



## Representation of memory in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's dreams in a time of war and Wole Soyinka's ake: the years of childhood



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### Abstract

This study examines how two writers, Wole Soyinka and Ngugi wa Thiong'o, present their childhood experiences while growing up in colonial Nigeria and Kenya respectively. This study set out to investigate how childhood memory shapes the consciousness of the two autobiographers in particular and their societies in general. The rationale for the study was to make a critical enquiry into the childhood memories of the two writers as children and as established writers. This study compares the way Soyinka and Ngugi represent memory as grown up writers from the point of view of privileged child in the case of Soyinka and a deprived child on the part of Ngugi. The two writers grew up at about the same historical time at a challenging period in the history of Africa in particular and the world at large. The study employed the use of post-colonial theory, formalism theory and the theory of autobiography as its critical approaches. The study found out that these writers become major protagonists in determining their own destiny in a colonial environment, the World War II and the struggle for independence. The study also shows that Soyinka and Ngugi's perception of life was greatly influenced by the family, the politics of colonialism, school, sociological factors and other historical forces that were at play during their childhood. The two autobiographies originate from West Africa for Ake: The Years of Childhood and East Africa for Dreams in a Time of War and the study suggests that despite the geographical distance, the experiences of childhood for the two writers had some common denominators.

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