

Magical Realism for Revolutionary Didactic Purposes in Ngugi's *Matigari*

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Abstract :

This paper attempts to explore the magical realist dimension of Ngugi's novel *Matigari*. The major contention held in this paper is that Ngugi has used Magical Realism for a twofold purpose: to drive home his revolutionary message to the *grassroots*, and to serve his cultural revival mission. Magical realism has often been used to call for revolutionary *praxis* by Latin American writers. Again, since this literary mode relies on the use of myths, folklore, fantasy, and other traditional lore, it appealed to Ngugi who attempts to work for the retrieval of Gikuyu oral culture. In *Matigari*, Ngugi draws from both African and biblical mythology. From the former he borrowed the fable on which the story of the novel is patterned, and from the latter he has borrowed the savior motif, a motif that serves the revolutionary didacticism of the novel. In the main, in this novel, Ngugi fuses two literary genres: African oral and Western written. He, however, contends that his novel belongs to African oral Literature.

Key Words: Biblical mythology, cultural revival, magical realism, revolutionary didacticism

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