THE RIVER AND THE SOURCE

PLOT:

The River and Source has a very simple plot. I would easily define the plot as a linear plot-in the sense that the book begins with the birth of Akoko, the flow and pace that the writer uses is of progressive nature. It moves from one event to another progressively to the end. Unlike many books, The River and the Source lacks real conflicts for one cannot fight with nature. The supernatural forces within the book sets the motivation in Akoko to live on and see another day unlike in other novels where, revenge is motivated with a wrong done or the antagonist has to face off with the protagonist. The protagonist has to learn the antagonist‟s weaknesses and defeated for a happily ever after life.

The River and The Source begins with a fine morning where a child is born in the house of Aketch the Second wife of the Great Chief of Yimbo Odero Gogni Adinda. The child is the first born daughter in a family of already seven sons. Significant in the beginning of the text is the naming process, the Nak festival and the resounding marriage of Akoko to Owuor Kembo.

Akoko‟s marriage, despite the love that exists between them, faces some challenges. Akoko is hard at bearing children a condition that rubs the mother-in-law the wrong way. Despite her being industrious and successful she is faced by galloping problems.

Her first born son, Obura escapes home and is reported to have died in the First World War of 1918 in Tanganyika (Tanzania). Before long, Chief Owuor Kembo passes on followed closely by the last born son Owang‟Sino. This lives Akoko technically „barren‟ that is with no son. Among the Luo and most African communities boys were valued and looked upto more than girls. A man‟s strength was only as strong as the number of boys they sired. Akoko, though she still had Nyabera, had little to do in Sakwa and trooped back to her paternal home in Yimbo.

As fate could have it, Nyabera did not get a son to lean on. She stealthly walked out after her attempts to continue Okumu‟s family with Ogoma Kwach hit a rock. She decided to live her matrimonial home and seek refuge in Aluor at the mission Station.

Akoko uncomfortable of her life as a migogo (unmarried woman) joins Nyabera. The young female controlled family includes Awiti, Nyabera‟s daughter and Owuor Sino Owang‟ Sino‟s son. The new life in Aluor shapes Akoko‟s perception of life.

Her perceptive nature sees her accept life as it unfolds. Nyabera tries her luck with family but life has dealt unfairly with her. Beaten up, Nyabera embraces her solitary life, cues her life with that of Akoko and the two women look after their family like accustomed lesbians.

In Aluor Owuor Sino develops a new liking for priesthood breaking the chain of leadership in Sakwa forever. Regardless, times had changed and chieftaincy, as it were, had changed with colonialism.

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Awiti on the other hand trained to become a teacher. She met a young man Mark Athony Oloo Sigu. The two were betrothed to each other but before the big day, Akoko, having lived a life of determination, dynamism and love, died peacefully in sleep.

Nyabera stood in her mother"s stead and the river moved on. Awiti got married and her young family started her life in Nakuru. Mark with his infidelity learned the spirit of fidelity and brought forth a family of seven children-Vera, Becky, Aoro, Anthony, Opiyo, Odongo and Mary.

Becky Married John Courtney a Canadian and got two children- Alicia and Johnny. Vera joined Opus Dei and chose celibacy. Aoro now a doctor married Wandia a doctor from Central Kenya. They had four children-Lisa, Daniel, Mugo and Kipusa. Opiyo married Edna and they had two children-Elizabeth Jnr and Mark Jnr. Anthony became a priest like his uncle Peter Owour Kembo.

The book, in its dying embers extinguishes the life of Awiti after she had buried her mother many years ago in Aluor besides Akoko. Mark too, succumbs to his loneliness and is buried beside his wife. Overlooking their grave is the beautiful flowers on the grave of Becky who died of AIDS. The Book that started with life continues with life dropping life after life to the engulfing death that never tires.

The River and the Source is a genealogy with one key message, life is lived with an open mind that embraces change as it comes. Death is an inevitable loss that bestows in us the spirit of determination to face anything thrown at humanity with life. The book underscores the power of feminism and the role of women in shaping a generation of change and tackling anything that is thrown to them by life in the male dominated society.

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CHARACTER AND CHARACTERISATION: River and the source by Margaret Ogola

1. OWUOR KEMBO

He is the chief of Sakwa. At young age he had to personally go to Yimbo to negotiate for Akoko to become his wife. Owuor with Akoko get three children; Obura who died in 1919, Nyabera and Owang' Sino. He dies leaving the chieftaincy to Owang' Sino

Character traits

Considerate/Keen/Generous

He listens to the council of jodongo before he makesany decision. When he is told of the antecedents of Akoko he listens keenly and every word of the Jawng'yo, the spy, goes to his making what will be his ultimate decision-to marry Akoko no matter the cost. His choice of words reveals a person who is thoughtful before he speaks. He generously accepts to the 30 head of cattle of bride without negotiations. He is ready to share his office with the family of Otieno Kembo, he tells the elders that Otieno has many children who can take over chieftaincy in case his own son is taken away.

Decisive/Proud/A Man of Honor

Chief Owuor Kembo decides to surprise his in-laws by paying the suggested bride price. this reveals to us his pride an devaluation of life. He is the kind of a person who takes challenges easily as long as he knows the value of the challenge. In so doing, he earned the respect of Yimbo and admiration of Sakwa and above all the love of Akoko. Chief Odero Gogni tells Oloo, his Spokesman to set the bride price at 30 so as he can trim the pride of this people from Savanna land.

When he visits Yimbo he stands upright exuding respect and honour. The writer says he was obviously a man of Nyadhi.

Stubborn/Incorrigible/Quick to Anger When Provoked

Chief Owuor Kembo stubbornly remains monogamous in a land that worships polygamy. This is aggravated by the fact that Akoko, however beautiful, was not the kind of a woman who easily got children and therefore the children came in sparingly.

Despite pleas for his mother and incessant calls from the council of jodongo, Owuor sticks to his decision of having only one wife. He was in position of marrying more wives but he was satisfied by having only one wife a condition that almost caused him to smite his mother out of anger.

This incident occurred when Owuor arrived home to find his wife missing. He learns that she had had to leave after being accused by the mother-in-law of being a juok. After his anger was calm, he called the council of Jodongo and wisely consulted, stubbornly insisting that he should bring the mother of his children back regardless of the dissents among the elders.

Loving/Accommodating/Caring/Friendly/Wise/Brave

Owour loved his wife so much that he did not further wish her any more pain when she gave birth to Owang' Sino after a laborious labour. He decided not to try and make any more children. He persistently remains monogamous despite the incessant calls from the people of Sakwa

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because of his feeling for Akoko. He is satisfied by her. Akoko is treated as a queen and she does

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not disappoint in contrast Otieno Kembo treats his wives like sluts and they do not disappoint either.

Owuor likes to sit around with his wife and listen not only to her voice but also to the wise counsel she espouses. He makes friends with her and after the evening meal he would go to her house to talk. A wonderful man indeed!

He carefully advises Obura to forsakes his dreams about seeing the world and concentrate on getting ready to be chief after he is gone. He does not use force over his child but let‟s Obura speak his mind.

2. OBURA

Obura is the first born son of Owuor Kembo and AKoko Obanda. He joins Kenya African Rifles (KAR) where he does in war in 1919.

He was down to earth/obedient

Despite being the son of a chief, Obura does not use his position to intimidate his friends but treats them with respect and us equals. He obeys his parents command.

Loving/expressive

He loves his parents and he is very apt. he likes his mother and feels comfortable with especially when expressing his thought s and feelings.

Early Riser/Hardworking

Akoko ensures that Bora is not a lay about. Even though they had servants, Akoko made sure that some of the chores were done by Obura or that Obura helped in looking after her humongous her. In this regard, Obura appreciated hard work and always woke up early.

Sturbbon/decisive/friendly/social

Obura decides to make a voyage out of Sakwa and see the world. He is talked out of it by both parents who thereafter believe that the boy is reformed only for him to go missing one day. He inherited his father stubborn behavior. He is friendly and overly social interacting with the likes of Nyaroche where he learns of the Jorochere, the Whiteman.

3. OTIENO KEMBO

The brother to chief Owour Kembo and chief of Sakwa after the death of Owang‟ Sino

Greedy

Otieno kembo is avaricious. He envies his brother‟s wealth an unashamedly uses it to marry more wives. His greed for power surpasses reason and he steps into Akoko‟s wealth when all her sons and husband die. He marries two more wives in quick succession when he is ordained as the custodian of the chief‟s stool.

Inconsiderate/malicious/unreasonable

Despite having not worked in building the wealth of his brother, he relishes it as his own. He and his family expect the Owuor Kembo‟s to pay bride price for his sons. Outrageous enough, with mature sons he has no sense of reason but to continue marrying women.

Coward/insensitive

He fears Akoko despite her small body. When Akoko rouses the whole village in the morning, he threatens to teach her a lesson but grows cold feet when she confronts him. He also fears to confront AKoko when he learns that she had reported him to the DO.

Chauvinist/abusive

He does not value women; he treats his wives like sluts while his brother treats his wife like a queen. He does consider the situation of his women and that is why, in Akoko‟s words, they go borrowing food in the house of the money due to the number of children growing in his house

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hold. He abusive Akoko when she threatens to go back to her people in Yimbo.

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4. NYABERA ODERO MARY

She is daughter to Owour Kembo and Akoko. She gets married to Okumu Angolo where she gets an only child Awiti after all the other children died. She is inherited by Ogoma Kwach but decides to leave her matrimonial home after Ogoma Kwach is accused of neglecting his wife for her.

Kind/generous/loving

Nyabera loves children and while young willingly shares her food with them. She loves her daughter Elizabeth and feels so bad when Elizabeth is to join a teachers training college. Her love for children makes her fear that Elizabeth, with her education, might not get a husband. Her love for children makes her, despite the many deaths in her children, as a married woman to Okumu, inheritance with Ogoma to still try her luck which again turns out disappointing.

Considerate/patient/determined/relentless

She looks at the mess she had created by involving herself deeply with Ogoma Kwach and realizes the pain she could have caused his (Ogoma) wife and children. She decides to opt out. She is patient but determined get children despite the fact that all her children die after living for some time.

She does not give upon her quest to get more children until when on the third man, she decides to give up to fate and take care of her Awiti.

Visionary/calculating/approachable

She makes a decision to join Christianity after getting some information from Pilipo. In her new religion, she contemplates that her mother Akoko might love the idea. She goes to Yimbo to get her mother, daughter and nephew.

Owuor „ Sino is confides in her about his plan to join priesthood. He finds courage in her (Nyabera) to go and speak to his grandmother about going to the seminary.

5. OWUOR SINO (PETER OWOUR KEMBO)

He is the son to Owang‟ Sino and Alando nyar Uyoma. He is later renamed Petro Owour Sino then Peter Owuor Kembo after he joined the seminary.

Humble/conscious

He is a humble boy who is conscious about the feelings of others. He changes his mind about chieftaincy but is reluctant to tell his grandmother whom he cares about how she will react to such an act of betrayal.

Caring/Loving

He loves his grandmother and feels horrible about hurting her with his change of mind. He cares about her hopes and dreams to rebuild her shattered life in Sakwa.

Pious/dedicated/bright

He performs well academically. He looks a promising student. He decides to follow religion which he has dedicated most of his time studying and obeying.

Decisive

He makes a hard and lifelong decision to live a celibate life despite his family‟s lack of male history.

6. OWANG' SINO

He is the last born to Akoko and Chief Owuor Kembo. He became Chief in his father stead. He dies after choking on a fish bone.

Eager to please/Ready to please

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As a young boy he was always calm and eager to please. After the death of Aoro he tries his best

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to be the image of Aoro or a better person for he lived in the shadow of his (Aoro‟s) fame. When he becomes chief he is good to his subjects like his predecessor but the people of Sakwa get shocked when he chokes on a fish bone and dies.

Loving/considerate/an apple of his father's eye

He glows with pride when his father is around. He knows that with the death of his brother, a young man of repute, a huge responsibility had been bestowed on him (Owang Sino)

His leadership therefore is without incident. He shows love and consideration to his subjects and tries as much as he can to earn their love.

Submissive/tolerant

He is not rebellious and does not exercise his will like his brother. He follows the dictates of chik and marries as soon as was deem fit. He takes over his responsibility as chief and subjects himself to making his people happy.

6. AWITI, ELIZABETH

She is the only child of Nyabera. She becomes and teacher and later married Mark Anthony Oloo Sigu from Seme. She was baptized Elizabeth.

Hardworking/dedicated

She works hard in school and achieves the highest level of education at the time for a girl.

Focused/vision-oriented

She does not deter from her dream of success in life. She steadily progresses avoiding any interruptions from the overtures from the boys around until she meets Mark Anthony Oloo Sigu.

Loving/caring

She loves her husband and cares about her children. She understands Mark Sigu even when he cheats on her. She works at bringing a united her. She is the first one to get up when Anthony is attacked by acute appendicitis.

She comes to Aoro‟s rescue when he faints before his father.

Strict disciplinarian/conciliator/observant

She reports Aoro to his father and takes a cautious background while he is being punished. Though she allows Mark to be as strict as a military man he is, she also comes to the aid of the children. She gives Aoro and Anthony when they are denied food for not taking care of Oloo and Opiyo.

She reconciles Becky and Vera when the two get into a confrontation.

Social/accommodating/friendly/magnificent host

She gets acquainted to Wandia in the shorts time and the two hit out a conversation like old friends who have just been reunited. Wandia was AKoko while Awiti was Awiti of the old. Their friendship blossoms into a kind that exists between a mother and a daughter until when she dies, Wandia faints.

When in what could be viewed as sheer coincidence the family of the Sigus have a small unexpected re-union, she cooks a lot of food for the family and generously shares savors the moment

During her burial, many people who knew her, old and young came to share the grief of the Sigus. Her contribution as a teacher and disciplinarian and accommodating nature was seen in the number of those who came to mourn.

7. MARK ANTHONY OLOO SIGU

He is the husband to Elizabeth Awiti. He was in the army. He left the army and was recruited to

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work in Nakuru. He has seven children with Elizabeth Awiti.

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Determined/exuberant/Witty

He relentlessly wrote to Awiti until she replied to his letters. His uncle says that they trusted his judgment on issues and that is why when he told them that he had found a girl, they came to negotiate on his behalf. While talking with Akoko, Akoko is seen to have heard a happy laughter and gay eyes showing just how much Akoko approved of his witticism.

Strict/Tough/ambivalent

He does not condone laziness and indiscipline. He punitively punishes Aoro and Anthony when they err. He almost sends Aoro to his death with starving when the boy is suspended from school.

However, he gets to soft with Mary until Becky wonders loudly what Mary could do to get punished. Becky feared Mark‟s toughness that after her A-level, she had to run away from home to further her career as an air hostess- a profession Mark was against.

Vera on the other hand, was level headed enough to ask her father whether she could go on a date with her boyfriend Anthony Muhambe.

Industrious/Disciplined/Flexible

He works hard to provide for his family. He ensures that besides food on the table and comfortable house, all his children have achieved education to the highest level. His value in education is shown when he insists that Becky must do her A-levels.

He disciplines himself to love only his wife after a short lived rendezvous with a certain girl. He also ensures that, his work ethics and competence are adhered to hence earning him the deserved promotion.

When Kenya achieves her independence, Mark takes a correspondence school to enhance his expertees at work. This shows his dynamism to embrace change and also meet the goals of the rapidly dynamic world.

Purpose driven/Loving/Caring

He loves his family and wife. He makes them comfortable and offers a sence of security. His purpose in life is to take care of the welfare of his family. He does this by directing his energy at work.

His is a rather caring parent too. When Elizabeth gets complications with her last pregnancy he does everything in his power to be with her. This makes his love for Mary to hit the roof because of how delicate the situation had been.

8. AORO SIGU

He is the second born son of Elizabeth and Mark. He studies hard to become a doctor. He meets Wandia Mugo Medical school thereafter the two gets married and have four children; Daniel, Alicia, Mugo and Kipusa.

Playful/Innovative/Keen Observer/Naughty/Mischievous

Aoro and Tony love playing just like any other young people. Their mischief lands them in trouble, when Oloo almost drowns as the two elder boys had gone on their separate ways.

He observes Tony‟s stitches after he had come from hospital with interest and with a dexterity that was amazing, managed to successfully operate on a frog.

Bright/competitive/relentless

He is always at the top of his class making distinctions in sciences, a feat that is highly regarded in Kenya, which lands him to medical school.

In medical school he meets Wandia Mugo an equally brilliant student. The two are neck to neck

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in class taking the first two slots. In anatomy, Aoro loses to Wandia.

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This defeat makes him take a very tough challenge; dating Wandia. She turns him down severally but Aoro is relentless. He finally wins her over.

Homely/supportive/loving

Aoro decides not to further his studies in Medicine. He takes to private practice. However, he supports his wife‟s endeavours to further her career. Wandia says that she almost gave up but his determination and support gave her the agility to go on.

Level headed/Pragmatic

Aoro is level headed. In many societies in Africa, women overachievers are always looked at as loose cannons or feared for their open mindedness. Aoro embraces his wife‟s higher educational accolades and respectfully loves her as who she is.

He is pragmatic enough to reason with his father and change Mark‟s perception of the Gikuyu.

9. WANDIA MUGO

She is the wife to Aoro and a doctor.

Visionary/Perceptive/High Achiever

Wandia Mugo as a young child wanted to be a doctor and a teacher too. She envisions that as a doctor, she would be able to help her society, as a teacher, she would train future doctors. She works hard to achieve both goals. Additionally, she makes sure that she is at the top of her profession.

Loving/Down-to-earth

Despite learning and getting to the top of her career, she values Aoro who is just a simple doctor.she recognizes the sacrfifce Aoro made for her sake. She stands by Aoro and she is greatful to have him for a husband

Wandia teaches modern women the value of education in life and the essence of respecting men regardless of their low standard in life. She recognizes the fact that, men and women need to treat each other with respect regardless of one‟s level of education

Accommodating/easily-embracing

She accepts Aoro even though they were from different tribes. She falls into intimate friendship with Elizabeth Awiti. In fact she finds it hard to accept her death.

She takes in Becky‟s children and treats them as her own.

10. VERA

She and Becky are the first children of Mark and Elizabeth. She studies engineering and religiously joins OPUS DEI after breaking up with her long time boyfriend Anthony Muhambe.

Loving/extremely generous

She declines to join the school she was called to so that she can be with Becky. She is overprotective of Becky until when Becky shows her true colour. Regardless, Vera, while at the university, takes the initiative of going to look for Becky at JKIA.

Supportive/Caring/intuitive/observant

She supports those around her, talks to Alicia against her moving to away from home. She also supports Wandia when Daniel gets ill.

She cares for her sister a lot and sacrifices a lot to make sure that Becky is comfortable. For instance, she joins Riverside to be with Becky in the same school.

She keenly observes the relationship between Becky and her children and is forced to intervene.

Sensitive/Decisive/Pragmatic

She gets into a confrontation with Becky which hurts her feelings deeply.

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She decides to breaks up with her boy friend and hence decides to join Opus Dei.
She is a realist, she asks her father to go out with Tony. She turns down Tony‟s proposal.

11. BECKY
She is twin sister to Vera and an air hostess. She marries John Courtney a Canadian but they are divorced because of her infidelity. She and Courtney have two children Alicia and Johnny Courtney. She dies of HIV/AIDS leaving a large estate to her children.
Sensitive/irrational/self-possessed
Becky is overly self possessed. She gets jealousy of the attention given to Mary. She accuses Vera that Vera always hated her.
She concerns herself with her own wellbeing.
Amorous/Gold Digger/Unfaithful/Visionary
Becky despite her marriage to John Courtney engages in extra-marital affairs. She is divorced and finally dies of HIV/AIDS.
The money she obtains from men is invested in the name of her two children who do not suffer since they get good custodians in the home of the Aoro‟s.

CHAPTER ANALYSIS OF THE RIVER AND THE SOURCE by Margaret Ogola PART III

CHAPTER ONE

THE YOUNG FAMILY OF MARK AND ELIZABETH SIGU

Elizabeth delivered twins Veronica and Rebecca. The two girls had varied personality and physique. Becky (Rebecca) was startlingly beautiful and an avid attention seeker while Vera was quite intelligent and independent minded. When Vera and Becky were two years old, Elizabeth got another child, a boy Aoro. Mark decided that his young family could no longer stay in Nakuru because of the raging struggle for independence in Kenya. He took Elizabeth and the kids to Aluor where he thought they will be safe. This decision was questioned by Mark‟s mother who felt the children should her stayed in their paternal home.

Back in Nakuru Mark engages in extra-marital affair with a certain girl. This woman after staying with Mark for some time, she claims to be pregnant. The allegation snaps Mark out of his dreamland and he sends her parking. He decides to go back to Aluor and see his family.

At Aluor Elizabeth decides to park their things and go back to Nakuru since it looked like Mark had forgotten all about them. Elizabeth heard the rumours about a woman in her house but chose

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to keep them under the bed.

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SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER ONE

1. The birth of the twins; veronica and Rebecca.
2. Aoro, durng the dry season is born.
3. The fear of Mau Mau rebels forces Mark to take children to Aluor.
4. Mark engages in extra-marital affair.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER THREE

1. Do you think it was excusable for Mark to cheat on his wife? If it was, do you support Elizabeth decision to keep quiet about it?
2. Explain the difference in the character of Vera and Becky.

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER THREE

1. Mark realizes the harsh reality of monogamous relationship. He strays a little but now seems to accept the fact that he confessed to have one wife. It does not occur to him that in some parts of his world including his own culture men have more than one wife. What is written all over his face is the guilt of cheating on his wife Elizabeth Awiti.
2. The responsibility of taking care of the family has slowly shifted from being that of a woman to being the duty of a man. Mark Elizabeth says, must have someone to remind him of his responsibilities. Compare Mark"s responsibility to that of Akoko.

CHAPTER TWO

FREEDOM OF KENYAN AND WORK

The country celebrates its independence under Mzee Kenyatta and Oginga Odinga, everyone is happy that finally Uhuru has come. The country is faced by so many problems including incompetence or as Kenyatta put it ignorance, poverty and…… the leaders call people t go back to the lands and work.

There were so many job opportunities and in 1967, Mark got a promotion as manager and moved to a much bigger house. He now had a bigger family which consisted of; Vera and Becky, Aoro, Anthony Jr, the twins, Opiyo and Odongo and the last born Mary.

Vera was a brilliant and hardworking student while Becky, who got everything she wanted did not know hoe to put in much more effort. Vera passed her certificate of Primary education but declined to join the national school she had been called to. She joined Becky"s school (Riverside high) instead.

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SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER TWO

1. Independence and its associated problems.
2. Marks hardwork and the labour of putting shelter on his family.
3. Progress of Marks family.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER TWO

1. Expound on the emerging differences between Vera and Becky.
2. According to the chapter, outline the problems Kenya inherited from the colonial government that still bedevils her.

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER TWO

1. The chapter reveals the new kind of slavery. Mark Sigu has to work extra hard to provide for his family. He is enslaved to his job and paying of rent. He does not own a home but rather has to move from one house to another according to how much money he earns. Everything surrounds money and one is counted as being rich according to how much money he/she earns. The money one gets determines where that person lives.
2. Despite earning substantial amount of money Mark has chosen to stay in rented houses. This is one of the bigger problem that faces most Kenyan towns- a large percentage of urban dwellers do not consider the said urban centers as homes but rather there ancestral homes.
3. Academics has taken a caste system where those who perform well go to better schools while those with abysmal performance are relegated to what is considered as smaller schools. Does this procedure inhibit some student potential?

CHAPTER THREE

AORO SIGU

Aoro sigu was like Obura son of Owuor Kembo. He was „swift and bright; confident and curious" with three younger boys under him, he became overly adventurous. One day they went fishing, Aoro and Tony took to fishing oblivious of their brothers Opiyo and Odongo.

Odongo Almost drowned but the noise of Opiyo who was screaming attracted the bigger boys who rescued their brother. At home, there was a case waiting for them. Aoro and Tony were punished for it was there word against the younger boys.

The boys swore never to go anywhere with Opiyo and Odongo.

Meanwhile Tony develops acute appendicitis and is rushed to the hospital at night. Aoro is very worried of his brother but receives the good news that after operation, Tony will be well.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER THREE

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1. The near death experience of Odongo by drowning.
2. Tony develops an acute appendicitis.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER THREE

1. Narrate and event in your life where your parent(s) punished you severely.
2. Do you support how the Sigu"s treated their children?

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER THREE

1. The rigors of family life are setting in and the Sigu"s have to deal with the day to day challenges of raising a family. The near death experience of Odongo opens Mark to the dangers crawling outside there where he thought the boys could not venture out to. He now realizes that there is so much to young boys that just sitting around or in the neighbourhood.
2. Tony"s appendicitis literally gives us the notion that, as a parent, one sleeps with one eye open. This emergency also opens a door to good neighbourliness, if it were not for the neighbour"s help, Mark would have lost his child.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN EPIPHANY FOR AORO SIGU

Aoro examines Tony"s stitches and a fortnight later, he operates on a helpless frog successfully. His journey to medical school had begun.

Peter pays them a visit. Every child in the house is excited to be with him especially Tony who has hundreds of questions about priesthood. Mark is apprehensive for it is evident that Tony is eyeing priesthood. Many parents have reservations when children tend to incline to fields they (parents) are not comfortable with. Peter was on his way to getting a promotion to become bishop.

After staying for a while, he left for Aluor to pay a visit to his Aunt Maria, (Some versions of books say **COUSIN MARIA*** pg165 but it should be considered just as a typing error and corrected)

It was decided that Opiyo and Odongo should go with Peter and keep their grandmother Maria Awiti company.

Aoro performs exceptionally is invited to join one of the best schools in the country. This inspires Tony to work even harder.

At school Aoro takes time to adapt and is sent home for indiscipline. His suspension attracts the wrath of his Father who grants him independence as an adult to start a life.

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Aoro is troubled to submission and changes his view of his father. He resolves to go back to school and never disappoint.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER FOUR

1. Aoro like his great great ancestor Obanda, from whom Akoko Obanda got her name from, shows his passion in medicine.
2. Tony shows an interest in priesthood when Uncle Peter pays them a visit. Peter is on the way to becoming Bishop.
3. Opiyo and Odongo are taken to Aluor to keep their grandmother company.
4. Aoro joins Form one but he receives a suspension which ends him on the wrong side of his father.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER FOUR

1. Do you think Aoro"s punishment was justifiable? Explain.
2. What are some of the harsh realities in boarding schools?
3. As a parent, would you allow your child to join priesthood? Explain.
4. Write an essay showing how priesthood is looked at today.

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER FOUR

1. Many parents fail to notice the interests of young children at this age. Aoro is now discovering his niche and according to the result of his experiment he is quite good. There are things children do in childhood which opens up new avenues for r their lives in future and technically Aoro is on the right track.
2. Regardless of their choices, children stir quite a dilemma in their parent"s life. Anthony Jr. has overzealous questions for his uncle Peter about the seminary and church. Mark calmly contemplates whether he has the audacity to let his son, though he had other sons to follow what he (Tony) believes in. most parents have had to kill their children"s dreams by virtue of controlling their life and knowing what is better for the kid.

CHAPTER FIVE

NEAR DEATH EXPERIENCE!!!

This chapter is a flashback of the birth of Mary the last born of Mark and Elizabeth Sigu. The pregnancy was a torturous one for Elizabeth given that she developed a high pressure. The doctors feared for both the mother and the child"s life. Elizabeth held on until the induction of labour which gave her the girl Mary.

Mary received glowing love from Mark her father. She was taken to the best private school and her father personally drove her to school. This attracted envy from Becky who was known to be the only attention seeker.

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Becky‟s remark about how Mary was loved by their father brought a huge scuffle between the twins Vera and Becky. This brought a huge rift between the girls never to be amended

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER FIVE

1. Pregnancy and the birth of Mary- the last born child.
2. Showers and floods of love shown to mary by her father creating envy in Becky.
3. Confrontation between Becky and Vera which attracts intervention from their mother.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER FIVE

1. Do you believe in the saying that most last borns are spoiled? Explain.
2. Vera and Becky show the height of sibling rivalry. Explain the impact of this rivalry to their relationship.

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER FIVE

1. The value of life is appreciated in this chapter. Mark puts everything at risk to try and save his last born‟s life from the jaws of death. He puts his wife‟s life in danger but at the end of the day, his prayers and fears pays up.
2. Vera and Becky‟s relationship degenerates into bitter and painful reflections. Did the parents see this coming? It is important for parents to be on the look out for such vital signs especially when kids advance in age. More often, sibling rivalry break that blood bond beyond repair especially in occasions where children have different personalities like Vera and Becky.

CHAPTER SIX

THE DEATH OF MARIA AWITI

The secondary school results came out and Vera had done well in sciences and Mathematics. Becky got second division which she was well pleased with. Antony got 36 points in his Certificate for Primary Education. He surely knew he had earned a spot in Aoro‟s school. Becky wanted to look for work but Mark insisted that he should go back for A-levels.

Meanwhile a telegram from Aluor brings in news of Maria‟s sickness. Elizabeth is beside herself with fear. Maria dies in hospital Elizabeth by her bedside.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER SIX

1. The children pass their exams and Mark prevails upon his beautiful daughter Becky to continue with her A-levels.
2. Maria dies at the age of 70.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER SIX

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1. Relate the death of Maria to that of Akoko Obanda.
2. In your opinion and basing on Becky‟s decision not to join A-levels. What is the importance of education?

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER SIX

1. Beckey was extremely beautiful. Any man certainly would have paid heavy bride price for her. Consider many years ago- Akoko was exceptionally beautiful and thirty head of cattle were given in appreciation. At this age and time hover, what Beckey is looking for is work and Mark, instead of being ready to take in suitors, is busy sending his girls to school.
2. The death of Maria Nyabera yanks life away from Aluor and the present da river rages on in Nakuru wanting to burst into other corners of the world. From what we see, this river does not turn back.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE RUNAWAY BECKY

Opiyo and odongo return to Nakuru after staying with their grandmother. Education is central among the Sigus and as examinations approach, five candidates at the same time, the house is on fire. Aoro was sitting for his O-levels, Vera and Becky for the A-levels and Opiyo and Odongo for the Certificate of Primary Education.

Vera and Becky are now in the prime of their ages and boys are milling around. One guy, Tommy Muhambe is interested in Vera. Vera brings this question to her dad requesting for permission to go with Tommy to the movies.

When results came out, Aoro had performed well in his O-levels with six distinctions. Vera got two A‟s and a B. she decided to do electrical engineering at the university.

Becky flunked in her subjects but she had other plans which after the results she put into force by secretly eloping from home leaving behind a note.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Opiyo and odongo return to Nakuru after the death of their grandmother.
2. There are a total of five candidates at different levels in Mark‟s houe. Opiyo and Odomgo doing their CPE, Aoro his O-levels and Vera and Becky their A-levels.
3. Vera asks permission to go to the movies with Tommy Muhambe.
4. When results come out, Vera decides to pursue electrical engineering while Becky elopes to the city.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER SEVEN

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1. Differentiate between life in traditional African courtship and modern day courtship.

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2. Explain the character of Vera as shown in this chapter contrasting it to her twin Becky.

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Vera portrays maturity when she asks her father to give her permission to go to the movies. She showcases aspects of adult responsibility and respect for her father unlike many girls who elope without asking. It was unthinkable for her father to deny her such a huge chance when she had expressed herself very well.
2. Becky on the other her shows her sheer lack of self expression by simply slipping away without having her chance with her parents. The image here is reminiscent of many families whose children choose to escape into a world where they think they can make independent decisions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LIFE IN CAMPUS AND THE BREAK UP

Life in the campus was fun. Vera did not know what to do with so much freedom at hand. Many girls in the campus were either dating the rich affluent that picked them at school or seeing some campus students.

Vera maintained her steady relationship with Tommy. Tommy proposes to her but she declines ending their 3 year relationship. With emptiness in her heart, Vera ventures on a journey to look for her long lost twin sister.

She finally tracks her sister at Jomo Kenyatta International airport.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Vera adapts to campus life and its freedom.
2. Tommy"s proposal from marriage is humbly rejected by Vera.
3. Vera goes on the hunt for her long lost sister and tracks her down at the Airport.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Explain the reasons for Tommy"s rejection. Was it premature to propose?
2. Do you think Vera made the right decision to track down her sister? Discuss.

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER EIGHT

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1. The decision on marriage now lies between two consenting adults. It is not like time ago where the father accepted or rejected the offer. Vera unlike her great grandmother turns down Tommy Muhambe"s marriage proposal.

CHAPTER NINE

BECKY RETURNS HOME

Becky lived an affluent life. She was now dating John Courtney a Canadian national who was a pilot. Vera was shocked that they were planning to get married without informing Becky"s parents. The conversation turned towards going back home. John quipped in and the two managed to convince Becky to go and see her parents.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER NINE

1. Becky is engaged to be married to a Canadian John Courtney, the pilot.
2. Vera and John manage to convince her to go back home and visit her parents

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER NINE

1. Discuss the barriers associated with inter-racial marriages.
2. Does Becky love Courtney or money? Explain.

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER NINE

1. Society is now expanding making the world a global village. Inter-racial marriages are now commonplace. Vera seems comfortable with her white boyfriend.

CHAPTER TEN

'OPUS DEI'

Mary-Anne Ngugi was Vera"s friend and roommate in the university. In her loneliness, Vera opened up to Mary- Anne about their love gone sour with Tommy. Vera too had been heartbroken with her action. The two girls talk about Vera"s twin Becky. The conversation extends to the larger Sigu family.

Mary-Anne invites Vera to a recollection at Parkview College, which she readily agrees. It was Sunday the two girls went to church where they enjoyed service. After service Vera"s mind had many questions about her religion and how well she knew it.

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That evening she went to watch a play and enjoyed it. The week that followed was full for most student in the university were preparing for their final exams. Vera had learned the art of preparing early and so she was more than ready.

When Saturday came, the girls boarded a matatu towards Kangemi. Vera was introduced to a group of Christians who had different view of church and work among other lives challenges.

She got out of the church puzzled but Mary-Anne offered to give her books which will help her understand better.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN CHAPTER TEN

1. After the break up Vera resumes normal life trying to re-establish herself.
2. She attends a church service where she starts questioning her spirituality and how well she knows God.
3. Mary-Anne introduces her to a group of strict church people where she earnestly starts on the journey of understanding her mission towards God.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAPTER TEN

1. Vera sets on a new journey to redefine herself. Discuss the events that transpired in Nyabera"s life back then that led to such huge change we see in the book.
2. There are many questions about spirituality that we confront every day. Basing on Vera"s questions, do you think learned people appreciate Christian values and their roles? Discuss.

OBSERVATIONS MADE FROM CHAPTER TEN

1. Usually when one is faced by major challenges in life, they reflect upon their life to make some decisions which may ultimately change their future. Vera, recovering from a broken relationship tries to make some decisions which bring her closer to understanding her spirituality. This leads us to the question, is it only pain and despair that draws us closer to our God?

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THE RIVER AND THE SOURCE- THEMES

THEMES

A theme is the main subject or agenda pushed by an author or writer. The river and the source has the following themes:

1. **FEMINISM**

Feminism: the doctrine advocating social, political, and all other rights of women equal to those of men. (dictionary.com)

- The advocacy of women‟s rights on the grounds of political, social, and economic equality to men. (online dictionary)

The story revolves around Akoko. The buck stops with women in the fight against oppressive testosterone. It is upon women to tap into their innermost strength to transform the world it what they imagined. Akoko, being on the losing end in a male dominated family fought her way to earn her father‟s love. She had to put her feet on the ground to make the world recognize her. Aloo, the family spokesman said that Akoko‟s hard work had been incorporated into a saying that women sending their children on errands would mention her.

She did not show any female shyness when she was introduced to her husband to be. With her head held high, Akoko stirred into Owuor Kembo a feeling that had not earned vocabulary among the Luo – love.

Akoko did not subject the chief to monogamy. She was okay with him marrying as many women as her wealth could manage. It was the chief‟s decision, despite growing outcry, to remain faithful to his wife. We are not told of any arm-twisting but sure as the sun rises in the east, Akoko build Chief Owuor Kembo to stand in her defence and love her unconditionally.

I don‟t want to explain how she did it, and I don‟t want to sound melodramatic about it. One thing that is for certain is, women have the power to change oppressive traditions to

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accommodate them.

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Otieno Kembo treated his wives like sluts. He thought he would do the same to Akoko, short as she was; she had the height in confidence. She stood him down on various occasions. She earned his fear and she cherished it. The difference between Akoko and Otieno‟s wives are, she was daring where the wives were submissive, she was confident where they were shy and she was loving where they were just doing their duty to their husband.

Many women in oppressive regimes choose to me dutiful. To ask little, oppose little and take in as much as they can. (Read Khaled Hosseini‟s A Thousand Splendid Sun‟s). In most occasions, women wait until it is too late to do too little.

Akoko stood before the DO and DC to fight for her infant grandson birthright in Kisumu in defiance to Otieno Kembo. She did not have to use men to right a wrong; she did what any mother would do in the face of uncollapsible wall. She forwarded the case before the white man herself, defiant like Mekatilili before the British who were conscripting young Giriama men into a war they knew little about. She knew her days in Sakwa were over, she therefore packed, having won the war, and went away.

Let me shift gears and burrow into other characters that bore a mark on feminism in the book. First on the list is Vera. Vera as a young lady broached a question which by standards of the time would have brought the earth to a standstill. Even in some societies today, such acts are despicable. She asked her father for permission to go out on a date with Tony Muhambe. This was an atrocity that could lodge a fishbone in any father. Her mother of course intervened in the matter but this act alone marked Vera as a woman daring to stand against forces that had difined her community.

She turned down Tony‟s proposal for marriage! Who does that? She therefore decided to live unmarried life! This alone would have earned her father shame that would have landed him hanging on a tree in a banana plantation shame written over his face. A girl‟s destiny was determined by her father. Vera did the despicable and her dad was okay with it.

Wandia Mugo the wife of Aoro sigu is a significant woman too. She did ask Aoro to marry her! Further on in the book, she becomes the first Kenyan woman to earn a doctorate in Medicine. Men should shallow a hard pill on this! A woman! A doctor! A doctor Woman!

Basically, the trendsetters in the book are women who stand out to live a life they dreamed about to stand down regimes that are oppressive and to disapprove those who thought that they cannot. Women have been joyriding on the affirmative action but its time they should ditch the tomfoolery and proactively stand out equal to the task and look down upon regimes that reward them with sugarcoated buffoonery of half-baked men opportunity called affirmative action.

2. **TRADITION**

Tradition in most occasions refers to African traditional values that are or should be done away with. In this context though, I explore tradition on the concept of African (Luo) practices that are both good and bad and have been passed on from one generation to another, some still in

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existence while others, non-existent. I contextualize them in accordance to the mastery of Margaret Ogola"s book.

The naming ceremony of Akoko sets the bar very high on how a simple function like naming can take astronomical grounds call in all levels of spiritual intervention. The Luo name according to: season-Adoyo, the will of the dead- Obanda, intervention by the ancestors- Akello and the characters exhibited by the child- Akoko.

Secondly the Nak ceremony has to be performed to both genders. The ceremony has its rituals which are to be obeyed. Nak cannot be performed to the second born before it is done to the first. The ritual involves the removal of six lower teeth.

Marriage is a significant cultural event. Before marriage, a jawangyo (spy) is sent to look around for ladies of marriageable age who can make a good wife. Fascinating enough, the society looks more on the basis of what you are marrying from more than what you are marrying to. It only lies with the father of the girl to decide where her girl is getting married to. This puts women at a disadvantage; men too are not given the vantage to marry who they want. If the Jawang"yo has found a suitable mate, the negotiations begin in earnest. Bride price ones determined, the wedding follows and has to be a mock struggle like an eagle stealing a chick-pun intended.

The brutality of tradition is seen as the backbreaking industry of Akoko is unnoticed. Tradition notices a woman who grows a generation than the one who ensures food sustainability. Tradition does not recognize love but instead looks at a woman who is loved as a witch. Akoko is accused as a witch by her Maro, mother-in-law, which draws her wrath. When her husband and boys die, Akoko is left groundless. She has to fight using external forces because her tradition does not recognize a woman who has no sons or husband. She would have secured her life if she had chosen to be inherited by Otieno Kembo according to the dictates of tradition.

3. **POST-COLONIALISM/COLONIALISM/CHRISTIANITY**

The whispers of the coming of the white man are first had from Nyaroche and his friend. The two enjoy spreading the beauty of the world man drawing the attention of Obura Kembo. Obura decides to explore the world outside without his parents" permission. We learn of Obura"s demise in the war in Tanganyika and subsequently, the calendar floats in.

After Obura"s death things in Sakwa are untouched by the influences outside. Like the fictional ridges in Ngugi Wa Thing"o"s book The River And The Source- Kameno and Makuyu, Sakwa remains behind like Kameno.

In her agony and loneliness, Nyabera decides to join the Christians in Aluor. She is drawn by the rumour that, the white man"s religion recognizes people like her. She is later join by her mother and her daughter Awiti and her nephew Owuor Sino.

The family of Akoko is baptized into Christianity. Akoko is named Veronicha, Nyabera-Mary, Awiti-Elizabeth and Awour-Peter. Akoko seems at home with the new religion. She takes to

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faith as she has embraced the ups and downs of the life she lived. She counsels Awiti and

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strengthens her in patience and love. She reprimands Nyabera and reminds her to rely on internal comforts when Awiti joins college.

Peter Owour wants to become priest but what stands between him is the return back home to take his rightful position as the chief of Sakwa. He struggles with indecision fearing Akoko would not like his decision. Nyabera and Owour join Akoko in the garden but the visionary already knew what was cooking. She readily blesses peter and renames him Peter Owuor Kembo after her husbands. Peter joins the seminary.

The element of sacrifice is evident here. Akoko sacrifices her only chance to go back to her matrimonial home for Peter"s sake. She forgets about grandchildren roaming in her homestead and chooses to live a lonely life. To her life is giving happiness and finding happiness in generosity. Her element is sometimes construed today as a generalization that Luos forget their homeland and build big houses and mansions in the cities away from home. To Akoko, Alour was home just like any other, times had changed and so was she.

Christianity imparts reason, discipline in the generation Akoko built. Her reflection is seen in the eyes of Elizabeth Awiti and Wandia Mugo as they model their family on Christian virtues.

Margaret ogolla mentions little on colonialism but focuses her attention to the independence of Kenya. She relishes the new freedom gained. She portrays her characters as the people who recognized that with independence came the responsibility of building a better society. Mark works extra hard to provide for his family. He takes evening lessons to double his efforts and also rise in ranks. He knows that, with independence better skills are required to build the country. These opportunities are also exploited by Aoro sigu, Vero, Wandia Mugo and the post-colonial generation. She does not portray the society as the one mired with corruption but hope.

4. **EDUCATION**

Informal education had basic principles which enabled young people to live cohesively with the society. Akoko had been taught to follow the ways of chik. She had been well groomed to obey her husband. The education was tailored to ensure that responsibility and obedience was imparted by instilling fear i.e. one was to abide by the ways of chik.

Mothers were given the responsibility to train children that is why Akoko has greater responsibility in training her children. She ensured that they knew the value of hard work by indulging them in work. "….. his mother"s adage that the sun should never rise and find a man still asleep." Pg 52. "Stupidity in a woman was a sin only greater than stupidity in a man.."pg65

Formal education came through by the Missionary. The disparity in gender is clearly felt as young people joined higher system of education. Many boys joined high school than girls. There were higher dropout rates among girls than boys.

Awiti and Peter studied hard to follow their vocation. They took different paths; Peter studied for priesthood while Awiti took to teaching. They had learned the value of education given that

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resources were awarded according to one‟s occupation.

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Mark made sure that all his children had decent education. He struggled to convince Becky to finish her A- levels despite her reluctance. The Aoro‟s too dedicate their resources to educate their children

Wandia Mugo excels in education to become a doctoral degree in medicine.

5. **DEATH**

Death has been used variously in the book. Death represents an end. It cycles around the life of Akoko. The book portends death as inevitable. The first chapter opens with Akoko receiving the name Obanda after her recently dead uncle.

In another twist, Nyabera is given the name Odero after her dead grandfather Chief Odero Gogni.

Obura after escaping home meets with death at the hands of the Germans in Tanzania. The death of Obura represents deprivation. Everyone feels for this loss. Though Obura was the only one who everyone looked upto, this death also creates an opportunity for Owang‟Sino as the next heir-to-the-throne.

Owuor Kembo‟s health fails him and he soon dies leaving the chieftaincy in the hands of his son Owang‟Sino. This death signifies a change of guard as everyone looks for the leadership of the promising young Owang‟sino.

When Owang‟Sino chokes on the bone of fish, Akoko is at loss. She loses her sense of direction and is left without a pole to hold on to. She has to relay on her own instincts, her inner power and wisdom to forge a life of her destined future. This death represents despair and confusion. It determines a turning point from the decadent tradition of male property ownership to woman self-reliance-feminism.

Nyabera is surrounded by death. All her children die save for one-Awiti. Nyabera‟s life brings about a change of course as she moves away from hope in ever diminishing life of child bearing and walks on the path of appreciation of individual life and what Were has to offer.

The death of Akoko represents transition. She had become the light and cushion and hope everyone looked up to. Her death is a seal of the new bond she found in the union of Mark and Elizabeth. It is a blessing in sadness that after all is said and done; she has fulfilled her life as a father/mother to a generation of change. Fate had made her grow wiser and her decisions transformational.

When Elizabeth loses her first to ignorance, we learn the sad reality that, with the new education, few get to learn about the basics of child bearing and caring. The young couple is so ignorant of the early signs of pregnancy that they take it as malaria-a common mistake.

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Becky"s death wakes the sad reality of HIV/AIDS as it pops its head in Africa. Becky"s lifestyle and mannerisms exposed her to the ugliness of life. A lesson that students have to learn that life in itself has monsters and limitations to any choice one chooses to live.

Awiti and Marks death finally rests the life that begun in Sakwa many year ago, pulsated through the caves of Aluor almost finding a water fall in the death of Akoko but picked up to Nakuru culminating in Wandia and Aoro.

Many will argue that death is not much of a theme but recurrent topic. Majorly, I argue that death is as much a theme and a strong one because theme is what recurs in a story. Having said that, I believe that, death offers lessons of perseverance and the will to survive despite the prevailing circumstances. Death also re-evaluates and opens up other avenues in life that have been unexplored.

6. **CHANGE**

Change as a theme has been of central focus in African literature. In so many ways, change is viewed as the move from traditional perception of society to the modern ways. Change can be radical or transitional as seen in The River and The Source.

The River and The Source brings about a situational type of change. The characters we come across in the book are open-minded individuals who are visionaries. They embrace change and accommodate radical views moderately.

Akoko involves the white administration in securing the custody of her grandson. The way the colonial administration handles the matter is profoundly unimaginable. The DC involves the traditional customs and regulations to resolve the matter amicably instead of descending on Sakwa with guns and clubs. This raises some hope in Akoko and her confidence in the white administration. The subtle British influence on the matter and the knowledge of traditional culture shows that the DC understood the importance of coercion as opposed to use of radical force. He knew it was just a matter of time.

Petro Owuor"Sino and Elizabeth Awiti start the white man"s education after leaving Yimbo. They learn Arithmetic and religion and successfully secure careers based on education and not a transition from childhood to adulthood where the only obligation was marriage. The new education offers opportunities and diversifies. Regardless of the education, owuor remembers that he has great responsibility as the chief of Sakwa. This responsibility makes him uncomfortable but soon he is given blessings by his grandmother to pursue what his heart desires.

Change requires sacrifice. Akoko knew how much she sacrificed to make Owuor pursue his padre education but she was happy that she was embracing this new life leaving the little about traditional obligations behind. Nyabera sacrifices her love for Awiti and lets her join a Teacher Training College.

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The marriage negotiations of Elizabeth are a fascinating spectacle. For the first time, the women are directly involved in this age old custom. Akoko makes sure that the marriage does not take the aspect of selling a girl to her potential husband but a custom that has to be obeyed. In this context, the little Mark Anthony gives is just a way of appeasing chik and not dowry per se.

It comes as a surprise that Akoko serves Kong"o during the negotiations. Many would have expected that since she was a Christian, Akoko would not indulge in traditional practices, which in some churches are condemned to witchcraft but to Akoko. Change is about embracing the new and the old alike.

7. **PARENTING/REPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD**

In traditional Luo society ladies were trained to respect their husbands. Of Akoko, "she has been carefully brought up and has been taught all the requirements of chik. She is a very apt pupil and will therefore not bring ruin to her husband by improper conduct. (pg21)

Akoko taught her children to value and appreciate work. She reprimanded them on idling, of obura she says, "It seems I don"t give you enough work. Only an idle mind can think of such nonsense……. Now go and help the herdsmen with their task." (Pg 49)

Akoko teaches her children to wake up early (pg 52). When Obura ran from home, Akoko thought that he had overslept. She had taught him to wake before the sun rose. On Nyabera, " (Akoko) she believed that a young woman had to be intelligent, fast on her feet and hardworking." (Pg65)

Akoko and Nyabera brought up Awiti and Owuor Sino in a loving way. They were given education at the mission station and baptized to Christian. Akoko gave her kin space to make choices and she approved of them. "I had also hoped that you would marry and provide many sons to ensure the continuity of Owuor Kembo: but no I will not stand in your way" (pg126)

Nyabera learned the art of consolation from her mother. When Akoko dies, she takes it in gracefully to console Elizabeth Awiti who was inconsolable. (Pg154)

Mark and Elizabeth worked hard to take care of their children. When Aoro misbehaves in school, "Since when did you see breakfast walking in here by itself?" Mark says as he sends his boy Aoro to go and look for food for himself. Mark wanted Aoro to learn perseverance and hardwork. "……his mother rushed out to her son. Mark walked into the bathroom and returned with a basinful of water…." (Pg189) Mark displays principals of a strict disciplinarian who values hard work though he loves his children. Elizabeth checks Mark"s anger by bringing in some kind of motherly tenderness where Mark shows relentless brutality.

Aoro and Wandia Mugo also are exemplary parents. They are much caring especially to Daniel who suffers Down"s syndrome. They take in Alicia and Johnny Courtney, the children of Becky after Becky passes on. In love and guidance, the Aoro"s help shape the destiny of the Courtney"s "Johnny you are the most lovable person I know. I couldn"t love you more if you were my son,

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but never blame the colour of your skin for anything" Wandia told (Johnny pg303)

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