

Ng'ang'a Mbugua's *Different Colours*: A Metaphor of Environmental Activism and Deconstruction of Patriarchy

Joseph Nderitu Murage and Albert Mugambi Rutere
Laikipia University

Abstract

Literature can be used effectively to promote national cohesion and integration. The objective of this paper is to demonstrate how Ng'ang'a Mbugua's *Different Colours* is a metaphor for environmental conservation and creation of cohesion amongst the characters in the fictional Banana County. The research problem handled is the dearth on studies that apply ecocriticism and feminism theoretical lenses to interrogate how patriarchy in *Different Colours* impedes environmental conservation and cohesion creation. The methodology used is an interpretivist reading of the text buttressed by secondary sources. The data collected was subjected to open coding with the thrust of the coding notes being an identification of characters with patriarchal power and action connected to environmental degradation or conservation and the consequent creation or destruction of societal cohesion. The key findings of the study are that the characters in Banana County are initially unaware of the significance of their environment, especially their waterfall, but later, through the effort of Miguel, the lead male protagonist, they finally realize the need for collectivity in diversity when it comes to environmental conservation. The paper concludes that in this allegorical novel, Miguel projects the message that "in a spectrum of diversity, Banana County can be one" in conserving the environment. The study recommends that more research needs to be made on how fictional texts are a microcosm of the larger society, the latter which might be reeling under the onslaught of social antagonism and lack of cohesion, wrought by patriarchal ascendancy and neglect of the environment.

Key Words: *Allegory, Cohesion, Ecocriticism, Gender, Patriarchy*

Introduction

Different Colours is a text written by Ng'ang'a Mbugua, a nascent Kenyan author, and published in the year 2011. In this fictional work, the author takes the reader through the emotional and social development of Miguel, the male protagonist in the text, as this lead character merges his artistic skills as a painter with his environmental conservation effort. Miguel is; however, cognisant of the reality that his work as a painter does not provide him with the wherewithal that he needs to make a living and start a family. Goaded on by his friend, known as Billy Joe, he decides to seek a better fortune in Banana County, where, according to Joe, a magnificent waterfall that might interest his artistic eye exists. Once in Banana County, he at first receives a frosty welcome from the fundamentalists of the deserted town but finds hospitality in some of the local inhabitants who include Angela and Juliana.

Miguel later visits the magnificent waterfall and is mesmerized by its splendor as well as the beauty of the surrounding flora and fauna. He gets immersed in painting the beautiful scenery but inadvertently discovers that quarry workers, working at the behest of a business mogul known as Dick Teita, a man with a patronymic name that alludes to a dictator, are digging on the opposite side of the waterfall, thereby destroying the environment and creating a possibility of the waterfall collapsing. His decision to rally the other inhabitants of Banana County in opposing Teita, puts him on a collision course with Teita and his coteries but Miguel succeeds in finally getting Teita arrested and hence helping conserve the waterfall and the environment around it.

The objective of this paper is to demonstrate how Ng'ang'a Mbugua's *Different Colours* is a metaphor for environmental conservation and creation of cohesion amongst the characters in the fictional Banana County. Moreover, the paper shows how *Different Colours* is allusive of a "rainbow" society in which patriarchal power is tempered with matriarchal assertiveness in such a manner that the society is rid of unnecessary antagonism among its different cadres.

The research problem handled is the paucity of studies that apply ecocriticism and feminism theoretical lenses to interrogate how patriarchy in *Different Colours* impedes environmental conservation and cohesion creation. Moreover, there is a dearth of studies that look at how patriarchal authority in *Different Colours* is weakened by accommodative and complementary forms of feminism. A theorisation on African feminism is of essence because there are emergent concerns in African feminism that may not be adequately covered by the earlier first and second wave feminists. Azodo (1997) comments on the foregoing:

Even now, with African women writing in spite of the critical eyes and tongues of African societies, can we say that such writers as Buchi Emecheta, Ama Ata Aidoo, and Flora Nwapa are irrelevant because Julia Kristeva, Susan Gardener, Virginia Woolf, Toril Moi, Simone de Beauvoir, and Bell Hooks, to mention only a few, have already dealt with all the issues that affect women, including African women? To say so would be to ignore the fact that there existed a complementarity of male and female roles in pre-colonial African societies and that it is during and after colonization that the downfall of the African woman from a position of power and self-sovereignty to becoming man's helper occurred (*DC*, p.201).

As Azodo (1997) avers, the mentioned Western feminists were concerned with issues that defined the position of mostly the Western woman at an earlier time in history while the emergent African feminists have opened up new frontiers that are relevant to the present African milieu. It is the latter feminists who provide the thrust of this paper.

Ecocriticism, as a theoretical approach to literary studies was popularized by the American critic, Cheryll Glotfelty, and a decade later, the movement reached the United Kingdom. Glotfelty and Fromm (1996) define ecocriticism as a study approach in which relationships are established between works of literature and the environment. The approach is also known as "green studies" in recognition of the fact that an environmental flora when in its bloom is normally green, connoting a healthy existence. It is within this encapsulation of a healthy environment being allegorical of a peaceful and cohesive co-existence of Banana County inhabitants that *Different Colours* is put under interrogative academic lenses.

In this paper, the research methodology used is an in-depth reading of *Different Colours*, buttressed by a reading of secondary resources. In adopting the mentioned research methodology, this paper is guided by Kothari (1985) who owns the following:

Research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge. One can also define research as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic. In fact, research is an art of scientific investigation. The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English lays down the meaning of research as "a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge." Redman and Mory define research as a "systematized effort to gain new knowledge." Some people consider research as a movement, a movement from the known to the unknown (*DC*, p. 1).

Hence, as per what Kothari (1985) reiterates, "research" is a word whose etymology contains the prefix "re" that conjoins with the verb "search" to form the root "research" rather than the derivative "re-search". The latter phrase evokes the possibility of "searching again" while the former root is what has been canonized as conducting a scientific enquiry. Kothari (1985) is collaborated by Edmonds & Kennedy (2017), who avow that research has to do with a systematic process of control designed to elicit answers about an existing question.

The placement of Miguel and other characters within the idyllic environment of the waterfall and the beauty associated with a bushy area is not without a precedent. For instance, in Thoreau (1999), a tale is told of how the lead character builds a small hut on the shores of a pond. This pond is located some distance away from his home. In so doing, the lead character seeks to disappear back into the natural world and momentarily sever his ties with the mundane existence and dreariness that he associates with the modern life. This American classic canonizes “ecocentered” writing from which *Different Colours* finds its precedent.

Results and Discussions

Dismantling Xenophobia and Community Jingoism in Banana County

This paper identifies xenophobia and community jingoism as being twin evils that exacerbate environmental degradation and destruction of a cohesive existence in Banana County. The foregoing is what Miguel sets out to correct.

To begin with, the author writes that Miguel is a sociable individual who finds it easy to fraternise with the new people that he encounters in his life. He is therefore shocked when he arrives in Banana County and instead of being openly welcomed, he is received with a mixture of suspicion tempered with affected civility. He realizes that Banana County is under an illusionary canvas of social cohesion if its inhabitants are xenophobic and steeped in a jingoism whose bedrock is a refusal to embrace strangers. About Miguel’s initial treatment by the people of Banana County, Mbugua writes the following:

It bothered [Miguel] that the people of Banana County were so hostile towards him to a point of being occasionally resentful. From his calculations, he surmised that they were uncomfortable with strangers. They had lived with each other for so long that any new influence was an unwelcome intrusion (*DC*, p.122).

To counter the cited scenario, Miguel decides to work hard so as to beat the hostility directed towards him for merely being a stranger. He wins the favour of an inn owner, known as Juliana, and the affection of Angela’s son, Tom Tenge. The reality that Juliana, a woman, owns an inn, contravenes the representation of female figures in the nineteenth- century fiction:

The representation of women in literature, then, was felt to be one of the most important forms of 'socialisation', since it provided the role models which indicated to women, and men, what constituted acceptable versions of the 'feminine' and legitimate feminine goals and aspirations. Feminists pointed out, for example, that in nineteenth-century fiction very few women work for a living, unless they are driven to it by dire necessity. Instead, the focus of interest is on the heroine's choice of marriage partner, which will decide her ultimate social position and exclusively determine her happiness and fulfillment in life, or her lack of these (Barry 2005, p. 85).

Contrary to the portrayal of female characters as only finding happiness from marital unions as discussed by Barry (2005) above, Mbugua creates the character of Angela in such a way as to imbue the female figure with the ability to find happiness in work. Further, Miguel and Tenge relate cordially with a kind of camaraderie that deconstructs the patriarchal principle of an older male predominating a younger male as espoused by Millet (1971). By teaching Tom Tenge about painting of landscapes, Miguel succeeds in debunking community jingoism and xenophobic tendencies, consequently building for himself a small circle of friends. The foregoing confirms the thesis of this paper that *Different Colours* is a metaphor for environmental activism and creation of cohesion in Banana County.

The Waterfall as an Allegory of Societal Health

Equally, and as alluded to in the introduction to this paper, the waterfall in Banana County is at the center of Miguel’s environmental conservation campaign as well as his endeavours to create peaceful co-existence of people in the county. Mbugua’s choice of a waterfall, a river and the surrounding forest as metaphors for societal well-being echoes sentiments expressed by theorists on how

ecocriticism is woven into literary studies. Barry (2005) recognises three American authors, that is, Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) and Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), as being transcendentalists who felt that the wilderness and other aspects of natural life forces were powerful images that could be woven into literary creations. From such an understanding of the natural forces of the environment being linked to literary productions, one appreciates why Mbugua places his lead character, Miguel, at the center of an environment-business controversy so that a message on societal cohesion can be articulated as further discussed below.

After Miguel discovers the quarrying going on behind the waterfall and the person behind it as being Dick Teita, he approaches Teita with a view of impressing upon him why the quarrying needs to be stopped as a matter of urgency. However, the following discourse, as written by the author unfolds:

“Listen here young man,” Dick Teita said after listening to Miguel’s story. “One of the ways to keep your head on your shoulders is to keep your nose from matters that do not concern you. If you go on disrupting other people’s businesses you will not live long enough to paint that godforsaken waterfall,” he said and paused for effect (*DC* p.140).

Here, it becomes evident that business interests supersede harmonious existence and environmental protection in the estimation of Teita. Teita’s activities are a continuation of environmental plunder in a postcolonial country, a plunder that began in the colonial occupancy period. Bate (2000) avows that deforestation and colonialism are twin evils that led to environmental degradation as both of them were driven by the need of a section of the society to elevate itself materially at the expense of a country and its environment.

Consequently, aware that Teita will not easily let go his pecuniary interest represented by the sale of building stones from the quarry, Miguel tries to dissuade him from fronting his business pursuits while ignoring the environment and destroying a peaceable coexistence with his neighbours. Although Teita dismisses Miguel’s appeal as based on an irrelevant and whimsical sentimentality of an artist, Miguel’s interest in immortalizing the beauty of the waterfall on canvas, coupled with his friendly approach to Teita, vindicates the position that Mbugua uses *Different Colours* to metaphorically comment on environmental conservation and peace-building in Banana County.

Avoidance of Disasters and Attraction of Tourists

This paper is also used to front the argument that preservation of environment in Banana County is organically related to avoidance of man-made catastrophes. As such, the paper concurs with Bate (1991) who indicates that literary critics in Britain had already embraced “green” studies even before the coinage of the word “ecocriticism” by the American theorists. Ironically, the infrastructure of British ecocriticism partly rests on studies done by Williams (2011). Williams juxtaposes life in the rural England and in the emergent urban areas and paints images of a rural existence that was erroneously romanticized by English poets, novelists and essayists. He argues that the class conflict in England, from sixteenth century, was fueled by a fallacious association of rural life with simplicity and urban life with competitiveness. It is the foregoing disdain for romanticizing rural life that Bates (1991) and other British scholars would later efface as they joined their American counterparts in embracing ecocriticism.

If Banana County avoids a looming disaster, then the people in the County can continue enjoying amicable interaction with one another in an environment of eco-friendliness. In furtherance of the stated position, the reader notes that Miguel tries to show Dick Teita the dangers associated with digging into the bedrock of the land the opposite side of which is the back of the waterfall:

“Listen, Sir,” Miguel said, trying to sound diplomatic. “[The quarry workers] are in grave danger. The water from the fall could find its way into the cracks they are making in the rocks and this could put their lives in peril. And just so you can appreciate the magnitude of the problem, both the Orange River and Banana County will be destroyed if the waterfall collapses. Can’t you see that?”(*DC* p.141).

That Miguel directs the above appeal to Teita confirms the avowal that *Different Colours* is a text in which environmental degradation is associated with societal disintegration, a premise from which Miguel works as he tries to avert both adversities from becoming a reality. Miguel's fearlessness in pleading with the otherwise intransigent Teita also emasculates Teita's patriarchal power.

Moreover, it is of interest that the inhabitants of Banana County have not noticed that the waterfall is a tourist attraction that could help the county in bringing in some revenue from visitors. Miguel becomes the first person to bring to their attention that the waterfall needs to be preserved so that it can help popularize the backwater county to the outer world. He therefore tells Juliana, and his employee John, to go to the waterfall and have a closer look at it. However, the two meet Teita at the waterfall and Teita manages to convince them that they had been sent out to the waterfall by Miguel so that Miguel could play a con game on them. This revelation makes Juliana to conclude that Miguel sent them away so that he could steal her money, hidden in his inn. The following discourse is indicative of Teita's duplicity in painting Miguel in diabolical light:

"There is nothing to see," Dick Teita said as he emerged from behind a bush, scaring the wits of the two.

"What do you mean?" Juliana asked.

"Miguel told me the same story. I have looked everywhere but I can't see a thing," Dick Teita told them. "We have been conned." (DC p.150).

As noted from the above conversation, Teita, the epitome of patriarchal ascendancy in the text, tells Juliana and John that Miguel is a con artist who sends them away to search for what does not exist. As a consequence, Juliana and John run back towards the inn with Juliana screaming that her money had been stolen. Juliana's running of an inn is in agreement with Arndt (2002) who proposes that women are increasingly assuming community and political roles in defiance of gender limitations imposed on them by patriarchy. A mob nearly assaults Miguel when they get him at the inn and surmise that he is the purported thief. However, Juliana finds her money intact and apologetically tells the crowd that Miguel is after all innocent. This incident serves to galvanize Miguel's image as a peace maker whose character has nothing to do with theft. In view of this incident, Juliana and the other people in Banana County realize that the waterfall is indeed as important as Miguel tells them, a state of affairs that casts *Different Colours* as a metaphor of environmental preservation and eradication of social vices such as theft, the latter which would interfere with a cohesive existence of the inhabitants of Banana County. Equally, Teita's failure to incite violence against Miguel deconstructs his patriarchal authority in the text.

The Beauty of Nature Juxtaposed to Murder Most Foul

When Miguel decides to visit the waterfall in order to start painting it, he is accompanied by his landlady and confidant, Angela. The affable but non-romantic relationship between Miguel and Angela is an affirmation that *Different Colours* is a text in which the author challenges oppressive patriarchal practices. Of such patriarchal societies, Azodo (1997) writes that "endemic sexism, patriarchal attitudes, and the force of blinding tradition bond African men in a hegemonic system that nourishes and protects their interests" (p. 201). The manner in which Miguel's drawing of the waterfall is described is evidence of the position held in this paper that a deification of the waterfall is adopted as an alternative measure in showing how important the environment is:

He used the green ink to draw faint outlines of the trees that framed the waterfall. The trees stood out sharply with the colours of the flowers shining a brilliant red, orange and yellow. The plants gave the waterfall a surreal appearance. It was as if Miguel was looking at something that was out of this world. It was the closest he could have gone to heaven, he thought, as he strove to capture the magical element as best as he could (DC p. 169).

The serene ambience that is created in the description above lends itself well with the thesis of this paper that peace and tranquility creation associated with the waterfall is allegorical of the amity and comity that would define Banana County if its inhabitants would preserve their environment. In that

respect then, this paper suggests that the waterfall should not be understood from a merely literal perspective of it being a geographical feature in Banana County - rather, a repetitive description of it is symbolic and allegorical of a peaceful Banana County. Hence, as the people of Banana County preserve the waterfall and their County in general, they are united, and as such, cohesion among them is attained.

It is hence of import that one examines the contrast of ideas that are juxtaposed- the serenity and peace associated with the waterfall and the heinous murder of Angela's husband, Martin. Miguel is still in the process of painting the waterfall when he discovers that Angela, who had silently been watching him as he works, has suddenly started to shed tears. When Miguel enquires as to why she is weeping, she reveals that her husband was killed not far from where she and Miguel are:

With an unsteady hand, she pointed to a spot not far from where they were sitting.

"He was found there," she said, her sobbing growing into a whimper. "But it is not the water that killed him. He was stabbed to death. And his blood was flowing into the river."

Miguel was shocked beyond words. He had never guessed what had killed Baba Tenge. But judging from the way Angela had spoken about him earlier, he had had the impression that maybe he had died after an illness (*DC*, p. 171).

It is animadverted in this paper that bearing in mind that Miguel and Angela are at the waterfall to immortalize it on canvas, then their very action is part of the environmental conservation measures that form the bastion of metaphorical language in *Different Colours*. Moreover, that Angela has never come to terms with the fact that her husband was murdered is indicative of the dictum that her spirit is not at peace as she is still distraught with early widowhood. Her search for comfort in the affable Miguel echoes sentiments by Nzomo (1997), who advises women to empower themselves through an association with men who do not display aspects of gender insensitivity. In that respect, between her and the unknown nemesis to her husband, is a lack of cohesion that Miguel seeks to remedy by getting justice for the slain Baba Tenga. It is hence unavoidable that this paper traces how Baba Tenga met his end because justice not delivered impedes the process of healing and restoration of a cohesive existence between erstwhile foes.

Consequently, Mbugua's message about environmental preservation, creation of cohesion and deconstruction of patriarchy is evident when one reads about Baba Tenga's murder. As alluded to earlier, Miguel has spotted Teita's band of quarry workers, a fact that irks Teita. Confronting members of his clandestine quarrying activity, an exchange ensues:

"You allowed yourselves to be seen!" Dick Teita shouted, pointing an accusing finger at the whole group. If his eyes could kill, he would have felled all the men in one swoop.

"We can take care of that man, boss," Vu Tabangi said, rolling his eyes menacingly, as he realized that they were being rapped over their encounter with Miguel.

"No, don't," Dick Teita said. "The last time I told you to scare Baba Tenge, you killed him," he said (*DC* p. 148).

From the above exchange, it becomes manifest that Baba Tenge died in the hands of Dick Teita's hatchet men. Though the murder was not premeditated as explained by Vu Tabangi, a character with a patronymic name that points to a bhang smoker, it is nevertheless argued that Teita's patriarchal authority is what is responsible for the murder of Baba Tenge. The foregoing position is vindicated by Teita's admission that he had tried to have Baba Tenge scared by Vu Tabangi. Later on, Miguel seeks justice for Angela's slain husband, in effect ensuring that he defeats Teita's patriarchal power and also helps in environmental conservation, twin efforts that are indispensable in bringing the inhabitants of Banana County into a cohesive and peaceful co-existence.

Serpentine Fauna and the Green Source of Beverage

The justice that Miguel gets for Angela has to do with his role in getting Teita arrested. The description of Teita's arrest is an invitation for the reader to further appreciate how environmental preservation and the deconstruction of patriarchy are central in articulation the theme of cohesion creation in *Different Colours*. As noted elsewhere in this paper, Teita exercises his patriarchal power by trying to mislead Juliana and John that Miguel is out to steal Juliana's money, kept in her inn. It then becomes a contrast that towards the end of the fiction, it is Teita who is on the run. Police officers, led by Inspector Yusuf, have found out Teita's hide-out and go to look for him. Teita has received a tip-off about the impending raid by the police officers and he runs towards the waterfall with Yusuf in pursuit. Interesting, it is an animal that assists Yusuf to apprehend Teita:

By then, Dick Teita was near the waterfall. Here, at least, there was a clearing and he could run faster since his way was illuminated by millions of stars above. He had not gone far when a blood cuddling cry rose from his throat as he screeched to a halt. There, right in front of him, was a python, slithering right across his path, its shiny green body shimmering in the night with every wriggle, its eyes shining in the night like two little torches (*DC*, p. 218-19).

It is worthy of note that Teita is on his way, trying to escape justice, for having facilitated the killing of Martin and also for being behind environmental destruction. His patriarchal power has been eroded by law enforcement agencies, represented by Inspector Yusuf and his officers. Finally, a snake, another representation of an ecocritic intervention in creative works construction, is used by Mbugua to further hamper Teita's attempt at eluding justice. In that regard; therefore, this scene is emblematic of how Teita's patriarchal authority is defeated by a combination of instruments of law enforcement and a member of the environmental fauna. Teita's arrest hence serves to reinforce a cohesive existence in Banana County because Angela and the other characters previously adversely affected by Teita's criminal activities can now live in harmony with themselves and the environment.

A look back at how Angela had met Baba Tenge, the latter who is also known as Martin, vindicates the thesis of this paper that *Different Colours* is a text in which patriarchal oppressiveness is emasculated by juxtaposing environmental conservation measures with societal cohesion creation. The two had met when they were co-workers in a tea plantation. The blossoming of their romance is narrated alongside a description of environmental beauty:

One day among many, the two decided to sit by the river, which meandered serenely through the farm. They chatted for hours on end and did not realize how time had flown. It was dark when they rose to leave. A full moon was shining in the sky, adorned by many stars which lit up the land. The strong smell of tea bushes intoxicated them. Martin held out his hand to Angela.

"We must go home now, tomorrow is another working day," he said, suppressing a yawn.

"It is not, my dear," Angela had replied, allowing Martin to pull her gently to her feet. "Tomorrow is Saturday." (*DC*, p. 221).

From the above discourse, this paper is used to postulate that Mbugua advocates for environmental preservation through putting his characters in settings that are allusive of the beauty of the environment. As seen above, there is a mention of a meandering river, a full moon as well as a starry night. The description of such features of the environment alongside the romantic involvement of Martin and Angela echo the author's pre-occupation with the environment as a mediator of peace building and familial cohesion creation.

Further, that Martin is the one who tempers the intoxication of their growing passion with concerns that the two have to go to work the following day bespeaks of a man who is not bent on achieving a subjection of a woman hurriedly. Martin negates sentiments expressed by Millet (1971) to the effect that patriarchal dominance normally takes the form of sexual ascendancy. Equally, the fact that it is Angela who reminds Martin that the next day is not a working day, bespeaks of a woman who is not constrained by the gender-based expectation for a woman to be demure in the course of a courtship. As such, Angela confirms sentiments expressed by Belsey, and Moore (1997) about the relevance of

the words “feminist”, “female” and “feminine”, noting that the first is political in conception, the second one alludes to a biological condition while the third one encapsulates cultural conditioning. Consequently, when Angela encourages Martin to continue with his overtures towards her, instead of thinking about going to work the following day, she avoids the culturally assigned “feminine” tag referred to by Belsey and Moore ((1997). Hence, Angela reverses the expectation based on patriarchal cultural conditioning to the effect that a woman cannot provide the impetus required to start and maintain a relationship, a position that makes *Different Colours* to be an epitome of patriarchal machismo emasculation that this paper is used to portray.

Conclusion

This paper has been used to show how Ng’ang’a Mbugua’s fiction, *Different Colours*, is used to deconstruct patriarchal authority. The paper, has equally, demonstrated that Mbugua uses the text to demonstrate how the preservation of the environment is a condition *sine qua non* if a society is to achieve social cohesion. Hence, Mbugua, in *Different Colours*, confirms that language, cultural diversity, tourism and hospitality are essential in creating national cohesion and integration. A recommendation is made that literary critics need to carry out more research into how ecocriticism and feminisms are intertwined with the theme of national cohesion and integration in texts authored by other African writers.

References

- Arndt, S. (2002). *The Dynamics of African Feminism*. Trenton: African World.
- Azodo, A. U. (1997). “Teaching African Literatures in a Global Literary Economy”. *Women's Studies Quarterly* Vol. 25, No. ¾ pp. 201-207. Retrieved 12th November, 2020 from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40003384>.
- Barry, P. (2005). *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* 2nd ed. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Bate, J. (2000). *Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition*. Oxfordshire: Routledge.
- Bate, J. (2000). *The Song of the Earth*. London: Picador, 2000.
- Belsey, C. & Moore, J. (eds). (1997). *The Feminist Reader: Essays in Gender and the Politics of Literary Criticism*, 2nd ed. London: Palgrave.
- Edmonds, W. A. & Keneddy, T. D. (2017). *An Applied Guide to Research Designs: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods* (2nd ed.) Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Glotfelty, C. & Fromm, H. (eds.) (1996). *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. Georgia: University of Georgia Press.
- Mbugua, N. (2011). *Different Colours*. Nairobi: Big Books Limited.
- Millett, Kate (1971). *Sexual Politics*. New York: Avon.
- Nzomo, M. (1997). “Kenyan Women in Politics and Public Decision Making.” *African Feminism: The Politics of Survival in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Ed. Gwendolyn Mikkell. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Oxford (1952). *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Redman, L.V. and Mory, A. V. H. (1933). *Romance of Research*. Philadelphia: The Williams and Wilkins Company.
- Thoreau, H. D. (1999). *Walden*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Williams, R. (2011). *The Country and the City*. Nottingham: Spokesman Books.