andũ a mũhari wa mbere magwete tũthandũkũ twa mbicínci mokoinũ. Mũhari wa kerĩ matiarĩ na kĩndũ moko* (vol.1.160) [The people in the first queue held business briefcases in their hands. Those of the second line had nothing in their hands.] This reveals an economic
gap that exists between the two classes. Holding nothing is symbolic, it represents the have-nots in the society, whereas the ones having business briefcases represent the haves.

The World Bank envoy is juxtaposed with the Ruler. The envoy representing Western nations is for the idea of formation of many parties with an aim of boosting democracy. Ruler, who represents African leaders, is however not for the idea. He instead proposes multi-partysm while the ministers are against it. The envoy has this to say:

_Ona no mūrīkanĩre ciama ìmwe ithondekwo nĩ Mawathiri amwe aku nīgetha ituĩke cia mūng’ethanĩro Mwathĩku_ (vol.3.127) [even they can agree on how some parties can be formed by some ministers so that they can oppose innocently.]

The Ruler, with his fellow ministers, has a different opinion. Ngūgĩ thus portrays rulers in Africa who have surrounded themselves with sycophants. The followers have placed a wedge between the rulers and the very people they represent: _Īhĩ, ithuí túi ma ūmwe, kĩama kĩmwe, būrūri ūmwe, Mwathani ūmwe, Ngai ūmwe!_ (vol.3.127), [No, we know only one truth, one party, one country, one Ruler and one God.]. This way, he writer depicts African states tilting towards dictatorships that are used to weaken the most important system of checks and balances that may help involve the auxiliary precautions of impeachment and removal for high crimes and transgression. Without the checks and balances, democracy remains deficit in most Africa states.
The gap that exists between the masters and their subjects is also illuminated through juxtaposition:

*Mwathani, Mawathiri maarĩ kĩruri̍nĩ kĩa hema, na nĩ maikaraga makĩhehagia tũnuwa twao na maĩ ma ndigithũ. No mũngĩ waikarire ũnḡ’ārite o ũnḡ’ara* (vol.1.14) [Ruler and his ministers were sitted under the shade of a tent, now and then cooling their tongues with water from a clay pot, while the citizens remained in the hot sun thirsty; thirsty indeed.]

The leaders are portrayed as the most privileged in the society as everything is within their reach as long as their loyalty is with the ruler. Through the sycophancy, Ngũgĩ depicts a form of power structure in which power effectively rests with a small segment of society distinguished by loyalty. Ngũgĩ brings out the problem with the leaders as that of attitude or airs as once in power, they feel a sense of importance; the inability to rub shoulders with the common person.

Struggle or competition for recognition is revealed through juxtaposing Ruler’s ministers. At Ruler’s birthday celebration, Machokali attempts to explain the meaning of the cake: *Aburĩria rĩu ìgwaka kĩnyumba kĩrĩa kĩaremire andũ a ithiraĩri, kĩrĩa gĩetagwo kĩa mbamberi.* (vol.1.18). [It will be a tall building that has never been built on earth apart from the one that children of Israel tried but failed. The one called the Tower of Babel.] Sikiokuu, to counter attack his colleague says: *Kaĩ Machokali na ndundu yake meteciririe wega mone atĩ Mwathani nĩ arĩnogaga mûno akĩambata kũu na magũrũ?* (vol.1.20). [Did Machokali and his committee not put into consideration that Ruler would get tired going up the staircase to Heaven’s gate on foot?] This is
meant to provoke Ruler to discredit Machokali and at the same time, make him realize
the need of another object to substantiate the one proposed by his opponent. He comes
up with the idea of forming another committee under his leadership to explore the
possibility of the construction of a space luxury liner.

Ngũgĩ in addition juxtaposes lobby groups and the government. He depicts an
uprising, whereby the young generation together with security forces, join hands
against the dictatorial regime. The street battles unfold where thousands of people
stream out of their homes. Whatever the fallout from the protesters - be it change that
comes suddenly or unfolds over the years - the upheavals at the heart of African world
has vast repercussions for the status quo in the region including tolerance for secular
dictators by a new generation of frustrated youth, the viability that had been kept mute
or locked up for years.

Ngũgĩ therefore reveals how these protests are interwoven with the state’s function:
Mũthenya wa Bůrũri kwĩyerũhia and muthenya wa bůruri gwĩciara (vol.3.228), [A
day of self- renewal in the country and a day of rebirth of the country]. “The party of
voices of the people” under the leadership of Nyawĩra schemes how all workers will
strike and stage a demonstration on the same day: Makĩanĩrĩra kũgĩe mũgomo wa
aruti a wiğa a bůrũri můthenya ũcio. (vol.3.228), [They called for a one-day general
strike and festivities throughout the country.] Ruler’s promise is to open up
democracy and to fight corruption, claiming that they understand the hardships facing
their countries:

    Mbaara ĭyo yarũagwo nĩ kameme ka Mwathani karĩa kabatithũtio
    ‘kanua’ ka mwathani na kameme ka mũingĩ karĩa kabatithũtio
‘Thimũ’ ya rũhuho. (vol.3.232) [the war was fought by the state radio, nick named the The Lord’s Mouthpiece, and the people’s word of mouth, nicknamed the Wind Telegraph.]

What the writer advocates for is a pan-African movement for the liberation where the people would get their countries back from the blood-thirsty and greedy selected few individuals who make use of the people’s taxes earned by means of blood and sweat to squash the aspirations of the very citizens.

The space occupied by people and animals is also contrasted, where Ngũgĩ portrays people as stinking and animals as smelling good. It is the stench he gets among people he has interacted with that forces Wizard of the Crow to flee to the wilderness where animals live harmoniously and naturally. The rich people are also stinking:

No mũnungo araigua matukũ maya ũrakorwo ũrũ ũtiganu mũno na mũnungo anaigua…No athiĩ kĩweruinĩ kũraya na Eldares kana mũtituinĩ kũraya na andũ ndaiguaga o na e mũhutu atĩa. (vol.1.55)[The smell that he lately perceives is completely different from any he had smelled before… but in the wilderness, deep in the forests away from Eldarers, the smell was absent no matter how hungry, thirsty and tired he was.]

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o enhances social criticism through juxtaposition of artificial and natural environment; a strong sense of smell in town is contrasted with absence of the same in the wilderness.
Through the voice of the writer, The Wizard has given services to many people afflicted with different evils implied by stench. In contrast, he has found tranquility in the world of animals.

Life in town is also portrayed in such a way that the Biblical Sodom and Gomorrah is evoked. Even Kamĩtĩ, in a rhetorical question, wonders the difference between the modern Eldarers and Sodom and Gomorrah: Utīganu wa Sodom na Gomorrha īyo ya tene na Endarers ya rīu wīha? (vol.2.256) [What is the difference between the modern Eldarers and Sodom and Gomorrah?] From the Bible, God, due to its immorality, destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. To this effect, the speaker wants to pass a message that the ills that are happening in modern Eldarers are similar to those that were in Sodom and Gomorrah. Symbolically, modern Eldarers is today’s African state. These African states are full of evil deeds like those that compelled God to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.

The earthily and heavenly Rulers are also juxtaposed. The donkey in which Jesus rode on symbolized humility: Ndīgiri nĩ yo ruithi ruithi ya ūtarĩ (vol.1.30) [The donkey is the “Rolls Royce” of the poor.] According to the Bible, Jesus is supposed to have set a good example of a humble ruler by riding on a donkey. In contrast however, Ruler in Aburĩria rides on a donkey, which is always associated with poverty, his motive being to mock the poor, as portrayed by the writer.

Additionally, the sick and the healer are also juxtaposed. In Mūrogi wa Kagogo’s context, Wizard of the Crow is the doctor and those who queue are the sick. It is through the interaction between the ‘sick” and the ‘doctor’ that we learn what bothers Tajirika. The symbolic nature of the odor is revisited again where the absurdity is
made apparent when the ‘sick’ appears to be wearing smart cloths and very tidy yet they stink. As noted earlier, the stench is symbolic in that it signifies the rot that is in the society and in particular, among the rulers.

The notice: *Nĩgwatuka; wîra nî wahingwo; Roka Rũciũ (vol.1.178)* [It is night, work closed, come tomorrow], is also paradoxical. The queue had started some time past six in the evening yet this is the time most people retire to the house after a day’s work, but Murogi refers to midnight, a time most people have retired to bed, as when darkness started.

Evil and Godliness are also placed hand in hand. This is revealed through the testimony of The Wizard of the Crow: *Nî ndogaga marĩa moru kūrogora marĩa mega.* (vol.3.180) [I only poison evil in pursuit of the good.] Virginia’s proposal to harm her husband after beating her is termed as evil by Wizard of the crow. The Wizard however, portrays that justice should prevail over injustice. Through her, the rights of women are revealed, as well as how the women have come out to fight for them: *Nî manjanji aigana atumia bũrũrinĩ…ñ na mo mahaki?* (vol.3.180)[How many women judges and magistrates do we have in the country…and the bribery?] The writer reveals the power of good against evil. He suggests that with money in hand, one can walk free with an offence committed.

The writer thus juxtaposes how the government deals with the rights of women in court: *ithuĩ nî ithuĩ nyama njeru ya atumia a matuku maya.* (vol.3.185), [we are a new order of justice created by today’s modern woman]. It is therefore absurd for Tajirika to believe that his wife cannot reveal what transpires at their home: *No ningĩ nîtîkîtie na ngoro yake yote aî Vinjinia ndarĩ hîndî angîhaka ageni kagutuî ka mûciî*
(vol.3.187) [He believed that Vinjinia would never say anything about their domestic affairs.] In a twist of events however, Vinjinia informs the women how Tajirika has been beating her: ũyũ mündũ atindaga anumĩtie ngundi ũtukũ na mùthenya

(vol.3.188) [this man rains blows on me day and night.] Vinjinia then vows that she would never be beaten again: wĩra ũcio wa ngundi mwĩrĩ ũtukũ na mùthenya nĩ ndarega mbere ya igooti rĩrĩ (vol.3.190) [I just want to say before you all that I will not accept blows on my body anymore.]

Nyawĩra’s father and that of The Wizard of the Crow also enhance juxtaposition in that whereas Nyawĩra’s father is depicted as yearning for riches, The Wizard of the Crow’s father dislikes anything that comes the easy way. This is depicted through the rhetorical question he poses to Kamĩtĩ: …Kaiĩ waingĩrire ũyũ wa magendo na nĩ ũĩ ndingĩhutia ona ndururu yumĩte kũheenania, kũiya kana kũragana? (vol.3.23). [Or are you into some sort of illegal venture? You know too well that I would not touch even a cent from cheating, robbery or murder.] Nyawĩra’s father on the other hand wishes to be in partnership with Kaniũrũ when the Global bank releases the funds;

Wona mbeca cia mwako ũyũ ciarukio ni Bengĩ ya Ngirũmbu na mwako wambĩrĩrie niĩ nawe no tuonane twiĉirie ũhoro wa kandarathi ya kuhe mwako ũcio ituģĩ na mbaũ (vol.3.15). [I am for the idea that when the Global Bank’s funds are released and the construction starts, both of us can meet and plan on a contract of supplying timber and posts.]
2.2.6 Metonymy as Subversion

Edward (1971) refers metonymy as “substitution of some attributive or suggestive word for what is actually meant”. According to Kövecses (2002:209), “one of the best known metonymy in English is the “hand”, the hand stands for the person. In this, Kövecses gives an example of “a factory hand” (209) which refers to “a factory worker” (209), when we therefore say; we gained an upper hand; it implies we attained an advantage over another person. This is incongruous. Gray (2010) concurs with Kövecses for he refers to metonymy as “the substitution of the name of a thing by the name of an attribute of it, or something closely associated with it.” This is echoed by Wendell (231) when he refers metonymy as “the substitution of one term for another with which it is commonly associated” He gives an example of a pen which is mightier than the sword. Harris (1992) further states that metonymy “is a saying changed from one proper signification to another.” He gives six ways in which it can occur:

“By means of that which is contained for that which contains”, “by means of the author or rule for what is authored or the subject”, by means of what does something for what it does” and by reverse of each of these.”(231)

Attaining an advantage over another is mostly associated with the father of all ills in society; abuse of power. In our study, leaders take advantage of the others by subduing them. This is through oppression, detention, intimidation and execution. It is worth noting that metonymy involves application of an element adjoining or closely associated with the referent. Like similes and metaphors, metonymy stirs our
imagination and makes us recreate for the part; the whole and ourselves the relationship between the thing referred to and the one named.

Nguĩgĩ wa Thion’o has applied various metonymy in his work, Mũrogi wa Kagogo. He has used such words as Mwathani, [Ruler] Kaniũrũ, [the Nose] Nyawĩra, [One who works] Sikiokuu, Tajirika and Machokali just to mention a few. These words/names have reference of their own. Words such as Sikiokuu, Tajirika and Machokali are metonymic.

Nguĩgĩ has applied pastoral metonymy. He names his antagonistic character Mwathani [Ruler] who is the president/Ruler of Aburĩria. The term Mwathani stands for the act undertaken by the ruler; one who rules. The term is associated with the Creator of the universe: God. Ruler has his own commandments that the subjects have to follow. This is illogical and the writer paints him as master and his subjects the servants. The writer enhances the incongruity by depicting the earthily ruler so powerful that he could manipulate the calendar and interchange the pattern of the months:

_Karenda thĩinĩ wa aburĩria yarĩ rungu rwa Mwathani na mĩeri kuma Januari nginya ndithemba yaṛṕumańagĩrĩra kuringana na wendi na itua rĩa mwathani. Aarĩ na pawa ya kĩgarũra mweri o wothe ũtu ke mweri ũria ũngĩ (vol.1. 13) [The yearly calendar in “Aburĩria” was under the control of Ruler who controlled how months followed one another according to his will. He had power to declare any month to be the other one in the year-January to be July for instance.]_
There are some natural phenomena that an earthily ruler cannot alter however. These include climatic changes, months, just to mention a few.

The writer however has painted a ruler who has the power to control all seasons and hence the months. Ngũgĩ depicts the Ruler as having much power as that of heavenly ruler portrayed capable of multiplying loaves of bread and feed a large multitude. Biblically, Jesus fed the multitudes by the use of five loaves and two fish only. In *Mũrogi wa Kagogo*, citizens had turned up in large numbers at the celebration not because of the birthday of the Ruler, but to feast on the cake. Hearing that the cake would be multiplied as did Jesus made people turn up in great numbers:

*Keki iy yo yahota kwenyorangirwo kĩrĩndĩ na yumithie keki nyingĩ ta migate īria ītano tene yenỹurangirwo kĩrĩndĩ nĩ Njĩcũ (vol.1.13)* [It might multiply and feed the masses the way Jesus Christ once did with just five loaves and two fishes.]

The masses believe that ‘Mwathani’ [Ruler] has equal powers to the Biblical ruler, Jesus Christ. Jesus would sacrifice himself for the sake of the subjects. Ngũgĩ portrays the extent to which sycophants of the earthly ruler systematically use manipulative methods to persuade the common people to conform to the wishes of the dictatorial regime: the common man is coerced to abide to his (ruler’s) rules.

The envy for ‘Mwathani’s’ seat [Ruler’s seat] by his minister depicts the powers that it carries:

*Kũmira andũ magakira. Gũkorwo wee nĩ we mũnene wa ũtonga wothe bũrũrinĩ, woiga andũ mamire makamira (vol.2 16)* [You
sneeze and people keep quiet. You hold the key to all the wealth in the land. When you tell the masses to blow their noses, they do so without protest.]

Machokali, one of the ministers in the government of the Ruler associates the seat with the previlege above. Through this, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o accuses all power hungry leaders who wish to ascend to the throne by whatever means in order to rule with an iron fist. In popular usage, in all nations, "dictatorship" is often associated with brutality and oppression. Nevertheless, those who practise it refer to it as ‘ruling’. Ngũgĩ has portrayed Ruler as feared by his subjects. It is thus odd for the masses to keep quiet at a mere sneezing of their Ruler, meaning they are reduced to mere robots following blindly, what the leaders say. The writer thus effectively shows that leaders yearn to ascend to power with an intention of manipulating the citizens.

He (the writer) further reveals the powers of ‘Mwathani’ [Ruler] through testimonies by his sycophants. It is bizarre to get that his followers glorify him more than they glorify God the creator:

*hĩndĩ īmwe nĩ ndaiguire ngoro yakwa īkiuga; Ngai na Mwathani mangĩkorwo marũgamaine hamwe, na rũhuho rũgũithie ngũbia ciao hĩndĩini īmwe, niĩ ndambĩrĩra kuoya ya Mwathani, naaniĩ ndaigu ngoro īkiuga ũguo ngĩamũkĩria, Hereruya (vol.3.83)*[One day, I overheard my own heart saying, if God and Ruler were standing together, and their hats were blown off their heads at the same time, I would pick up the one that belongs to Ruler first, and realizing what my heart had said, I said loudly: Alleluia!]
Through the testimony above, Ngũgĩ successfully reveals the leader of Aburīria as Mwathani [Ruler.] Ruler’s actions are however incongruous since they fail to conform to the Almighty God who had a good purpose for his creation whose commandments are meant to guide them positively and help they live as one people.

The name given to the female protagonist indicates what she does. The term Nyawĩra is a common noun that literally means a hardworking female. At a deep level, Ngũgĩ uses the term to underpin the role played by the character in commenting about the society. Indeed, running through the three volumes of Mũrogi wa Kagogo is the conflict between the lobby group-led by Nyawĩra and the government. This conflict is aptly captured when the Minister Machokali proposes the building of ‘Matheca itu’ [the Tower of Babel] at the expense of taxpayers. Nyawĩra, together with others protest the building by comparing it with excrement: “MUTHECA ITU NI KIRIMA KIA MAI!” (vol.1.303) [Můtheca itu is a hill of excrement]. Bearing in mind that Nyawĩra belongs to a secret lobby group, we can deduce that this is another form of advocacy to influence the public to play an important part in returning to a brief in every individual being responsible for his conduct and deeds with punishment immediate and certain. The common man in particular, is urged to take up arms in order to curb the social classes in their attempt to cement their own ranking above the lower classes in the hierarchy to the detriment of the society in general.

The conflict between the government and lobby groups is best captured at Nyawĩra’s home where Kaniũrũ [the nose] states that he has visited the parents of Nyawĩra to help them protect their daughter since the government is looking for her. Nevertheless, we are aware that his plan to visit them is solely to boast of what he is. Furthermore, it is a lie that he wants to help Nyawĩra bearing in mind that he is a
government informer: Ndoka gūkū tondū thirikari nī īharūrie kūnyita Nyawīra e muoyo kana e kūmba. (vol.2.18) [I am here to inform you that the government is determined to get Nyawīra dead or alive.] His motive is evident when he, Kaniūrū, declares that Nyawīra’s father and his daughter are in trouble. This mirrors ideological differences that exist between human rights activists led by Nyawīra and the oppressive government with Nyawīra becoming a hardened fighter for justice.

Nyawīra, with her opposing, spirit, compels the government to hold her father hostage. In the newspaper: “Eldares Times”, the father to Nyawīra (in presence of her foes) urges his daughter, Nyawīra, to come out of her hiding place, if not, he would disown her. The minister, Silver Sikiokuu, who stands besides Nyawīra’s father is the one given authority by the state’s overall leader to investigate and get Nyawīra whether dead or alive. Though the father urges his daughter to turn herself in, the minister on the other hand declares the position of the government: it will do everything to make sure that Nyawīra and her colleagues are arrested: Sikiokuu aarī mūgwete akiuga atī thirikari ndītiga kīī gitari kīgariūre magīcaria Nyawīra (vol.2.29 [Meaning, Sikiokuu is quoted as saying that the government will leave no stone unturned in its effort to capture Nyawīra.] It is due to her effort to fight for the rights of the society that the government considers Nyawīra a threat.

The writer sheds more light on the role his protagonist Nyawīra plays. He portrays her as determined to help Vinjinia, the wife of Tajirika, know the whereabouts of her husband. Nyawīra succeeds in organizing the other women into forcing the authority to reveal this. The state officers are cornered by women led by her in addressing their predicament. The press has also been invited to shoot a photo of Kaniūrū and Sikiokuu together as well as reporting the organization of the ceremony, only to start
shooting the drama staged by Vinjinia; Tajirika’s wife. Through the press Ngũgĩ suggests that public can be notified what transpires inside the high offices of the governments. He also notes the power that the press holds but which is always ignored. He suggests that the press can manipulate what their audiences want and create a different scenario. This is evident with the outcome of the photos after Nyakïnyua” stage a dance in the presence of Sikiokuu, Kaniũrũ and Vinjinia. Instead of the photographs showing women entertaining the government officials, they portray the women entertaining and dancing for Vinjinia: *Gutirî mbica...itonanagia Vinjinia...ciahanaga ta arî mbica cia atumia makînîra mûnene wao kana mûgeni wao ti Vinjinia* (vol. 2.83) [All photos showed Vinjinia, and other women dancing for their guest of honour/leader: Vinjinia]. True to Nyawĩra’s heroic attributes, she succeeds in outshining Kaniũrũ in the entertainment and when Kaniũrũ signals the “Nyakïnyua” to start the song, they not only dance to castigate the authority, but also pass their intended message instructing Kaniũrũ and Sikiokuu to cater for the needs of Vinjinia. Worth noting is that Nyawĩra was the soloist of the song: *Nyawĩra niwe watongoragia rwĩmbo. Mutumia ũmwe akãmbîrũria gĩtiro nao arĩa angĩ mamukagîrie na ciïko na irumi* (vol.2.41-42). [Nyawĩra was the soloist. One woman led in song, actions and insults while the rest sang along.]

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o reveals how Vinjinia had looked and searched for her husband in all possible places to no avail only to be helped by her female counterparts including Nyawĩra. This is meant to perpetuate the character of Nyawĩra as an industrious and fiery woman.
The writer also portrays Nyawĩra as a controversial person. Her movements do not only baffle the government but also her colleague Wizard of the crow. The Wizard wonders that the government agents leave Nyawĩra at her place without slight knowledge that she even talked to them: *matiga Nyawĩra o hau nja makururia Kamĩtĩ atĩ athiĩ akamonie kĩmamo kĩa Nyawĩra* (vol.2.113) [They have left Nyawĩra outside and picked Kamĩtĩ to go and show them Nyawĩra’s hiding place.] Ngũgĩ is for the idea that those that push the ruling regime for change live among the regime secretly; there can be underground movements, like that of Nyawĩra, which do survive even in hostile regimes.

Ngũgĩ enhances Nyawĩra’s deeds through her reaction after the beating of Vinjinia. He says the cry of Vinjinia was heard by all women in the country including Nyawĩra: *Gũtuĩkaga mbu īrĩa yoigirwo nĩ Vinjinia nĩ yaiguirwo nĩ atumia othe bũrũri mũgima, nginya īgĩkinyĩra Nyawĩra* (vol.2.175) [it was claimed that women all over Aburĩria, including Nyawĩra heard the screams of Vinjinia.] Ngũgĩ shows Nyawĩra contemplating on how whites oppress blacks, men oppress women and the rich oppress and exploit peasants;

*Nyakairũ handũ yarũma thĩ nĩhinyĩrĩrie nĩnyakeru; atumia handũ marũma thĩ nĩ ahinyĩrĩrie nĩ arũme; na arutĩ a wĩra na arĩmi anyinyĩ handũ marũma thĩ nĩ ahinyĩrĩrie nĩ ndonga cia múthithũ na cia múgũnda* (vol.2.177) [The black race is oppressed by the white race; female by male; peasant by landlord; and the worker by the capitalist.]
This suggests that those who are mostly oppressed and exploited are the black women, the workers and peasant farmers; *Kwa ũguo gĩkundi kĩrĩa kĩhinyirĩrie mũno thĩnĩ wa thĩ nĩ atumia airũ aruti-a-wĩra na arĩmi –anyinyi* (vol.2.177) [It follows from this that the female worker and peasant is most oppressed.] Through Nyawĩra, the rights of women are revealed and how they have come out to fight for them: *ũtumia wa atumia no ta guoya ũrĩa werirwo atĩ waneneha mũno ũtũũragia ũkĩa mũcii* (vol.2.181) [The silence of women in the face of male violence is the nurse maid of poverty and more violence.]

The writer illustrates how women have resolved to fight male domination. Women take Tajirika hostage: *ta kimenye kĩgegearo gĩake rĩrĩa oonire atĩ othe kenda maarĩ atumia!* (vol.2.183) [Imagine the way he was shocked when he learnt that all of them were women.] His (Tajirika’s) feeling that women are powerless is fruitless when three women led by Nyawĩra overpower him: *akĩgeria kwĩnyagunyia no nĩ ta ũyu warĩ muohithanie na thĩ na cuma kana agaikarĩrwo nĩ ihiga kana mũgogo* (vol.2.184) [trying to wrestle himself from their hold, he seemed like one who had been soldered like to the ground or been stuck under a boulder.]

After the beating of Vinjinia, the writer highlights those who fought for the rights of women. The women led by Nyawĩra come with a “court” of women’s rights: *ithuĩ nĩ ithuĩ nyama nj eru ya atumia a matukũ maya.* (vol.2.185) [We are a new order of justice created by today’s modern woman.]. The writer’s portrayal of women beating Tajirika culminates their rights. The women’s court resolves to give him an equivalence of “boxing” he had given his wife; *watuĩrwo ngundi o ta iria ũraĩgĩrũre mũtumia waku mwĩrĩ* (vol.2.191) [You are sentenced to receive as many blows as you rained on your wife.] Through Nyawĩra, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o successfully propagates
the rights of women and asserts that men and women are equal. There is also the concept that women can join hands and fight against the brutality leveled against them by men.

Nyawĩra’s deeds are made manifest by how she, together with the other protesters, counter attack the state’s functions. There is contrast in the statements: *Mũthenya wa bũrũri kwũyerũhia and muthenya wa bũruri gwĩciara* (vol.2.228) [A day of self-renewal in the country and a day of rebirth of the country.] This is arranged by the party of voices of the people under the leadership of Nyawĩra. In this, they arrange for a strike among all workers;

*Makĩanĩrĩra kũgĩe mũgomo wa aruti a wĩra a bũrũri mũthenya ũcio. Ituĩka rĩa thayũ na gũkeno riũke* (vol.2.228) [they called for a one day general strike and festivities throughout the country to mark and celebrate the day; a joyous revolution of all workers.]

Nyawĩra’s efforts to advocate for better terms of employment through an uprising against the government are made eminent here.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o reaches to the first-class deeds of Nyawĩra when he portrays Mũrogi wa Kagogo glorifying her. He refers to Nyawĩra as “work”: *Nyawĩra nĩ wĩra na nũũ wanyu ũtarutaga wĩra?* (vol.2.250) [Nyawĩra is work, and who among you does not work?]
Through Mũrogi wa Kagogo, the writer attains his climax when he regards Nyawĩra: *Nyawĩra nĩ inyuĩ. Nyawĩra nĩ ithuũ ciana cia Aburĩria na Abirika tũteguthitũkania kabira ũno na ũrĩa, ndini ũno na ũrĩa, atumia na arume, ciana na andũ agima* (vol.2.251) [Nyawĩra is you. Nyawĩra is; the children of Abururia and Africa, without discriminating against any tribe, religion, women, men and children.] His attitude towards the joint effort is revealed when the masses answer the question: *ũrĩa wothe ũraigua atũ nĩ we Nyawĩra ũcio nĩ eyumũrie arũgame tũmuone* (vol.2.251) [If you know that you are Nyawĩra, please rise and be seen.] This is the response of the masses:

\[Mũtumia ũmwe akĩrũgama na igũrũ akiuga, nĩ nĩi Nyawĩra. \]
\[Kamũira andũ mamũrore nake ũŋgĩ akĩrũgama akiuga nĩ nĩi Nyawĩra. Nake mũndũrũme akĩrũgama na igũrũ akiuga ota guo. ũcio akĩrũmũrirwo nĩ ũŋgĩ na ũŋgĩ, kũharo gĩothe\] (vol.2.251) [One woman stood up and said, I am Nyawĩra. Hardly had the eyes of the people turned to her when a man stood up and said, I am Nyawĩra; he was followed by every other woman and man until the entire assembly proclaimed itself Nyawĩra]

It is encouraging to see that even men have realized the efforts that Nyawĩra has made and so, he declares that he will follow suit. Ngũgĩ by this suggests that all men and women must wake up and work together towards attaining a sober society. How to attain it is guided by the response of Nyawĩra when Kamũtũ asks what is required for one to join their party:

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The above principles describe what Nyawîra is. It can be summarized that what makes her is hard work and being focused.

Another instance of metonymy is by use of a character called Kaniûrû. Kaniûrû, a villain in the book Mûrogi wa Kagogo, can mean “a small nose.” This is associated with the idiom “poking the nose.” This means that Ngûgî has labeled the character Kaniûrû on the basis of his interference with other peoples’ affairs to an extent of
telling on them to the state. This is evident when Ruler orders Nyawĩra to be captured either dead or alive. Even though surrounded by Matũ, maïtho na maniũrũ ma Mwathani (vol.1.262), [The ears, eyes, and noses of Ruler safeguarding his welfare.] The three terms: ears, noses and eyes are applied to imply a spy and informer. According to the senses, ears are meant for hearing, noses for smelling and eyes for seeing. The government spies led by Kaniũrũ are alert to arrest the culprit. As such, the writer portrays Kaniũrũ as the one who had informed on Nyawĩra. Nevertheless, the officer in charge of that operation leaked the information to Nyawĩra unknowingly. No rĩrĩa aiguire rĩtwa Kaniũrũ, akĩmenya o rĩmwe hatari nganja atĩ nĩ we weteretiwo anyitwo. (vol.1.267) [When she heard the name Kaniũrũ, she knew without doubt that, they were looking for her.] This shows that due to Kaniũrũ’s poking his nose about, he knew the whereabouts of Nyawĩra.

Kaniũrũ, the deputy chairperson to the commission of inquiry on the origin of queues, intends to overthrow his boss Tajirika. This is made manifest by the way he handles Tajirika, the chairman and his boss. Kaniũrũ, who is his deputy, has a government stamp yet he himself (Tajirika) as the chair of “Matheca itu” does not. He therefore wonders: Nũũ waheire Kaniũrũ rũtha rwa kähũthĩra mũhũri wa thirikari? (vol.2.31)[Who gave Kaniũrũ authority to use a government’s stamp?] In this, the writer portrays how junior officers like Kaniũrũ struggle to ascend to power by disregarding their seniors. He is depicted as summoning his chairperson, Tajirika, to the commission and the way he pokes his nose is brought out clearly when he orders the arrest of Tajirika after ignoring his (Kaniu’s) summon: Aiyĩrirwo gwake mucιũ utuku gatagatĩ nĩ borithi agiikio thutha wa randiruba ta rũtungu (vol.2.34) [The police came for him at midnight. They threw him into the police vehicle like a log.]
The arrest of Tajirika following Kaniuru’s instructions show that he, Kaniũrũ, would like to hear what Tajirika knows about the issue of queues.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o additionally shows Kaniũrũ poking his nose at Mũrogi wa Kagogo. Initially, we are aware that “Mũrogi” had earlier warned him against revealing any information: *Ndikanaigue kunu kana cere cia wonire kana waigua kwa Mũrogi wa Kagogo* (vol.2.100) [I must never hear that you have repeated to others ears, what you have seen or heard at the Wizard of the Crow’s.] This is triggered by the fact that Mũrogi wa Kagogo is aware of Kaniũrũ’s traitorous nature. The writer portrays Kaniũrũ contravening the warning and as he goes ahead to share the experience: *ũhoro wa magegania nĩ ũyũ: mũrogi ũcio nĩ aramenyire rĩtwa na wĩra wakwa* (vol2.1.104) [The most amazing thing about this sorcerer is that he knew my name and what I do for a living.]

Ominously, the writer brings out Kaniũrũ’s character when he portrays Wizard’s comment about him: *Kaniũru nĩ ndaa ya bũrũri* (vol.2.109) [Kaniũrũ is the country’s louse.] A louse sucks blood from its victim, relying on someone for its survival. Comparing Kaniũrũ to a louse then means that for his survival, he has to rely on somebody. It is indeed very clear that he informs on people who are against the government for his survival and this is well illustrated in his proposal to use Mũrogi as bait in an effort to capture Nyawĩra. This is when he assumes that Mũrogi will honour their request if promised a prize of money and leadership; *Mbeca na ũnene. Gũtirũ ũthũire gũkuruhana na ũnene na ũtonga* (vol.2.105) [Nobody loaths to rub shoulders with money and power.] This depicts his character brought out above as he assumes that everyone is corrupt, just like him, that he/she can do anything for money.
Kaniũrũ’s character as a sycophant betrays him as he pretends to be obedient in the presence of Ruler:

*hĩndĩ īmwe nĩ ndaiguire ngoro yakwa īkiuga; Ngai na Mwathani mangĩkorwo marũgamainesamwe, na rũhuho rũgũithie ngobia ciao hĩndũni īmwe, niĩ ndambĩrĩra kuoya ya Mwathani, naaniĩ ndaigua ngoro īkiuga ũguo ngĩamũkĩria, Hareruya (vol.3.83)*[One day, I overheard my heart saying, if God and Ruler were standing together side by side and their hats were blown off their heads at the same time, I would pick up Ruler’s first. And without realizing, I echoed: Halleluia.

The writer personifies Kaniũrũ’s heart to portray the fact that, he does not only poke his nose into other peoples’ affairs, but also into his own heart. It is illogical therefore to learn that even the heart talks. This is applied by Ngūģĩ wa Thiong’o to depict the extent of sycophancy played out by followers to their bosses particularly in Africa.

Kaniũrũ’s character is heightened by the way he is portrayed by the writer on the plot to exterminate Mũrogi wa Kagogo:

*Abangĩte ũrĩa gĩkundi gĩake gigũkaba Mũrogi wa Kagogo mwena ũyũ na ũyũ… kĩrĩa yuthi yake yoĩ nĩ atĩ thutha wa umbũri no yo īkumagaria Mũrogi wa Kagogo (vol.3.237) [He had already organized the group that would cover the wizard of the crow on either side. The official plan was for Kaniũrũ to eliminate the wizard of the crow.]*
Kaniũrũ bravery to fight the enemy of the Ruler makes him appointed minister of security in the government of Aburĩria. By this, Ngũgĩ depicts how the sycophants are rewarded based on their loyalty to their rulers.

In conclusion, Chapter Two has deduced that Ngũgĩ has applied exaggeration, ambiguity, paradox, irony, juxtaposition and metonymy as forms of semantic incongruities in a deliberate manner.
CHAPTER THREE

LEXICAL DEVIATIONS IN NGŨGĨ WA THIONG’O’S MUROGI WA KAGOGO.

3.0 Introduction

This chapter embarks on how and why Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has applied lexical items in an incongruous manner. Just like chapter two, this chapter identified sub chapters to tackle forms of lexical absurdity. These are: neologism, foreign words, taboo words and big words. As Mugubi (2005) defines, lexical deviation is “transgressing principles governing the word-stock by coming up with non-existent words using obsolete word forms, borrowing from other languages or employing words considered inappropriate for a particular context.” The lexical deviance therefore comes out as unheard of, unusual, unexpected or unpredicted. All these amount to incongruity. Mugubi (2005:85) goes further to state that; “lexical divergence is intended for clarity and forcefulness”, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has a purpose for applying lexical incongruity. As stated above, our study identified forms of lexical incongruity in Ngũgĩ’s works Mũrogi wa Kagogo and subsequently analysed their significance in communicating his social vision.

3.1 Neologism as Deviation

Ngũgĩ made use of Neologisms. Mugubi (2005:86) defines neologism as “a writer’s liberty to come up with new words: Words that never before belonged to the pool of language in question.” Generally, it means novelty of the use of words. Neologism is commonly of two forms: affixation and compounding. According to Mugubi,
Writers may opt to give either new and unique suffixes or prefixes to certain words. By so doing, the formed word(s) bears a totally new meaning. In compounding, Mugubi (87) terms it as a situation whereby “a writer blends or joins two or more independent words to form one word.” In this case, new compound words are formed by the process of combining two or more lexical items mostly by use of a hyphen.

In Mũrogi wa Kagogo, we are told of ‘Mwathani Mũtagatibu Rayithi II wa Njamũhũrĩ huru ya Aburĩria (vol. 1. 3) [The Excellency the second president of Aburĩria] as the ruler of Aburĩria. The noun Mwathani connotatively means the one who rules, but has a nuance that this person is awful. In addition, Ngūgĩ has amplified it from ‘wathani’ (vol.1.5) [Regime.] The dull enunciation of the prefix wa- suggests the wickedness of the sadistic ruler and his dehumanized leadership. “…tondũ aingĩrire wathani-inĩ wake abĩrĩte rũhio na kuhĩria ndotono, acehage andĩ ūrĩo na ūmotho, magũwage thĩ mu ta mĩramba ya marigũ” (vol.1.11) [For it was well known that he seized power with flaming swords, the bodies of his victims falling down left and right like banana trunks]. This suggests that the Ruler ascended into power by force.

The ruthlessness with which the ruler is associated with is captured in the name used to describe his army; ‘Manjeci’ (vol.1.9). It would suffice to simply call this ‘Njeci’, which loosely means, army. In addition, the narrator uses the augmentative form ma-, which puts the noun in the class of inanimate objects, to emphasize the abomination of the army. The leaders in power terrorize the citizens instead of providing them with security. During the struggle to challenge the tyrant, soldiers do anything with impunity; killing people taken or suspected to be going against the wishes of the Ruler. This is illustrated by mass killing of people after demonstrating at the occasion.
of rebirth of a nation. The lobbyists are not spared from betrayal. Nyawĩra flees to wilderness despite being Tajirika’s secretary. This illustrates that those in power control the freedom of expression to suit their needs. The dictator/tyrant uses his position to do things that do not befit a head of state. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o therefore reveals his attitude towards the army. The suffix *(ma-)* portrays this.

We have another example where ministers have to build a skyscraper in honour of Ruler’s birthday. They refer to it as ‘*Matheca itu’* (vol. 1. 18). The use of the prefix *ma-* captures the height of the building. It is a tall house. Similarly, the magnitude of the building is enhanced by *kĩ-* as in ‘*Kĩnyũmba  kĩarĩĩka’* (vol.1 .18) [When that big house is completed]. The modification of this through the prefix *kĩ-*, which ordinarily would be ‘*nyũmba ĩyo yarĩka’* [When the house is completed], emphasizes the extravagance associated with its construction. From the attitude of the narrator, the skyscraper would cost so much money that even the economy of the country would suffer. The donors therefore have to be incorporated for its completion. Through the incongruity, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o satirizes some of projects undertaken by governments without considering their viability, with leaders failing to take into consideration, their governments’ status before embarking on plans to start such projects that require huge amounts of funds. Worse still, followers of one leader can do anything just to please him. Thus, it makes it laughable for the ministers to design a skyscraper as a token for their leader on his birthday.

Ngũgĩ creates a nauseating attitude towards the altar in the cathedral in relation to Ruler as seen through the prefix that is applied to describe it in the text *Mĩrogi wa Kagogo*. A case in point are the names attributed to the Bible and the table on which it is placed; ‘*Karĩkanĩro aritarĩainĩ, kametha kau kainainire tagaka karanyegenyio nĩ*
mũndũ ngingya kabuku kau gakĩgũa thĩ (vol.1 31) [A small Bible on the altar, the small table shook like someone was shaking it until the small book fell down]. The prefix ka- signifies the attitude of contempt. The writer here addresses the issue of how leaders honor neither the house of the Lord nor the Holy Bible. They belittle both the Bible and even the table it is placed on.

There are other objects whose nominal description deviates from the grammatical norm. This again is mainly achieved through the use of augmentative and diminutive prefixes of the nouns in question. A good example is the dressing of the men who had queued for temporary jobs. ‘... tũthuti twa mĩtumba arĩa mathomaga tũgathĩti kana magatũkũnja magatũthĩnikĩra mĩhuko ya tuo ya na nja’ (vol 1.161), [...]the cheap second hand suits, those who were reading substandard newspapers or folded and tucked them in their outside pockets] The prefix tũ- reveals the feelings of the narrator. The prefix tũ- in the above quotation has two implications: One, in relation to the suits they wear, it portrays the extent of poverty associated with unemployment. Secondly, the newspapers they read are as well cheap. This means that despite them being learned, they cannot afford a standard newspaper. Through the use of the prefix therefore, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o pities these men whose suits and ties could otherwise be simply referred to as ‘thuti’ and ‘tai’ [suits and ties].

At the same time, the writer satirizes the society and the government that in spite of offering education, it is not ready to create job markets and the few opportunities that exist are filled through corruption.
Similarly, the queue of rich and influential men and the way they clad contrasts with that of the unemployed through the use of prefix ma-, ‘andũ othe a mûhari ûcio mehumbîte mathuti ma mîtumîre mîthemba mûngî (vol.1.160) [All the occupants of that queue were clad in expensive suits of different designs]. This is not just thuti (suit) but mathuti (expensive suits). The prefix ma- implies the opulence which the wearers of the attires are associated with. The description of the attire can also suggest their occupation and motive. The writer at his best suggests an embellishment, fueled by corruption and influence. This implies that their motive is destructive and ill fated. It indeed turns out to be the case in the story.

Another intriguing process of word-formation in the text is evident where Ngũgĩ has transfigures already existing words to form new ones. In the Gĩkũyũ text, the writer stretches his imagination to come up with new lexical items that appeal to our sense of aesthetics. The writer often makes them easier to grasp by readers who are not native speakers of the language. This is enhanced through adding suffixes to nouns to form other words one ending with –o. The expressions below serve to illustrate our argument: wathitimwo nĩ thitima (vol.1.7), Nyoka inyokoranio nacio (vol. 1 .28. mûbĩa na mûbĩyîrwo, kana mûtahîkio na mûtahîkania (vol. 1. 15). The terms; wathitimwo, inyokoranio, mûbĩyîrwo and mûtahîkio are formed from the words; thitima, nyoka, mûbĩa and mûtahîkania respectively. When the words are translated to another language, they lose their aesthetic value altogether.

The use of Gĩkũyũ language has also helped Ngũgĩ to appropriate and formulate personal nouns which have contextual symbolic significance and which have thus contributed to the overall lexical absurdity. This includes the names and nicknames of most characters in the story that are derived from common Gikũyũ words. The
ruler’s detectives for instance are referred to as, ‘Matũ, Maitho na Maniũrũ’ (vol.1. 262) [ears, eyes and noses]. In a deeper level, ears are meant to mean people who eavesdrop on others who perpetuates anti government propaganda. The eyes represent those used by governments to oversee the implementation of their (governments’) policies. Noses on the other hand are tasked with detecting any threat to the regime. Here, the writer uses it as a proper noun to represent sycophants who work for the welfare of their ruler at the expense of the society. Indeed, running through the novel is the conflict between Ruler’s detectives and the lobbyists as they compete for supremacy. The three names, therefore, have got significant connotations that contribute to thematic and character development in the story.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has also applied compounding in his work Mũrogi wa Kagogo mostly through combining foreign words and words from the language of the Gĩkũyũ text. The writer has therefore come up with such words as Mani-pawa (vol.1.73), [manpower] Ndigiri-pawa (vol.1.73), degree-power] Mwathani-plaza (vol.1.78), [Ruler-plaza] Mwathani square (vol.1.79) Ruler-square] Mwathani- stadium (vol.1.79) [Ruler’s-stadium].

 Democratically, a leader should be elected or chosen by the people, but in this case, Ngũgĩ shows how Aburĩria’s ruler came into power. As mentioned earlier ; “…tondũ aingĩrire wathani-inĩ wake abũrũte rũhiu na kũhiũria ndotono, acehage andũ ūrĩo na ūmotho, magũwage thĩ mu ta mũramba ya marigũ”(vol.1.11) [for it was well known that he came into power by a flaming sword, bodies of his victims falling left and right like banana trunks.] Ngũgĩ applies the imagery of banana trunks to show how a ruthless ruler takes over a government through bloody coup. Evidently, opponents are butchered and are killed in great numbers. The ruthlessness of the leader is further
revealed when he is depicted as hanging skulls of his most hated enemies on walls and others from ceilings in a chamber half a museum and half a temple. “Kanyũmba kau kaarĩ ta nuthu hekarũ na nuthu mithiamu” (vol.1.11) [The chamber was seemingly half a museum and half a temple.] A museum is where exhibits relating to wars that rulers have fought in can be seen. As the statement above suggests, dictatorship is outstanding. It is imperative to note that in the text, the authoritarian leader’s desire to subjugate and demonstrate that power does not end at torturing and inflicting pain on a living body. The performance of state power is further demonstrated through the disparate ways in which the dead bodies are treated: Gũtuĩkaga atĩ arookaga gwĩthamba mwĩrĩ wothe na thakame ya thũ ciake īrĩa yaigitwo rĩburĩnji (vol.1.11) [It was alleged that he bathed in his foes’ blood, which was stored in a refrigerator, every morning]

Further, there are other words Ngũgĩ has formed to formulate numerous sorts of political or rhetorical ends. The novel is sated with violence which reflects the ruthlessness and inhumanity of Mwathani’s regime. Apparently, violence is used by the regime as a powerful tool to assert power. This violence is directed towards imagined or real enemies who dare contest the state’s power. The state that should protect its citizens is portrayed as having exposed its people to brutality in order to show its power. Therefore, words such as senior yuthiwing’a (vol.1.313) [senior-youth winger], Nyonga-nyoka (vol.1.28) [snake-killer], Rũĩ Rũtune (vol.2.221) [Red River] are words coined by the dictatorial regime for its selfish gain. The term senior yuthiwing’a [senior-youth winger] above is coined to reveal a post created by the dictator with the purpose of recruiting youngsters who would be loyal to him in hunting down dissidents. To this effect, the youth winger comes up with a
terminology *Nyonga-nyoka* [snake-killer] in outlining their action. The ‘*nyoka*’ [snake] are the dissidents and ‘*nyonga*’ [kill] is the action taken-assassinate.

*Rũũ Rũtune* [Red River] is another jargon that has been applied with a purpose. It symbolizes the blood spilled by mass killing committed by the dictatorial regime; which is engaged in ruthless efforts to get rid of actual or likely enemies. Opponents usually disappear or are summarily killed rather than arrested. As the term hints, *Rũũ Rũtune* [Red river] implies spilling of blood to an extent that it flows like a river. The metaphorical sense alluded to in the text is that the amount of blood that is shed is a lot. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s choice of the jargon thus conveniently captures the level of violence by the regime which leads to massive bloodshed. This is well illustrated by the disappearance of a minister who has fallen out with the dictator. Ŭreciragia wĩ mũgĩ mũnɔ nĩ ũndũ wa ndingirii icio ciaku... Mũkungi aakorire mũcemi. (vol.3.156) [You thought you were more cunning than I am just because of your degrees … a cunning robber met his match in a stealthy thief.] These are the words of the dictator. The writer portrays him confessing he is involved with the disappearance into the red river.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has applied compounding in the formation of characters’ names. *Macho kali* (vol.1.14), [dangerous eyes] *Sikio kuu* (vol.1.15) [Big ears] and *Big Ben* (vol.1.16) are all blended by joining a noun and an adjective. As the names suggest, leaders are portrayed as the most privileged in the society. They have access to everything they need so long as their trust is the dictator. Through the sycophancy, Ngũgĩ depicts a form of power structure in which power effectively rests with a small segment of society distinguished based on loyalty. For instance, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of State and the Minister of Security in Ruler’s government
have one thing in common; to seek favors from Ruler through unorthodox means. They decide to modify their eyes, ears and lips respectively by making them bigger, in order to please Ruler. To mention, Machokali – the minister of Foreign Affairs—travels to England to have his eyes enlarged:

No muthenya umwe akumbuka nginya Randani, kwangeretha, kuria aingirire thibitarine ne, ti undu wa kurwara, aca, ati ngetha maitho make mathinjwo manenehio ... mahote kuona thu cia mwathani ona iri kuraya (vol.1.15) [Then one day, he flew to England where he went to a major London hospital, not because he was ill, but to have his eyes enlarged to be able to spot the enemies of Ruler from afar].

This shows how leaders in Africa employ any means, however crude, to ascend to power. Evidently, Machokali through the crude means is thereafter appointed minister. Similarly, the minister of state in Ruler’s office follows suit and takes a flight to France where he has his ears enlarged in a Paris hospital, so as to be able to eavesdrop private conversations better. Ngugi wa Thiong’o this way reveals the folly of the ministers’ actions, which they commit at the expense of their subjects:

Akioya ndege arorete Barithi kwabaranja kuria aathinjirwo matu makinenehio ati ngetha, ota uria oigire kianiriroini kia ngathiti aiguagire Mwathani ona maria marahehanwo ndumaini....(vol.1.15)[He flew to France to have his ears enlarged, as he had proclaimed in the press, so as to be able to eavesdrop on even the faintest of whispers made under the cover of darkness.]

Just like the above two, the third one followed suit:
Benjamin Mambo nake aambire gũkinya makinya ma Sikiokuu agiithi
Barĩthi aï akongererwo rūrimī nǐgetha aï akĩaria cia Mwathani
akaiguagwo kona ciothe cia Aburĩria (vol.1.16) [Benjamin Mambo
also decided to emulate Sikiokuu. He flew to Paris to have his tongue
elongated to enable him be heard more loudly and clearly all over
Abururia whenever he spoke about Ruler]

Other compounded words are; *Memba-mbunge* (vol.1.18) [Member of Parliament].
*Matheca itu* [The sky scraper] (vol.1.18), *Mchawi Kagogo* [Wizard of the Crow],
*meri –ya- riéra* (vol.1.20) [Air-ship], *Askari wa Manjini* (vol.3.11) [Spiritual police]
Some of these are imported words originating from other languages other than
Gĩkũyũ. Typically, they are used to express ideas that have no equivalent term in the
indigenous language.

Another interesting stylistic aspect in *Mũrogi wa Kagogo* is the way the author has
introduced words that are not indigenous to the lexicon of the Gĩkũyũ language. This
is word-formation through coinage, borrowing, blending, clipping and compounding.
We have a host of borrowed words from the English language with numerous words
having their pronunciation corrupted in Mũrogi wa Kagogo. These include words
such as *Ngurubuinĩ* (Vol.1:47) [in the group] *theero* (vol.2.134) [Cell],*thore*
(vol.2:141) [Sorry], *Mathekeretarĩ* (vol.2:57)[Secretaries] *Ndigirii* (vol.2:68)
[Degree], *Mathindĩthi* (vol. 3:3) [Mercedes], *Ndagĩtarĩ* (vol. 3:9) [Doctor], Kambineti
(vol. 3:163) [Cabinet], *kĩrathi* (vol.3:337) [Class], that are commonly used by the
speakers of the Gĩkũyũ language. As a stylistic strategy, the use of some borrowed
words captures the speech behavior of the ordinary people while others have
humorous effects in the story. This is especially in dialogue where the expected
enunciation of the words is amusing, it being an imitation of their English pronunciation. Words such as *burubaganda cia India* (vol. 2:63), [Indians’ propaganda] *Manĩinja wa bengĩ* (vol. 2:56), [The bank manager] *Bengĩ ya Ngirũmbu* (vol.2:55) [Global bank], are bound to sound amusing when uttered.

3.2 Foreign words as Deviation

A foreign word comes as a result of borrowing. Hoffer (2005) sees it as a process of importing linguistic items from one linguistic system into another. Crystal (1997) terms borrowing as the introduction of words or other linguistic features from one language to another. Bayton (1977) terms borrowing as the transfer of lexical materials across language boundaries. Crystal (1987) says that a loan word is a word borrowed from one language and incorporated into another.

Borrowing should not be confused with code switching. Lipski (2005) notes that borrowing means donor language words have been incorporated into the lexicon of the recipient language and are therefore part of linguistic competence of the nature speakers of the target language. On the other hand, code switching includes linguistic items that occur spontaneously in the target language discourse, but which are not part of the lexicon of the recipient language.

The use of foreign words provides variation in lexical choices. This is achieved, for instance, in way these words are used in dialogue. It is a common habit among literate Gĩkũyũ language speakers to talk in a mixture of languages. We find this in quite a number of conversations held in the story. The dialogues are laced with Swahili, English and French words. This contributes in the description of characters. The languages applied range from Kiswahili, Sheng, English, French and others.
The dictatorial regime is also portrayed applying English register that can only be understood by the learned few. The use of foreign words has also achieved humorous and satiric effects in the story. The narrator for instance ridicules people who cannot speak their mother tongue but are eloquent in foreign languages. Such people are evidently a big embarrassment. This is what the narrator implies when he highlights:

*The Kaniũrũ reports on the origins of queuing Mania and its possible connection with anti government activities and a secret report on acts of treason* (Vol. 3.61), *This has absolutely nothing to do with bribery or even hints of corruption* (vol. 3. 77), *Mwathani Advisory Council on the mind of the Nation, na Permanent personal Africhiatrist wa Mwathani* (vol. 3. 229), *No vacancy Today! For jobs come tomorrow* (vol.166).

More satire is achieved in the use of foreign words by Mwathani [Ruler] and his ministers as they converse with officers from Global Bank. They seek to use foreign words at the slightest opportunity. This is so because they have an image to create for their audience especially the foreign investors whom they are striving to impress. The government is determined to win the Global Bank’s heart into financing the construction of ‘Matheca itu’. Through his characters, Ngũgĩ wants to suggest the attitude of Africans towards speaking in a foreign language, such that the more alienated one is from his roots, the greater, it appears, the glory one gets; the more westernized, the closer one gets to the crown!
3.3 Taboo words as Deviation

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has applied taboo words in his work Mũrogi wa Kagogo. Mugubi (2005) has stated that “writers choose to ignore the rule about language etiquette and deliberately incorporate vulgarities in their art in order to communicate effectively and plausibly. The use of taboo words and euphemism is of relevance to a study of the stylistic effects of the Gĩkũyũ language in a literary text. This is because they are aspects of language use that are pertinent to certain socio-cultural aspects of the community.

Traditionally, Gĩkũyũ culture sets high moral standards especially in matters of sexuality. Decorum and use of polite language is required of every member of the society. This to some extent explains why there is a scant use of taboo words as it is a social abomination. Euphemism thus tends to be more prevalent than taboo words. It is in the light of the above observations that we analyse the use of taboo words and euphemism in Mũrogi wa Kagogo. There are a few instances of the use of polite and impolite language in the novel, which incidentally, seem to take place together. This is specifically found in the speeches of Mwathani and some of his followers.

Generally speaking, Mwathani strikes us as interesting if abominable in his use of language. He has an incurable inclination towards vulgarity. During his encounter with Sikiokuu over the lobbyists’ interference with his government, he indigantly says to Sikiokuu: “ĩ gati gaka ũratinda ũkiuga thũ ciakwa na cia bũrũri nĩ kĩ?” (vol. 1. 158) [You cunt, who do you always say are my enemies and the country’s enemies?]. The idea of a ruler uttering such a word as “ass hole” in public is both laughable and nauseating.
We are treated to more obscenity when we encounter Sikiokuu and Tajirika’s conversation. The two are arrogant and obscene: ‘Māũndũ ma nguĩko njogomu nĩ ma thũngũ’ (vol. 2. 150), [The issue of sodomy is related to whites] ‘ndiraria cia nguĩko’ (vol. 2. 150), [I am not talking about sex]. Their conversation legitimizes their base tendencies and their exploitation of women. For them, women are inconsequential. They are objects of sexual gratification. Thus their conversation is in the context of their many wives and ‘sugar girls’. The men brag about their sexual exploits.

Obscenity is also eminent on the second theory that explains Mwathani’s sickness:

Gũgũtuĩka njuĩrĩ īrũgamũrũre Mwathani we mwene, na handũ ha ītonyio nda īgererio mũthuti-inĩ, ta īrĩa ngi ciekagwo, gũgũtuĩka njuĩrĩ īgererio kanua ga thenge. Nĩgetha atĩ njuĩrĩ ndĩkone hakumira, thenge īgĩtumwo marima marĩa mṳgwanja ma mwĩrĩ, mwenji anjĩtie na mũthuti (vol.1.4) [It is rumored that the hair represented Ruler himself.

Instead of the hair being passed through the mouth, just like how the flies were being passed, it was decided to pass it through the goat’s mouth. And for the hair not to get an exit, the goat had its seven holes of the body stitched, the barber starting with its ass hole.]

The significant words in the above statement are “mũthuti” [ass hole.] and njuĩrĩ [hair] that represented Mwathani [Ruler]. Though the application of taboo word “mũthuti” [ass hole.], Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o satirizes the means by which Ruler’s sycophants try to no avail to cleanse secretly, ills committed by their leader.
The lobbyists’ feeling towards the governments’ plan to erect a skyscraper is as well revealed through the use of taboo words. According to them, the building is just excrement; “Matheca itu nĩ kĩrĩma kĩa mai! Matheca itu nĩ Mai biù” (vol. 1.303), [The skyscraper is just a hill of excrement, the building is total excrement]. At the surface, the statement may sound vulgar and therefore incongruous. Nevertheless, it turns out to be sensible at its deeper level. Through this, the lobby group wonders how a government can embark on constructing a house which will shake the economy of the country, without considering the welfare of the poor. Their attitude towards the building therefore is that it will be as useless as any hill of feaces.

Further, use of taboo words is portrayed in the description of Tajirika’s behaviour after his arrest and subsequently spending in a cell for quite some time. He dares the cell’s security with a bucket full of his excrement. This is revealed by information given to Sikiokuu by officer commanding the station: “Haha he na mūgwate ūrūgamītie kambi ng’ima na ndoo ya mai” [There is a prisoner here who has held the whole station hostage with excrement.] The mention of “mai” [Excrement] sounds odd. Of concern to the higher authority though, is the reaction of journalists if they happen to report the case:

ĩ ūndũ ūyũ ūngĩkinyĩra andũ a ngathĩti ați mwene gĩũ wa mwako wa Matheca itu nĩ aronirwo atengeretie thigari cia Mwathani na ndoo ya mai.... MWENE GITI WA MATHECA ITU GUTENGERIA THIGARI NA NDOO YA MAI. (vol.2. 131) [Suppose the issue reaches journalists, that the chairman of Matheca itu was seen chasing Ruler’s police with a bucket of excrement… suppose they consider it as the headline: THE CHAIRMAN OF MARCHING TO HEAVEN GIVES MARCHING
Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has applied the term “mai” [excrement] as a lexical deviation to portray the folly of the ruler’s security. At the same time, he wants to reveal the inhuman and pathetic conditions of the cells whereby a prisoner is not allowed to go for a call of nature freely but is rather provided with a bucket to use for his calls. The writer also suggests the crucial role of media: dissemination of information. Through the taboo word, the writer portrays the media articulating accurate and readily available information to the citizens.

Vulgarity is also illustrated in Mũrogi wa Kagogo’s comment on Ruler’s sickness; “Mwathani wĩ na ihu. Kĩrĩa ũrĩciara gĩtiũĩo” (vol. 3: 54, 58), [Your lordship, you are pregnant. What you will give birth to is not known]. There are two taboo words in the statement: ‘ihu’ [pregnancy] and ‘ũrĩciara’ [you give birth to]. In normal circumstances where euphemism is observed, a speaker ought to refer pregnancy as someone expectant. Likewise, giving birth ought to be delivering. Though the use of the two; “ihu” and “ũrĩciara’ are taboo words, the writer satirizes the nature of some leaders. He portrays them as people who do not consult when making decisions. This is the case with countries without democracy.

Silence of a ruler can make his/her subjects nervous since no one, even the close allies, has a clue of what will happen next. As a dictator, the ruler is equated with; “Bũrũri wĩ na ihu na kĩrĩa ũrĩciara gitiũĩo” (vol.3.49) [The country is pregnant and what it will give birth to is not known.]
Vulgarity is also distinguished at the reaction of Tajirika upon the blows rained on him by women. The women court resolves to give him an equivalent of “boxing” he had given his wife; “watuĩrwo ngundi o ta ʻiria ʻiraigirĩre mũtumia waku mwũrĩ” (vol.2.191). [You are sentenced to as many blows as you rained on your wife . . .] True to their words, he receives a thorough beating from the women. There and then: “akũmbũrĩria gũthuria, nginya mũthandũko wa ndore ya mbere ʻikeyagĩre Vinjina kĩhingoĩnĩ kĩa mũciũ wao thĩnĩ wa Golden Heights” (vol.2.191), [He started farting to an extent of being heard by his wife at their gate in Golden Heights Estate.] The term “gũthuria” [farting] is a taboo word. The writer, through the use of the obscenity wants to portray the power of women when they act in solidarity: they can overwhelm even men to an extent of making them fart. Though a man, Tajirika is revealed as someone who develops a kind of phobia such that he cannot dare to beat his wife again; “we oonaga atumia acio o mamũthiũrũrũkĩirie na atĩ, o ndagika o yothe, mahota kumbuthũka” (vol.2.192) [He was imagining those women suddenly emerging from the blues any time to confront him.]

He is also said to have started crying and weeping: “Rũrũ rũngũ matata makũnyitana magũtuũka mũnyũrũrũ ũũrũ na maithori...nginya mũticoũũ ʻibororokage thũ ta mbura” (vol.2.192) [tears raced down his cheeks and fell to the ground like rainfall.]

As far as gender sensitive language is concerned, “Ngoma cia aka” (vol.2) [women’s demons] can be termed as a taboo. The word “aka” [women] is offensive. The word which used in a patriarchal society indicates that women are inferior beings and whenever they advocate for their rights, they have lost their minds. A case in point is the naming of volume two of Mũrogi wa Kagogo as “Ngoma cia Aka” which is translated as women’s demons. At a deeper level, the bone of contention is the
women’s advocacy for the release of Tajirika, the husband to Vinjinia. Their song made the leaders change their minds over those who had been detained; “Mûtumia ũmwe akìmbìrìria gũìro nao arìa angì mamùkagìrie na ciĩko na irumi” (vol.2.42) [One woman started the song while the rest sang along in actions and insults]. The song which is sung portrays women’s bravery and assertion that they cannot be outwitted by men.

Another significant point in relation to the statement ‘Ngoma cia aka’ is that after the release of Tajirika, he beats his wife. The other women come to know of it and decide to take action. Tajirika orders his wife to ‘go back to the kitchen’- as a housewife, after leaving the cell, yet the wife has made their business flourish when he was locked in the cell; “ũndũ ũrĩa wambire kũgegia Tajirika nĩ gũkora Vinjinia aigîte mbiacara ciake ciothe wega mũno. Ona nĩ aanenehetie wĩra...” (vol. 2.171) [Tajirika was surprised to find that Vinjinia had run all his businesses efficiently…]

Evidently, Tajirika could not believe his wife. He could not believe that Vinjinia had ability of taking care of the business as well as the family. He would therefore not get any chance to trigger any quarrel; “Tajirika ndoonaga handũ angĩmùrutia” (vol.2.171) [Tajirika could not get loophole to trigger a grudge]. The incongruity is portrayed when Tajirika fails to trigger any conversation to express what he underwent in detention. This also compels his wife Vinjinia not informing him how she suffered in trying to rescue him; “Mùthuriwe ndaaragia cia kũu aarĩ na kwa ũguo o nake ndonaga kamweke ga kumwĩra ũrĩa athĩnĩkire akĩmùcairia...” (vol.1.172), [Her husband did not want to talk about his experience in prison. She also did not get any chance to tell him of her ordeal as she searched for him]. Vinjinia’s effort of attempting to save the family is revealed when she takes on her responsibilities. She is
depicted serving her husband accordingly. Paradoxically though, the husband is revealed as not appreciating her efforts; Rũcĩnĩ rũmwe akĩmũrehera cai na itumbĩ na mĩgate na tũmũtura aigĩriiire gaturee-inĩ. Tajirika no guokoaatambũrũkirie... Guoko gwake gũgũtindĩka kwa Vinjinia na turee ikĩgwa thĩ (vol.2.173) [One morning as she brought breakfast of tea, eggs, bread and sausages. But without looking at her, Tajirika stretched his hand…the hand pushed that of Vinjinia, and the stuff fell down]. As a woman, the above gave Vinjinia a chance to question the action:

_Nĩ atĩa ngũkĩte, Titus? Nĩ atĩa ngũkĩte tondũ kuma ũke ndwaragia ũndũ no gũtindũ ũthimbite? Kana kũũria ciũria itari na magũrũ kana moko? Nĩ atĩa maragũkire njera. Nĩ mũthanga ũrikũ ũyũ maragũkundirie maragũtua bubu?_ (vol.2.173). [How have I wronged you, Titus? What have I done to you to make you so bloated with anger? And when you open your mouth it is only to ask questions that have no legs or arms. What did they do to you in prison? How did they manage to turn you in to a dump creature?]

The solidarity of women is portrayed when the writer exaggerates Vinjinia’s cry when beaten by her husband; it is heard by all women in the country including Nyawĩra; Gũtuĩkaga mбу ũrĩa yoigirwo nĩ Vinjinia nĩyaiquirwo nĩ atumia othe bũrũri mũgĩma, nginya ĩgĩkinyĩra Nyawĩra, (vol.2.175), [It was claimed that women all over Aburĩria, including Nyawĩra heard Vinjinia’s screams]. The other women labeled husbands who batter their wives beasts; “ĩno nyamũ nũrĩ rĩtwɑ, ĩtagwo mũthuri” (vol.2.178) [This beast has a name. It is called a husband]. They compared marriage to prison, adding that prison could even be better; Ați mũtumia kũhika nĩ ta gũthiĩ njera! o na njera tĩnjũru tondũ mũndũ nĩ arĩkagia mĩaka yake akoima (vol.2.178)
Marriage to a woman is like being imprisoned; even a prison is better since one can complete the sentence and be set free]. The madness of women reveals Tajirika, the husband who battered his wife, being taken hostage by women; *ta kîmenye kîgegearo gîake rîrîa oonîre atî othe kenda maarî atumia!* (vol.2.183), [Imagine his shock when he realized that all of them were women]. The attitude of a patriarchal society is portrayed through Tajirika when he feels that the women cannot outdo his power; *akîigua atî we ndaangîkîrio hinya nî atumia, o na marî kenda* (vol.218) [His feeling was that women could not overpower him even nine in number as they were]. However, he was defeated by being knocked down by only three of them all; *akîgeria kwînyagunyia no nî ta ūyũ warî muohithanie na thî na cuma kana agaikarîrwo nî ihiga kana mûgogo* (vol.2.184), [He tried to wrestle them but it was like someone had soldered him to the ground or been fixed to the ground by use of a boulder or a log].

**3.4 Big words as Deviation**

The features of political language vary, as do its purposes. Where politicians interact with society generally, their purpose may be to persuade voters with party loyalty to turn out to vote; to move a floating voter's party allegiance or to make us adopt general political or social attitudes so as to support a given policy. Politicians may also use particular language forms when answering journalists' questions. Where they engage in interactions with other politicians, they may use other particular forms - either loosely or under the rule of an arbiter, such as the ‘Bwana Whitehead’ (vol. 1.218), ‘London, Tottenham Court road, Oxford street, Dean Street, na Side Street’ (vol. 1.222), ‘Sir Titus Clement Clarence Whitehead na Lady Virgin Beatrice Whitehead’ (vol. 1.222), ‘Harrods’ (vol. 1.222).
Finally, there is a contemporary feature of political language use whereby information to the media is provided in such a way that it favours a desired interpretation. ‘Big Ben Becomes Caesar: Minister combines the Glory of Imperial London with that of Ancient Rome (vol 3. 268)’, ‘Missing and presumed dead: a case of CID’. (vol.3. 322) ‘Office of the Government Commission on the origins of the recent queuing Mania’ (vol. 2. 32), ‘Institute of Marxist Revolutionary journalism’ (vol.1 23), ‘The Black Hole of Calcutta’ (vol. 1.62), ‘herbology’ (vol. 1.64), ‘Grand jury’ (vol. 2.20), ‘de facto’ (vol. 2.58), ‘political asylum’ (vol. 3.156), ‘The Wall Street Journal and Financial Times’ (vol. 3.206), ‘Baby D’ (vol. 3.264), ‘quid pro quo’ (vol. 3.315), ‘steroid Induced Obesity’ (vol.3.6), ‘Global Courier Service, Manhattan’ (vol. 3.33), ‘Magnus Africanus: Prolegomenon to Future Happiness by the Ruler’ (vol. 3.172), ‘close-ups, medium shots, cutaways and cut-ins’ (vol. 3.242), ‘Genetica inc.’ (vol. 3.315). ‘Shakespeare William’ (vol. 2.141), ‘first class palmist and astrologists’ (vol. 2.153). All the above imply that some registers are adopted to suggest the compication of institutions that they represent. Most of the jargons are meant to confuse the common citizens that the can not question the dubious operations of the oppressive regime.

In conclusion, Chapter Three has successfully identified forms of lexical deviations. We were able to deduce that Ngũgĩ has employed quite a number of the above mentioned items in Mũrogi wa Kagogo.
CHAPTER FOUR
NGÕGÕ’S SOCIAL VISION.

4:1 Introduction

We tackle our third objective in this chapter where we examine the way the Ngũgĩ has deployed semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in projecting his social vision.

Fanon (1963) captures the state of postcolonial African states where he states the national middle class that took over from colonial power brought with them a gross national stasis, where developed programmes ground into a halt as the leaders clamoured to fill their pockets with money looted from national treasury. What would have been a moment of arrival at the onset of independence, as the new countries geared for a better future after the darkness of colonialism, becomes a celebration for only a few.

It is at the heart of the postcolonial betrayal that Ngũgĩ pens his novel Mũrogi wa Kagogo. Through his protagonists Kamĩtĩ and Nyawĩra, the writer deliberately confronts a contemporary phenomenon that is bent on emasculating the masses of the post colony. Ngũgĩ is also involved in a pedagogical duty of informing the masses about the reality of their existence and thereby enabling them to take charge of their lives. Educating the masses according to Fanon (1963:161) is to make the totality of the nation a reality to each citizen. It is to make the history of the nation part of the personal experience of each of its citizens.

Mũrogi wa Kagogo, therefore, instantiates the questioning and deconstruction of the notions of truth and justice, in a bid to understanding what really constitutes truth and justice within postcolonial power relations. Through the application of semantic
incongruities and lexical deviations, Ngũgĩ rationalizes the ideals of truth and justice. As mentioned above, we shall go ahead and evaluates items of semantic incongruities and lexical deviations examined in chapter two and three respectively in order to get the writer’s projected social vision.

4.1.0 Semantic Incongruities.

According to Indangasi (1988), Semantic category involves transference of meaning. In a good writer’s hands, the image, fresh and vivid help the reader to feel the writer’s grasp of the situation he/she is dealing with. In this sub chapter we focus on the social vision projected by exaggeration, ambiguity, paradox, irony, juxtaposition and metonymy.

4.1.1 Exaggeration and meaning

The writer’s application of exaggeration is much effective in projecting his social vision. Much of it depicts the extent of dictatorship, sycophancy and unemployment that engulf most African states in the postcolonial era. Ngũgĩ, through creating vivid images of such problems, is asking for sobriety and subsequently people reason together for a possible solution.

One of the vivid images is on how Aburĩria’s Ruler ascended to power. As seen in chapter two, it was through a coup which has been assisted by colonizers. According to Fanon (1967), the new leaders’ impatience for leadership leads them to accept the conditions of the former colonial power and settle for dependency. This forces them to monopolize power, retain the colonizers’ oppressive laws, waste money on expenses and grandiose construction projects and divisively favouring the capital city over the rural areas.
Ngũgĩ depicts the cronies of the above mentioned leaders. They are there just to please their boss and not to advise him/her accordingly. The single party Kĩama kĩa Mwathani [The Ruler’s Party] has been transformed into a bulwark between the masses and their leaders and a device for enriching the Ruler’s hangers on. Consequently, the African nations under such leaders have been left with weak economies and poverty among the citizens. Employment opportunities are no more. The writer attributes this to the bad leadership. Just by advertising a temporary job; TEMPA JOBS: APPLY IN PERSON. Those who apply are great in number that one could not see the end of the queue. Worse still, an image is created of the amount of money collected as bribery from those applying for the job: three bags full of dollars.

Through exaggeration, the writer cries out for democratic electoral systems, public welfare and good governance. The images Ngũgĩ creates may suggest that the process is complicated but anyone who gets familiar with that form of tyranny would not fail to be cheered by the spectacle of revolution and especially by the sight of diminished ex-despots made to submit to the full force of the democratic and legal processes they have so shamelessly flouted. Examples of such dictators are Charles Taylor, Gaddafi and Hosni Mubarak.

4.1.2 Ambiguity and Meaning

The title of Ngũgĩ’s text under study is ambiguous. Mũrogi wa Kagogo [Wizard of the Crow] has different interpretation. Of much concern however, is the male protagonist, Kamĩtĩ, who has extra ordinary powers and so Mũrogi [Wizard]. In his testimony he declares:
To Ngũgĩ, postcolonial subjects are faced with new and daunting challenges. They therefore require unique solutions. Kamĩtĩ camouflaged as the wizard of the crow, is the answer. The writer remodels Kamĩtĩ along the great Gĩkũyũ prophets and medicine men that had the welfare of the community at heart. It is through that extraordinary power that he, Mũrogi, becomes the voice of the writer.

Through Mũrogi, Ngũgĩ pleads with evil doers for, all those who visit Mũrogi, apart from receiving herbal medication, are advised to undertake an inward journey in order to find spiritual healing as a supplement to the physical wellbeing. Majority are the leaders of postcolonial African states, whose only goal is self-enrichment.

4.1.3 Paradox and Meaning

Mũrogi wa Kagogo is preoccupied with crime and detention. Constable and later Superintendent in the text appears to be a kind of detective trying to piece together a coherent account of events from numerous and conflicting accounts that have come into his hands. These include isolated acts of corruption and wrong doing. The detective Arigaigi Gathere (A.G) is subsequently overwhelmed by the magnitude of the findings and all of a sudden becomes a victim to regime’s violence.
Ngũgĩ creates a vivid picture to the readers of such moments whereby he bequeaths the task of practical opposition to those readers after A.G is unable to perform a mere duty of arresting those implicated with evil or correct this state of affairs.

Oddly enough, The Ruler is portrayed never displaying any physical demeanour of a dictator. He humbled himself to the rest of the people, as long as they did not cross his political path. Boyers (2005:179) comments on dictatorship as “a composite portrait modelled on various originals, with the result that the character is larger than life, so awesome in the range of his brutalities that he is less a person than he is a force of nature.” A special chamber in the state house is built on violence.

People no longer mean what they say, and say what they mean. To Ngũgĩ, this is our enemy number one of 21st Century to our democracy. The writer depicts people saying and acting the political development, just to get the attention of the powers for their own personal gains. In fact, the politics is sadly infected with exemplary professionals who have the habit of singing hosannas when they really mean crucify him.

4.1.4 Irony and Meaning

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o portrays the Ruler swelling grotesquely and the bursts, covering the capital city in a malodorous fog before giving birth to “Baby D”. To the writer, this is a fraudulent exercise in democratic reform designed to satisfy the Ruler’s American allies and global financial institutions they control such as I.M.F. The Ruler’s plan to build a kind of Tower (Matheca itu) for which requires the support of the “Global Bank” and which becomes a lighting rod for corruption rife in Aburĩria.
The writer displays a conspiracy to simulate democratic institutions so that handouts for the African ruler can be exchanged for the lowering of trade barriers to Western corporations and the slashing of public budgets points to a larger truth, as postulated by McLaren (2008), the collusion between authoritarianism in Africa and the activities of western controlled financial institutions. According to McLaren (2008: 152) Mūrogi wa Kagogo shows that the West and global capital are implicated in the dilemmas of African leadership.

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The Ruler has spies that he misused to keep him in power. The ministers are useful instruments in the Ruler’s legacy. They briefed him almost hourly on what was happening in the rest of the country. These, to him, are useful tools for monitoring activities on the ground. Those who seem to go against him are exterminated secretly. Machokali is one example in the book Mūrogi wa Kagogo.

The Ruler has a special police unit that keeps close tab on suspected critics at the national level. Where he saw danger, the Ruler acted quickly and harshly. Even his closest advisors feared confronting him on anything, leaving him to make decisions that were sometimes dangerous to the well-being of the nation.
The Ruler practices a single-party system whereby the single party has the right to form the government, usually based on the existing constitution. To him, the single party is the forefront of the people, and therefore its right to rule cannot be legitimately questioned.

All other parties are either outlawed or allowed to take only a limited and controlled participation in elections. Sometimes the term single-party state is used to describe a dominant party that, unlike the single-party state, allows (at least nominally) democratic multiparty elections, but the existing practices or balance of political power effectively prevent the opposition from winning the elections.

The author depicts the ruler rewarding those who are devoted with plum jobs. But the fact is some are neither brilliant nor imaginative, and their time at the parastatal the first time round had zero if not negative impact. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to imagine their performance in the institutions they have been appointed to safeguard.

Ngũgĩ highlights sycophancy through Mwathani’s two faithful ministers: Machokali and Sikiokuu. The two are a representation of leaders who would do anything to win the president’s confidence.

The only inference that can be drawn is that the number one priority of those making the appointment was not really uplifting people, but consolidating political support. As such, the criteria for the appointment were not brilliance, imagination, passion or commitment to changing lives of the poor, but uncritical loyalty to the appointing authority.
The loyalty we are experiencing in our political circus in particular is however turning into something evil which, if not checked, has the potential to derail us from the democratic track. To Ngũgĩ, this evil is more dangerous to democracy than the coup makers. This vice is the one the author terms as dangerous. There is a thin line between loyalty and sycophancy to an extent that the two seem to be synonymous with each other.

People no longer mean what they say, and say what they mean. To Ngũgĩ, this is our enemy number of 21st Century to our democracy. The writer depicts people saying and acting the political development, just to get the attention of the powers for their own personal gains. In fact, the politics is sadly infected with quintessential professionals who have the habit of singing hosannas when they really mean crucify him.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o portrays varying degrees of sycophancy in our political development in our social, political and economic development process institutionalising into concrete magnitude, having direction and effect on our identity, and succeeding mainly in a strong, perpetual, powerful and virtually unchallengeable unbridled wielding of political, social or economic power and authority.

The painful fact is that we have not been able to separate opinions on national issues from attacks ones authority leading to many people who want to stand up to their opinions fall victims to unnecessary politicking. When this happens, those who could not believe in themselves to make it to the highest possible level based on their own abilities and capabilities, end up singing the hymns and praises of their masters.
For the sycophants it is better to swallow their pride. They [sycophants] will be happy to go this way than to be honest and straight-forward enough to speak their minds no matter the cost. For them putting up a debate on an issue against the powers that be is not in their dictionary simply because they do not want to have to write to their career when they can just quench their ideas and continue to enjoy honey and milk within the corridors of power.

Sadly, no wonder most of the corridors of authority and power are full of seasoned experts of sycophancy. Their business is just to pull all stops in buttering fellow citizens in leadership positions with hyperbolic, flowery phrases that could wet their appetite and woe unto you if you happen to come their way. This is the nuisance of the nations of today the writerportrays.

Through exaggeration, Ngũgĩ paints a picture any experienced politician or leader will be able to differentiate between loyalty and sycophancy. The way he has satirized it through Machokali and Sikiokuu, it is as if he suggests that we should be bold enough to stem it [sycophancy] out of our way of life. We should avoid entertaining such behaviour for one day the same elements will mount the platform to declare that we have all been reduced to political sycophants.

Our democratic process faces an unprecedented high level of respected professionals from across board playing to the gallery through sycophancy. Their main weapon to achieve glory is to effectively lick the boots of leaders at the right place and time. This democratic evil triumphs very well where there is a gross lack of effective cohesion. Besides, where the governed feel rejected and sidelined to the periphery where their voices and candid opinions are seen as attacks on the personalities of
those governing then they begin to create avenues for their voices and opinions to be counted. Unfortunately, the weapon they adopt ends up being a social cancer. If democracy is under threat under an alliance between newspapers and government then we can imagine the cancer that people who infiltrate government systems only to sing praises will cause our democracy.

The question Ngũgĩ puts across is whether these sycophants are necessary in achieving democracy. The obvious answer is no, and the time to make it impossible for them to continue their slaughter of our democratic process is now.

The writer suggests that we need to be strong on political sycophancy and take every step to discourage such grossly disturbing instances of ingratiating behaviour anemic to democratic sustenance. Of course political loyalty is extremely vital, but it should not be allowed to mutate into unashamed genuflection that has the potency to undermine the future of a nation’s democracy.

Ngũgĩ suggests that it is our collective interest to front line against the evil sycophancy. The author is concerned about the high level of unquestioning loyalty feuding into our social, political, economic and cultural fabrics. He persuades us to see this as a sign of danger to our democratic rights. The danger is that this sort of behaviour seeks to suppress dissent within parties and in the long term undermine democratic norms at the national level. At this critical juncture in our national life, we certainly do not need such inexplicable political grovel.

The sycophants are so powerful that they could easily reduce a performing state servant to that of a disgruntled one. They can mesmerize one to such a point that he/she feels like an alien to the very system they have been part of its operations.
Their motives are simply to infect the system of government and hence end up doing grave damage to our democracy and the future development of developing nations. To Ngũgĩ wa Thion’o, this is the evil scaring a nation’s democracy.

Effective leadership in our democratic process does not need flatterers to achieve it. He is pleading with us to do our best to eliminate the evil or else it will eliminate our constitutional democracy from us and the price we will pay for it can be very disastrous. He suggests to us we accept that the mix between democracy, development and sycophancy is very dreadful and inhuman for any nation.

4.1.5 Metonymy and Meaning

Ngũgĩ wa Thion’o applies his female protagonist Nyawĩra, A proper noun which means “workaholic”, or “one who works hard”. Nyawĩra mirrors the real revolutionary spirit that had previously been enshrined in male protagonists in Ngũgĩ’s earlier works. A graduate from the University of Aburĩria, she walks out of her matrimonial home and relationship with Kaniũrũ, which she seems to have been based on the latter's greed for social mobility but not love. She is also the leader of the underground movement that is bent on overthrowing Mwathani’s dictatorial regime. Ndigirigi (2007) looks at the idea of putting a female character at the helm of a revolutionary group as one that coordinates national politics and women's politics in an equal and dialogic relationship of mutual responsibility.

The woman is no longer only a symbol of the nation but a pivotal ingredient in the liberation of the nation from all fronts. The changing roles that Nyawĩra plays in the text are a clear testament to this fact. She, according to Ndigirigi (2007:191): Presides over an inclusive comradeship of men and women fighting to retake their country and nation from the grips of global capital. That remapping of the national also goes hand in hand with a destabilization of gender roles, with Nyawĩra playing both male and female roles as circumstances demand.
As earlier noted in chapter two, Nyawĩra and her organisation stop Mwathani’s government from constructing the proposed building called *Matheca itu* [Tower of Babel.] This makes her and her fellow women leaders on their own right without turning to men for protection. Ngũgĩ depicts Nyawĩra as an agent of change, whose activities revolves around fighting for a more just and fair society, both for the family and the nation.

This is well depicted under Nyawĩra’s wing, a group of nine women mete out justice in homes of men who resort to violence in solving domestic dispute - violence is countered with violence as Tajirika comes to realise. The new council of women acts as both the societal and moral police in their belief that it is possible to have a better society based on equality and justice. She tells Vinjinia:

\[ Thĩ īno nĩ nyinamu. Wĩ hinya akahinyĩrĩria ũrĩa mūhinyĩrĩrie handũ ha kũmūhinyĩrĩria mathĩĩna \] (Vol.2:179) [This world is upside down. The mighty oppresses the weak instead of making their life bearable.]

In Nyawĩra, Ngũgĩ’s dream of creating an all-round female protagonist is finally realised. The writer has demonstrated Africa not only having absorbed international women’s rights norms and practices, but also contributed towards them as well. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o depicts ideas and practices having emerged from Africa and spread elsewhere and for this reason, it is important to acknowledge the ways in which African women’s movements have, and are, influencing these global trends.

### 4.2.0 Lexical Deviations

According to Bolinger (1970), the organic function of language is to carry meaning, which must have something to do with workings of the linguistic cell. As such words are central in the construction of meaning and therefore determine our perception of reality. Bell (1948) however contends that a combination of words which in one
language very happily suits the impression desired is not likely when the words are taken from a different language. This subsection focuses on Ngũgĩ’s social vision as projected by neologism, foreign words, Taboo words and big words.

4.2.1 Neologism and Meaning

Ngũgĩ has taken full advantage of word’s to achieve his social vision. As seen in chapter three, one of the most striking successes is modification of nouns and noun phrases in describing characters. In so doing, the writer has managed to develop his thematic concerns and effectively satirize the character in question.

The term *Mwathani* [Ruler] ordinarily means God, but has a nuance that this person is awful. It is depicted that he seized power in a coup: “...*tondũ aingĩrire wathani-inĩ wake abĩrũte rũhiu na kukiũria ndotono, acehage andũ ũrũo na ũmothe, magũwage thĩ mu ta mĩramba ya marigũ*” (vol.1.11) [for it was well known that he came into power by a flaming sword, bodies of his victims falling left and right like banana trunks.] The structure of Mwathani, the president of Aburĩria, rises to that of god. Infact he is referred to as mtukufu which means “holy” in Kiswahili.

The body of *Mwathani* [Ruler] in many transformations captures the convolutions of power in the postcolonial era and actions whose surrealism defies belief. His evil nature, according to the writer, infects those around him who has a passion to become a white man.

Side by side is the name of the nation that *Mwathani* [Ruler] rules. It is called *Aburĩria*. This can be translated as “to disappear”. The writer foresees the end of misfortunes of citizens of this nation and a new dawn is outstanding in the people’s
struggle of the people’s movement (the voice of the people) under the leadership of his two protagonists, Nyawĩra and Kamĩtĩ.

4.2.2 Foreign words and Meaning

According to Makokha ental (2012) postulate that “English, when used in African contexts is often regarded as a mark of formality or as signaling the speaker and high educational level and/or socio-economic status quoted in (Myers 1993:86). The writer borrows from English to depict how social stratification influences the way a person speaks. The higher the person is on the social ladder, the more educated that person is likely to be. With a better education, a person will be more likely to use correct grammar as his or her sentences will be well formulated and slang will be at a minimum. On the other hand, a person occupying the lower level of the social ladder is likely to be less educated and will most likely use a lower form of a language. Usually, the Kiswahili and Sheng languages are applied when junior officers are carrying out their duties. Most of these officers are the police officers as they address their victims.

Secondly, the writer employs foreign words to demarcate a line between the senior officers who delegate duties and the juniors who are eager to abuse the power given to them. (Me na ndugu zangu wawili (vol.1.268) [Me and my brothers], Jina langu ni Askari Gathere na ukifanya kelele tena nitalipasua lile pua lako. Ma! Haki ya Mungu, Boss wangu ni inspector Wonderful Tumbo na amenipa uwezo wa kufanya hivyo (vol.1.17) [My name is police officer Gathere and if you bring chaos again I shall break your nose. I swear by God. My boss is inspector Wonderful Tumbo and has given me power to do so.] This is attributed to the fact that Ruler’s brutality would not let anyone speak about his inhumanity openly. Evidently, the people who overtly
comment on the cruelty of the regime are executed through calculated firing squads or killed in other atrocious ways.

The junior officers’ language is further enhanced: *Nilijua tu wale si wezi! Wale wawili walikuwa mashetani wa huyu Murogi. Nimerogwa wee! Najua nitakafa!* (Vol 1.87) [I knew from the beginning that those were not robbers, the two were devils of this wizard. I am bewitched! I am sure I shall die!].

Ngũgĩ has demonstrated that some very well-educated and rich members of society use loose forms of a language and frequently switch codes. In this, he has taken into account a person's status. Money tends to mix with money, while the poor mix with the poor. Ngũgĩ illustrates this through his character Tajirika. Through his code mixing, the writer reveals his attitude towards the person he addresses. At the same time, he wants to show that the invitation itself is vital: “*Hetwo personal invitation nĩ foreign Minister we mwenyewe*” (vol 1.59) [I have been given a personal invitation by the minister of foreign affairs himself.]

Ordinarily, many lower class individuals would speak clearly with Sheng. The writer portrays this through a junior officer lamenting on the danger of involving oneself with seniors: *magendo ma hawa wakubwa hata Mtukufu mwenyewe, utaona cha mtema kuni* (vol. 1. 138) [The corrupt nature of these seniors: even the lordship himself; you will see fire].

Clearly, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s intention is to show that individuals in the higher classes tend to speak clearly in a foreign language when they want to assert their power. When security officers want to interrogate Tajirika, Kahiga one of those interrogating him switches to English: *I am sorry but there must be a*
misunderstanding somewhere (vol.2.48). This is meant to prepare and convince the culprit that the security detail is just doing its work. This is enhanced by the same security officers when they set to trap Nyawira. Kahiga and Njoya, the two security officers are shown switching their code: Take all the time that you want, Mr. Wizard of the Crow (vol.2.112). Seriousness is portrayed when one mixes codes in his conversation. This is revealed when Kaniuru and Sikiokuu exchange some words in the presence of Ruler:

What? Are you crazy? Sikiokuu akĩrũga na igũrũ ena ruo rũingĩ mũno. Mwathani, can’t you see... My Friend, Kaniũrũ akũra Sikiokuu....This has nothing to do with bribery or even hints of corruption (vol.3.77)

[“What? Are you crazy?” Sikiokuu retorted bitterly. “My lordship, can’t you see… My friend,” Kaniũrũ told Sikiokuu....”This has nothing to do with bribery or even hints of corruption.”]

Through the application of some slang, the writer shows that people in authority may change their speech to fit in a social context from which they target to gather information. Through it, they are able to make a full and frank argument. This can be illustrated with the way Sikiokuu addresses Tajirika after learning that the security has failed to contain him in the cell. Sikiokuu had to change the mood by use of Sheng: hai, sasa, story zako? Ni nini makaraao wanakubringya kina? (Vol.2.132) [Hi, how are you? Why are the police harassing you?]. This is in line with Machokali who addresses the Wizard of the Crow in Sheng since by doing so; he lightens the moment for a cordial conversation with Tajirika which as a result will enable him to express himself freely. The investigator, Machokali, would then gather information that he requires. This way, the change of the language by those in authority makes their
power felt among their subjects as seen when a security officer threatens their culprit through code switching; *usicheze na mimi, mchawi Kagogo* (vol.3. 17) [Do not joke around with me you Wizard of the Crow.] This would make the victim submit and give the needed information.

### 4.2.3 Taboo words and Meaning

According to Indangasi (1988) taboo words are words that refer to subject or experiences or parts of the human body, which are not supposed to be talked about in public or in polite society. This may also entail the use of cursing or swear words.

Traditionally, Gĩkũyũ culture set high moral standards especially in matters of sexuality. Decorum and use of polite language is required of every member of the society. This to some extent explains why there is scant use of taboo words.

Ngũgĩ however has a reason for applying taboo words. The writer depicts the Ruler and his followers inclined to vulgarity. This depicts their rot and stupidity. Essentially, a leader should portray virtues that can be emulated by his/her subject. This is not the case with Ngũgĩ’s antagonist. The writer actually explores irrationality of leadership in Africa.

### 4.2.4 Big words and Meaning

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o applies big words as a form of lexical absurdity. Mugubi (2005) has stated that writers may select deep complicated, entangled or pompous language for purposes of equivocality to avoid being pinned down by thin skinned government or to satirize haughty or confused characters. This happens when an artist depicts characters speaking totally different language from the one dominating his/her literary
works. English for instance, when used in African contexts is regarded as signaling the speaker’s high educational level.

Through application of big words, Ngũgĩ attempts to suggest that differing levels of preparation and academic sophistication can sometimes be attributed to class background and the quality of previous schooling. They can also affect levels of participation. Ngũgĩ' decides to write the kind of Gĩkũyũ that only an educated Kikuyu populace can read. Characters are portrayed confident with their mastery of the material or of their ability to compete in the discourse of sophisticated verbal and conceptual gymnasts: question of ease in the world of ideas.

Politicians impose laws, taxes, and bureaucratic systems but seek to influence us to endorse their policies or turn out to vote for them through the use of big words. They may wish to influence us to use our collective power to return them to office, where they will use their executive power to direct some aspects of our lives. That is, they get us to give them power to tell us what to do and how to live. Indeed, we have the choice, collectively, as we show when we vote for a change of government.

**Conclusion**

Ngũgĩ has employed Semantic incongruities and Lexical deviations in his work *Mũrogi wa Kagogo* to comment predominantly on a people’s despair interplayed with hope. Despair however tends to outshine hope through out the text. Ngũgĩ’s message to Africans is that people need to rise up to its challenges of political dictatorship, unemployment, gender equality and sycophancy.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1 Introduction

This study is a stylistic analysis of how Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has exploited Gĩkũyũ semantic incongruities and lexical deviations against the backdrop of the social depravity. The study also brings out his social vision. This has been guided by the principle that however much a literary text may serve as a moral treatise, however much it may be geared towards social ends: it is primarily a work of art. Language on the other hand is the raw material in which Literature is created. Works of art are molded in the clay. A creative writer therefore generates an effect on the reader through manipulation of language. Taking advantage of stylistics, we have looked at language as a system from which we pick specific choices to articulate our ideas. Specifically, we have looked at how the Gĩkũyũ language in relation to semantic incongruities is determined by the way the writer manipulates it for a certain end. Thus, we have demonstrated that just like any other language, Gĩkũyũ is rich in aspects meant to pass intended message(s) to the society.

The study has analysed Mũrogi wa Kagogo in a detailed bid to unravel the writer’s message as presented through the use of semantic incongruities. Ngũgĩ voices concern over the misuse of power by presenting such issues as corruption, unemployment, dictatorship, gender disparity, capitalistic injustices, betrayal, sycophancy and struggle for power. This is brought about by his appropriate application of language. He therefore functions as the mouth piece for those who for various reasons cannot articulate their feelings on the appropriate direction of a society.
It has been established in our study that Ngũgĩ’s has applied semantic incongruities and lexical deviations. The study has demonstrated that Ngũgĩ has taken up a literary fight against social and political evils. He has addressed himself to the problems faced by human rights lobbyists and the Messiah in the name of Mũrogi wa Kagogo (Wizard of the Crow) in Aburĩria. Ngũgĩ has also taken a stand against the politics of sycophancy, misuse of power, and self-enrichment. We have also noted that the writer has borrowed heavily from other languages and particularly English as a way of enriching his literary work.

5.2 Summary of Findings.

The author has applied semantic incongruities and lexical deviations with a motive. Semantic incongruity is used purposively, to depict pretence of African rulers, who engage themselves in executing those who appear to oppose them: “Kanyũmba kau kaarĩ ta nutu hekarũ na nutu mithiamu” (vol.1.11) [The chamber was a cross between a museum and a temple.] A museum is where exhibits relating to murder committed by Ruler are reserved. A temple on the other hand, is place where people worship and is treated with great respect because of being connected to holiness. This underlines how dictatorship has many faces. The dictators behave in a manner that they seem innocent, and so a temple for ‘prayers’, but just adjacent to the temple is a room full of skulls for those who have died under their hands. By this, we see misuse of power, dictatorship and hypocrisy.

Juxtaposition as a form of semantic incongruity helps to portray the writer as someone who features various cadres of people. By juxtaposing the queues, a queue for the unemployed and those seeking to bribe for consideration in tenders, Ngũgĩ attempts to
highlight different needs in the society. He comments on unemployment versus corruption, economic injustice, disillusionment and challenges of life in the society.

The pragmatic approach we have adopted (stylistics) has helped explicate the work more deeply in a bid to extract the message therein. The issues are brought out through semantic incongruities. Of importance as mentioned above are: dictatorship, corruption, imperialism, betrayal, wrangles for power, unemployment and the place of woman in society.

5.3 Conclusion

Our analysis on how Ngũgĩ has manipulated Gĩkũyũ semantic incongruities and lexical deviations in his endeavour to communicate clearly demonstrates that a language is a powerful tool that creative writers exploit to shed light on social issues. The writer displayed the notion that African scholars have a wide range on the way they can manipulate languages in persuit of their scholarly activities. Further, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o suggests that semanticincongruities and lexical deviations can not only work in well in poetry but also in novels. We have also established that as Ngũgĩ seeks to retain purity of Gĩkũyũ language, there are obstacles that render this unrealistic. This is due to the fact that our knowledge of vernacular languages is shallow and limited due to formal education.

5.4 Recommendations for Further Studies

The works of Ngũgĩ are extensive and diverse. Interested critics in his Gĩkũyũ work may build on this research for instance by taking a closer look at the use of symbolism
and application of the omnipresent narrator. There is also the element of oral literature that includes oral narratives, proverbs riddles and puns.

Additionally, criticism must continue to play its role of mediating between the reader and the writer by helping readers appreciate the manipulation of language as a means of enhancing social vision.

As indicated in the literature review, much has not been done in the study of African languages, particularly with Ngũgĩ; vis à vis the issue of lexis and semantics. The study therefore recommends more studies on literature in African languages to shed more light on issues of lexis and semantics.

Comparative studies between texts in different languages are also desirable as a way of increasing dialogue between the different languages and cultures of Africa. Moreover, if we are to continue advancing the cause for African writers to write in local languages, we must give vernacular literature the attention it deserves. We must make sure its presence is felt in the community of literature. If we are promoting indigenous languages we should think of an appropriate vernacular rather than borrowing foreign words. Worth noting however, is that a language grows out of borrowing from other languages.
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