

**SELF NARRATION AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF HIV:
FROM HEARTBREAK TO DAYBREAK: MY JOURNEY WITH HIV BY ASUNTA
WAGURA**

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other university.

Signature.....

Date:.....

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Supervisors' declaration

This project has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.

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Date.....

PROF. MONICAH MWESELI

DEDICATION

This project is a special dedication to my son Glen Cosmas Kamau and my daughter Staicy Joy Njeri.

The more that you read, the more things you will know, the more that you learn, the more places you'll go.- DR SEUSS

I agree that a love of reading is a great gift for a parent to pass on to his or her child. –ANN BRASHARES

Regardless of your ages I promise to support you achieve your academic goals and nurture other talents you may have in life no matter what it is going to take. I love you.

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Psalms 100:4-5

“Enter the temple gates with thanksgiving, go into its courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise him. The Lord is good; his love is eternal and his faithfulness lasts forever.”

My innermost gratitude goes to my almighty God for giving me good health and the strength to write this project. In him alone did I put my trust even when I felt like giving up. He has seen me through thick and thin and finally it is done!

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to analyze the representation of the impact of HIV/AIDS on a patient from the patient's point of view. It focuses on the angle from which Wagura handles the attitudes of other people on HIV/AIDS and how she brings out her feelings as an author and persona. The objectives of this study are to evaluate the representation of the illness of HIV/AIDS in the autobiography by analyzing the theme of despair and the theme of hope through the agency of a woman and to evaluate the effectiveness of the stylistic devices employed by the writer. The hypotheses guiding this study are that Wagura's autobiography is a journey trailing from desperation to hope and that she has employed different stylistic devices to effectively pass across her message. The study employs the theory of autobiography which helps to distinguish between an autobiographical work from other literary works. In addition, I used formalism theory. The formalists' approach produced a theory concerned with the writer's technical prowess and craft skill. The feminist literary theories helped me explore the female experience in the text. I used library research for qualitative reading of the secondary texts. This study concludes that despite the suffering and desperation associated with HIV/AIDS, there is breaking of the powerlessness associated with being HIV positive. This comes from a sufferer of the disease.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Asunta Wagura is a Kenyan who serves as an advocate and champion for people especially women living with HIV. She was diagnosed with HIV in 1988 at the age of 22. She went public on her HIV status four years later. She says that this revelation gave her freedom and she decided to use herself as a resource in the campaign against AIDS. In 1993, she started The Kenya Network of women living with AIDS (KENWA). She is currently a mother of four boys all who are HIV negative. Her autobiography is majorly about her lifetime journey from childhood to when she found out that she was infected with HIV and life beyond that.

Wagura takes us through her personal journey as a girl child much loved by her father who almost spoilt her. She had a very strict mother with whom they seemed to be competing for attention from the father. She painfully narrates how her mother often made her feel bad about herself by telling her that she was ugly. She takes us through her schooling system up to that defining moment when she was crudely informed that she had been infected with HIV and immediately sent away from Nairobi Women Nursing School. She was accused of having been infected with a prostitutes' disease.

Life was not the same again for Wagura. She lived a dejected life, a life of hopelessness and humiliation made worse so by her closest family members including her mother and siblings. She was warned that she only had six months to live. Her family openly

stigmatized her by failing to share personal items like utensils and bedding with her; the church conducted some final rituals awaiting her death to deepen her stigma further.

Throughout her painful narration, she is very sensitive to the way anti-AIDS campaigns are conducted, especially the videos. According to her, they depicted HIV/AIDS as a death sentence. All the star characters in these videos ended up dying. Due to such portrayals, Wagura offers to serve as a voice for her own behalf and on behalf of others going through stigmatization and hopelessness in their journey with HIV. In *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* she rewrites the messages of despair to those of hope.

When Wagura contracted HIV, much was not known about it and hence the very high level of stigmatization. Jennifer Muchiri in *Women's Autobiography: Voices from Independent Kenya (2010)* defines the nature of autobiography. In reference to this, Asunta Wagura's autobiography addresses the concept of growth, taking the form of a journey or movement. She narrates her story from childhood to adulthood, from a life of good health to a life of HIV infection, to stigma and finally to overcoming the stigma.

Wagura feels that her life is worth sharing. She teaches us the virtue of resilience that no matter what is thrown at us, we must never give up. Through her story, she reminds us that we should learn to be very sensitive towards others, that it is good to empathize with the experiences of other people. After all, nobody in their right senses would wish to be infected with HIV. After introspection, Wagura sees her transformation and feels that it

is valuable to share her story with the readers. She rises to become the Executive Director-Kenya Network of Women with AIDS (KENWA).

Asunta Wagura has shared more of her life experiences other than the ones narrated in the autobiography through Newspapers like *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard* as well as magazine columns.

Between 1983 and 1985, twenty six cases of AIDS were reported in Kenya. Sex workers were the first group affected. In 1985, a study showed an HIV prevalence of 59% amongst a group of sex workers in Nairobi. An average of four new AIDS cases was being reported to the World Health Organization monthly towards the end of 1986. This totaled to 286 cases by the start of 1987. At this point, 38 of these cases had been fatal. The Kenyan Government responded to this by publishing informative articles in the press and launched a poster campaign urging people to use condoms and avoid indiscriminate sex. The Minister for Health announced a year long health and education program.

By 1987, HIV had spread so rapidly that one to two percent of adults in Nairobi were infected with the virus. Between 1989-1991, HIV prevalence among pregnant women in the capital had gone up from 6.5% to 13%. By 1994, about 100,000 people had already died from AIDS. In an AIDS awareness symposium in 1999, the president, Daniel Arap Moi declared the AIDS epidemic a national disaster in his speech. He announced that a national AIDS control council would be established immediately. At the end of 1999, in

a speech to students of the University of Nairobi, Moi told the students that the threat of AIDS had reached alarming proportions and this could not be treated casually. He advocated the use of condoms. In 2000, plans were drawn to have a condom factory in Nairobi aiming a production of one hundred million condoms a year. Due to rapid expansion of preventive interventions since the year 2000, HIV prevalence began to decline from 13.4% to 6.9% in 2006. There was a change in sexual behavior and increased use of condoms. The decline is attributed to the large number of people dying from AIDS in Kenya.

I chose to pick on HIV literature since HIV/AIDS is acknowledged as a global health crisis. AIDS is transmitted primarily through sex. Though the campaign mounted against AIDS has led to greater awareness of modes of infection and prevention, it has received different responses due to cultural factors. Open discussion on sexual matters is not socially approved in most societies and is usually associated with loose morals hence most growing minds do not get sufficient sex education. The impact of HIV/AIDS has been felt right from the national to family level. Both the infected and the affected have an equal share of psychological problems they go through. It is against this backdrop that writers have expressed their feelings through different genres of literature like poems, short stories, plays and novels among others to delineate the theme of HIV. I thought of self-narration as being one of the most effective ways of communicating about HIV since it is a personal testimony.

From Heartbreak to Daybreak (2012) is a story about Wagura's personal journey from childhood to when she found out that she was infected with HIV and the life after. In the narration, she states that hers was a normal life just like that of any other child. She narrates her innocence while trying to fit in the "college girl class". She was elated at being in a relationship without heeding to her parents advice that men were not "good". George was rich and handsome and she could not suspect that he was infected. The book details her post traumatic experiences from her relatives and the society at large. She finally explains the help she got from The Kenya Aids Society which gave her hope and a job to sustain herself. Together with other women, they are able to register their own group as Kenya Association of HIV positive Women which later translated to Kenya Network of Women with Aids which basically supported women living with AIDS, their own children and children orphaned by AIDS. She advocates for positive living even when things seem so dark in life.

The title of this book is symbolic. "Heartbreak" is like one walking around with tiny shards of glass in their chest. One feels a crushing sense of sadness and one is miserable. Wagura's heartbreak comes on that defining moment in her life when she has her HIV status revealed to her in the most insensitive manner. She is rebuked and rejected. She is finally thrown out of college. When she goes home, she is sidelined by her mother and siblings as they wait for her death. She goes back to George who marries her and then rejects her amid a pregnancy. She struggles on her own, gives birth and returns to her mother's home. She falls so ill yet her family continues to mistreat her together with her

son Peter. Generally, heartbreak symbolizes the despair and stigma that she went through.

“Daybreak” represents the hope and awakening of her dreams after she visits the Kenya AIDS Society. After her visit and talk with Muriuki, she accepts her status and works towards improving her livelihood. It was like a new dawn for her and streaks of light started streaming in. She got economic empowerment to raise Peter and her other children that she bore later. “Daybreak” is symbolic of hope.

Wagura could be writing for therapeutic purposes. Amer Lea Starfire a psychologist in on “Why Write? Emotional Healing” says:

Writing about past events works. The process of exploring emotions associated with events and people in our past can be like cleansing and disinfecting a wound that refuses to heal. Yes, it can be a little painful, but afterwards the wound is clean; the clogged emotional state that kept the wound has been bathed and soothed and has a better chance of healing properly.

He further says that while writing for emotional healing, one writes as honestly as possible. Writing honestly and vulnerably connects one to oneself. Writing about difficult and hurtful experiences and acknowledging that the pain and emotion still exist in someone while they are writing can help them to heal. This writing allows one to move through the process, keep what one needs to grow and release unhelpful thoughts and feelings.

Ros Coward in “Me, me, me: The Rise and Rise of Autobiographical Journalism”(2009) says that confessional journalism has become very prominent. This form of journalism heavily concentrates on the intimate details of the writer’s personal and emotional life.

She says that this genre is a form of personal essay in which one shares life's defining events and relationships in a form that connects one to one's readers. She refers to it as experiential first person writing. The most extreme and raw example of the autobiographical diaries has been cancer diaries. In self-narration, the identity of the self seems to change. This genre is dominated by narratives of transformation, describing journeys from one state of being to another, journeys of self-discovery or struggles to triumphant changes. Great value is placed on having lived through actual experiences, on the accounts of those who have experienced things directly. In many autobiographical writings, subjects concentrate on diverse aspects of their personal lives like teenage experiences, broken relationships like divorces and illnesses among others.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Illness narratives are on the rise in literature. Authors like Joseph Situma in *The Mysterious Killer* (2001) and Marjorie Oludhe in *Chira* (1997) have written the novels on HIV/AIDS but they have done so from a third person's perspective. On the other hand, Wagura in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* (2012), which is the centre of this study, has written about HIV/AIDS from a first person point of view. This study set out to analyse the representation of the impact of HIV on the patient from a patient's point of view. The analysis presents a double suffering for Wagura being a woman who is HIV positive. It focuses on the angle from which she handles the attitudes by people and how she brings out her feelings as a female persona and as an author.

1.3 Objectives

1. To evaluate the representation of the illness of HIV in the autobiography by analyzing the theme of despair and the theme of hope through the agency of a woman.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the stylistic devices employed by the writer.

1.4 Hypotheses

This study was guided by the following hypotheses:

1. Wagura's autobiography is a journey trailing from desperation to hope.
2. Wagura has employed stylistic devices to effectively pass across her message.

1.5 Justification of the Study

The title of the autobiography lends itself to study. Literature is about the soul which expresses hopes and aspirations as well as frustrations. Through literature we can unravel the meaning that from ashes can come out a beautiful plant.

This study falls under autobiography within which Wagura gives an illness narrative depicting her life experience. The writer conforms to the recognized features of autobiographies by trying to answer the question "How did I become who I am?"

Jennifer Muchiri in *Women's Autobiography: Voices from Independent Kenya (2010)* explains the nature of autobiography. She says that autobiography aims at communicating the truth about one's life, it relies on memory and recollections as well as indicating a lot of selectivity. Wagura basically selects on issues revolving around HIV to drive her motive. It has some connection with history by mentioning her father

as being one of the Mau Mau fighters. Literary critics have paid scholarly attention to thematic concerns in most biographies mostly to do with political, gender and identity issues. Limited research has been done on illness narratives and especially *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* and hence the need to examine how Wagura through the literary aspect of stylistics executes her purpose in the narration of her life experience. Most of the research conducted on Wagura is through mass media interviews specifically on Newspaper and television platforms but not documented in scholarly works. Such interviews further do not pay attention to her creativity and artistry employed as far as telling her personal story is concerned which most autobiographical authors employ in recreating their past events and put them in a narrative form. Most of other researches focus on the theme of HIV alone leaving out the feminine challenges that contribute to women getting infected as well as the challenges women face after contracting the disease.

Illness narratives have a complex character due to their social, psychological and motivational issues to which they relate. This study is significant and justified as it provides a platform for which Wagura uses the self narrative voice to let out her frustrations which at the end seem to bring healing to her.

1.6 Literature Review

Mike Bury in *Illness Narratives: Fact or Fiction?* explores the importance of studying narratives in circumstances where the “unfolding” of illness comes to dominate people’s experience of everyday life. He says that illness constitutes a major instance of

biographical disruption (Bury 1982, 1991) in which the relations between body, mind and everyday life are threatened. He says that illness narratives suggest three broad forms:

Contingent narratives deal with those aspects of the patients story or account that deal with beliefs and knowledge about factors that influence the onset of disorder, its emerging symptoms and its immediate or proximate effects on the body, self and others. Wagura in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak (2010)* is diagnosed with HIV which people believe is a disease of prostitutes and which someone should die within six months. Her body does not seem to change immediately as people thought. She is psychologically affected for being openly stigmatized both verbally and in actions. Her immediate relatives like the mother and the siblings avoid her and are embarrassed of her. There is a categorical view of these narratives based on the separation of the normal and the pathological. The onset and course of the disease is relatively clear cut. From the nature of HIV, the virus can be transmitted from one person to another through other avenues like blood transfusion and breastfeeding but in Wagura's society, it was only believed to be transmitted through sexual intercourse which they crudely regarded as prostitution. There is also the spectral view which explains that the difference between disease and illness is a matter of degree and a function of social process. It depends strongly on the social circumstances and societal reaction. In this view, the psychological well being of a patient in dealing with the disease is very important. Most patients die, not because of the disease itself but because of the stigma that comes with it. Patients are likely to live longer when given moral support by their

loved ones and the society at large. Wagura particularly singles out her brother Ruga who used to encourage her and give her hope that she would live when every other person turned against her.

Moral narratives introduce and evaluate dimension into the links between the personal and the social. Here, the valuations enter the picture, as the sufferers seek to account for and perhaps justify themselves in the altered relations of the body, self and society brought about by the illness. A more self development dimension proved that patients' stories spoke to illness as a form of disruption that can be turned into self-discovery and renewal. Wagura's story seems to be one of transformation. Out of her illness she turned out to be a public figure and indeed able to make a good living out of it

Core narratives are the accounts patients give to researchers and to a lesser degree those provided in first hand accounts published for a wider audience. These narratives seek to order experience in a temporal sequence. As the event of the illness unfolds(its onset, diagnosis and treatment) and gives the expression to the changed relationship between body, self and society, these narrators provide specific forms of language, clichés, motifs, references and other elements of linguistic and symbols which help them express themselves.

Virginia Woolf wrote the essay "On Being Ill" (1930) shortly after suffering nervous breakdown. She had lost her mother to influenza at the age of thirteen. Virginia had been in and out of mental hospitals several times at the age of forty two. She says that it

becomes strange indeed that illness has not taken its place with love, battle and jealousy among the prime themes of literature. By this time, the voices of women writing and speaking about illness were hardly as widely and forcefully amplified as their male counterparts. Woolf elaborates the isolation and loneliness of illness. She examines how the vulnerability and unknowable nature of disease and affliction can force a sort of child-like reversion in even the most hearty headstrong adult. She helps to change the society's perception of illness. I will also focus on other writers who have written autobiographies and novels of illnesses. Their storylines seem to be ones of pain, nostalgia and finally giving hope.

Rolf Schimid in his memoir *No Need to Lie* (2011) narrates his story on how he discovered that he was ailing from throat cancer. He states the importance of detoxing one's body as he had not felt any symptoms of the disease until he did a detox on his body. He narrates his frustrations and suffering as he was waiting for the medical results. He was wondering whether it was the bad one-HIV. In his narration he reveals the stigma that came with both diseases. He also talks about the stigma that came with it including losing several of his friends. All the same, he remains focused. He mentions the value of having supportive family and friends during such an illness. He talks of the value of doing what one likes during such moments as well as the need for prayer. He seeks medication both locally and internationally and finally gets healed from throat cancer. He attributes his healing to a positive mindset, ensuring that he did feed even when it seemed impossible, strong willpower and medication. He serves as a voice for all cancer patients and a sign of hope.

Esther Owuor in *My Life as a Paraplegic* (1995) narrates her painful story through paraplegia. She narrates about that awful bus accident that changed her life completely. She narrates being deserted on the hospital bed by her husband to being discriminated at the place of work. She speaks on behalf of other paraplegic people who feel discriminated upon in different ways. For example the public transport system as well as using buildings that are constructed in a way not favorable for people suffering from her condition. All the same, she is able to pass across her courage and resilience thus giving hope to others in her situation.

Henry Indangasi in “The Impulses in Africa America literature” (1993) considers that autobiographies are literary. He notes that writers bring out a higher truth using some degree of creativity. He acknowledges the instance of neutralizing one’s personal experiences and presenting them as fiction. He argues that an autobiographer “selects, re-organizes, re-arranges and reshapes the facts of life (144) using literary features.

Jairus Omuteche in “Meditated Plot in the Construct of the Theme of Struggle in Nelson Mandela’s Autobiography *Long Walk To Freedom*” (2004) says that the reconstruction of the autobiography is a creative discipline involving interpreting the past as a tool revealing the present. With reference to this, Wagura reconstructs her autobiography to show us that she is who she is today as the director of KENWA after contracting HIV in her past and taking it positively after that. He views the genre as a tool that can be used to judge human nature universally especially in oppressive situations as a quest for justice. Wagura speaks against the stigmatization that most HIV patients go through in

the society. He asserts that its narrative value lies in the fact that the autobiographer consciously selects and rejects some past truths and re-shapes them to reveal their motive on particular issues.

Karl Weintraub sees autobiography as a historical consciousness linked to the growth of individuality. This is clearly seen in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak (2012)* because Wagura's writing has been influenced by her transformation from her innocence to contracting HIV, passing through a lot of pain and humiliation and finally becoming the Executive director of Kenya Network of Women with AIDS.

Joseph Situma in *The Mysterious Killer(2001)* portrays a country mourning the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The village has to come into terms with Cecilia, a city dweller who comes back to Nkulu suffering from AIDS-a mysterious disease. Most people believe he has contracted it out of witchcraft and a sacrifice of three bulls is offered to appease the departed ancestors. However, the sacrifice does not bring a cure to Cecilia. She decides to consult a medicine man who she thought would have a solution. She sends her niece Rachel to Wauzi. When Rachel enters the medicineman's house, she is shocked to see a python coiled around a sooty pet. The medicine man invokes the spirits of the ancestral goddess and gives Rachel mixed herbs for Cecilia. This too does not work out and Cecilia eventually dies. The characters in Situma's text do not accept that HIV/AIDS is real.

Carolyn Adalla in *Confessions of an AIDS Victim* (1993) unveils how Catherine Njeri, a beautiful, young and intelligent woman gets her dreams shattered as she cannot go to study for her masters degree in the United States of America after contracting HIV. She learns with shock and utter disbelief that she is HIV positive. Just like Asunta, she starts thinking like somebody who is at the end of her life. She makes the revelation to her longtime friend Marilyn in a letter. In the letter, Njeri's life unfolds and her future is ruined.

Marjorie Oludhe in her novel Chira (1997), deals with HIV/AIDS in which the characters too do not see HIV as a reality. They too perceive HIV as a taboo illness which comes for those who go against the societal norms. People die emaciated and they really do not understand this disease.

Macharia Mwangi in "Reversed Dreams" narrates how Munga, a young man is at crossroads after testing HIV positive. His dreams of having a happy future are shattered. He wonders how he would disclose the badnews to his girlfriend. This story shows the psychological torture that the victim suffers. The title suggests that there is no hope for a better future.

Goro Wa Kamau in "When the sun Goes Down" (2011) deals with the stigma associated with AIDS. Steve is avoided by people for having inherited Maureen, a widow whose husband had died of HIV. Steve gets infected but lives positively. He takes his antiretroviral drugs and also dropped habits like smoking which would threaten his

healthy. He remains strong despite the stigma. Maureen is so much affected by the stigma. She refuses to take her drugs and she finally dies. This story shows that most HIV victims do not die because of the virus but the stigma that comes with it.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The theory of autobiography formed the interpretive grid of this study as it focuses on the study of self writing and the issues that arise with it. The early proponents of this theory include Pascal, Gusdorf, Misch and Dilthey. Wilhelm Dilthey particularly states that human sciences are best studied based on the understanding of human life experiences. According to him, a major aspect of autobiographical criticism is experience because self writing is a reflection of one's life. With this in mind, I get the basis upon which to examine the life experience of Wagura in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak*.

Roy Pascal in *Design and Truth in autobiography* (1960) observes that it is through intensive study of the art of autobiography that one establishes the aspect of truth in the self-life writing. The idea of truth in an autobiography is effected by the manner in which the writer orders their memories to form one whole narrative. The narrative is made up of memories and recollections. This assertion is important as it enabled me examine the extent to which Wagura creates the idea of coherence and unity in the autobiography.

Laura Marcus in *Introduction to Auto/biography Discourse*(1994) discusses the principles of autobiography that makes us differentiate between an autobiographical

work from other literary works. One of the major principals is the concept of intention- this is the motive of writing the autobiography. This helped me assess Asunta Wagura's intention of communicating about her innocent moments, contracting HIV, going through stigma and finally overcoming it. He further discusses the concept of compulsion to write about self. The autobiographer is driven by an inner compulsion to write about the self. AsuntaWagura in one of her articles "Tracing my Path from Heartbreak to Daybreak" in The Daily Nation of 16th January 2013 after the release of her autobiography says that it dawned on her that she had not recorded about her journey with HIV at a time she got involved in an almost fatal accident. This is what she says:

I vowed to have this book out after I was involved in a car accident. Were it not for God's grace, I would be a goner and my memory faded from most people. Isn't that what happens after most burials? As they say, life goes on. After the accident, I realized I was taking too much for granted. I refocused on accomplishing the items on my to-do lists, which stretched for as long as I could remember. One of them was penning my Bio. (65)

Through self-narration, the narrator reveals to the readers directly or indirectly the motive of the narration. Asunta says on the same article that one reason she had to write is the fact that people associate her with AIDS.

Most times, my name is mentioned in the same breath with the word "AIDS". I want to let people know-more so my kids- that AIDS just gate crushed later in life. I want them to know that their mother was born like other children and brought up in the village. I actually had a normal childhood. (65)

Russian Formalism was an important tool in this study. From *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, the Russian formalists were more interested in the "method"

The first Russian Formalists considered that human “content” (emotions, ideas and reality in general) possessed no literary significance in itself but merely provided a context for the functioning of literary devices. While the New critics regarded literature as a form of human understanding, the formalists thought of it as a special use of language. The formalists set about producing a theory of Literature concerned with the writer’s technical prowess and craft skill.

Formalists say that practical language is used for acts of communication while literary language has no practical function at all and simply makes us see differently.

Shklovsky called one of his most attractive concepts “defamiliarization” which refers to making something strange. This prolongs the process of perception. This helps in setting the context. Formalism makes you conscious of how the language of Literature delays and paints the picture for you. It has a way of lengthening our experience of seeing. Defamiliarization lays bare the device. Through defamiliarization, one becomes aware that the text highlights technique. The writer should be capable of showing, not telling in creative writing. Wagura as an autobiographer employs deliberate stylistics when telling her story. This starts right from the title *From Heartbreak to Daybreak (2012)* which is a symbolic title.

Feminist theories also helped me in my analysis of the text. In the first wave of feminism, Virginia Woolf is principally concerned with women’s material disadvantages compared to men. In *A Room of One’s Own*, (1946) she discusses the history and social

context of women in literary production. To her, women's writings should explore female experience in its own right and not form a comparative assessment of women's experience in relation to men's. Woolf feels that only if a woman has money and a room of her own is she independent enough to enable her develop to the full or else she will always be tied down by the conventions of her time and the society she is living in. She shows her desire for female independence and freedom. Simone De Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1946) recognizes the vast differences between the interests of the two sexes and its assault on men's biological, psychological as well as economic discrimination against women. Kate Millet in *Sexual Politics* which ranges from history, Literature, psychoanalysis, sociology and other areas states that ideological indoctrination as much as economic inequality is the cause of women's oppression.

1.8 Scope and Limitations

This study was limited to the examination of Wagura's *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* (2012) as a therapeutic text to the narrator. To achieve this, the study paid attention to the narrative strategies that the author employs to show her reaction to self after the news she has AIDS, how the society treats her, how she reacts to the societal treatment and finally her acceptance to her state of illness. I also evaluated the stylistics she uses to narrate her story. I also read a number of her newspaper articles and documented interviews in order to see the consistency of the narration of her story.

1.9 Methodology

This study explored Wagura's illness narrative that explores her journey from innocence, contracting HIV, going through stigma and finally letting go of any negative feelings concerning her illness and moving on with life. I relied on a thorough scrutiny of the primary text and pay attention to how the author constructs a society full of stigmatization even to its closest people. I also engaged secondary texts that detail other narratives of illnesses. These included books, journals and newspaper articles that sculptured these events. Autobiographical, Russian formalism and feminism theories guided my close reading of the text.

Chapters Breakdown

Chapter one

It comprises the introduction of the proposal. It sets the objective of the study, gives the justification as well as the perimeters of the study indicating the theoretical framework within which the study was done.

Chapter two

It will give preliminary definition of the autobiography. It shows the qualities that constitute the autobiographical mode and how far these qualities and attributes are evident in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak*. I will also examine the presentation of gender issues brought out by the narrator in her social cultural context as well as how she situates her challenges with the disease. I will look into her individual struggle, social struggle and her final triumph.

Chapter three

This chapter will deal with the issues of plot development, the plan and pattern of events. It will also focus on the choice of characters, use of pronouns, use of her first language and other stylistic techniques like symbolism, dialogue, similes, metaphors, rhetoric questions and hyperbole among others.

Conclusion

It will seek to sum up and tie up the argument and validate the approach taken. It will evaluate how far the objectives have been achieved. That is, the presentation of the illness of HIV in the autobiography through the theme of despair and the theme of hope from a feminine perspective and how the plot is patterned to effectively bring out these themes.

CHAPTER TWO

NARRATING THE FEMALE AND PATIENT PERSPECTIVE THROUGH AUTOBIOGRAPHY

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one formed the background to the study by identifying and proposing an area of study. It proposed the objectives of the study, the hypotheses and the theoretical frameworks within which the study would be done. It further justified the proposed study and suggested the methodology that would be used in the course of the study and within which scope it will be limited.

This chapter will dig deeper into the art of autobiography. It will show the qualities that constitute the autobiographical mode including autobiographical truth, autobiography relying on memories and recollections, experience and autobiographical selectivity. It will also focus on the portrait of the feminine world in her social cultural context. This will include gender related issues that let her to contracting the disease and the issues that she faces after contracting the disease. I will also focus on how she expresses her individual struggle and the social struggle in regard to the disease and her final triumph.

2.2The Autobiography

The many definitions of autobiography revolve around the issue of life history being told by the self. Jennifer Muchiri in *Women's Autobiography: Voices from Independent Kenya* (2010) says that:

Autobiography is a form of coming of age story in which the writer is initiated into adulthood through knowledge, experience and understanding. (28)

Encyclopedia Britannica defines autobiography as “the account of an individual human life, written by the subject himself or herself and must be composed by the subject himself or herself”.

Linda Peterson views autobiography from two perspectives. One, as self-representation and secondly as self-interpretation. *From Heartbreak to Daybreak (2012)* involves both. It has self-representation where Wagura narrates her own experience and on the other level, the interpretation of the meaningful place of her lived experiences and how they have shaped her personality.

Roy Pascal defines an autobiography as a narrative that involves the reconstruction of the moment of life or part of it (2). However, he asserts that, while the life history is concentrated with revealing the self, event outside the life of the subject cannot be avoided in the process of constructing the story. The individual narrative can only rely on the external events to get the story moving.

Peter Abbs in *Autobiography in Education (1974)* defines autobiography as “the search backwards into time to discover the evolution of the true self.” (7). This means that the autobiography is an account of the individual character’s past events. Abbs argues that the time frames for autobiographies attempt to answer the questions of the writer’s identity in the present as well as in the future. It is an attempt to ask “Who am I? How have I become who I am? What may I become in the future?”

From the above samples of definitions, the meaning of an autobiography can therefore narrow down to be a record of one's life history recorded by self with a deliberate effort to communicate the truth.

I will look at the nature of the autobiographical genre in the context of *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* (2012). At the end, I hope to give evidence that this text is an autobiography that brings the narration of Asunta Wagura's challenges with the disease.

Autobiography is about deliberately relaying a truthful account of the narrator's life. Muchiri quotes Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson who define autobiographical truth as "an inter-subjective exchange between the narrator and the reader aimed at producing the meaning of a life."(28). She asserts that the extent of autobiographical truth depends wholly on the sincerity of the narrator. The narrator undresses themselves and subjects themselves to public scrutiny without fear.

Wagura undresses herself and narrates that fateful night that she had asexual encounter with George.

I followed him to the room. When we got there, he locked the door and immediately grabbed me, tore off my clothes and forcefully had sex with me.....we did not sleep the rest of the night as George ravaged me till morning, grunting and groaning, enjoying himself. I hated the whole episode, experiencing pain and no pleasure at all. George was strong, powerful and heavy. I simply gave up fighting. (87)

She goes ahead and explains her plight when later on George infects her with a Sexually Transmitted Infection.

I did not know that I had contracted an STD. I had only been feeling a burning sensation in my private parts. (146)

By stating the naked truth as it is, she confides in us and by so doing appeals for our sympathy and understanding. It takes a lot of courage for anyone to open up about such intimate moments of their lives but it is worth the course as far as validation of truth is concerned.

In addition, she uses paratextual elements which give the autobiography a unique structure to present truth. For example, Wagura cites her book as a dedication to her children and millions of people living with HIV. In the dedication, she acknowledges her father, her brother Ruga and her mother who she refers to as her pillar and role model. This validates her claim later on in the text that she had made up with her mother. Also important in communicating truth are the photographs and the captions that accompany them. Roland Barthes introduced the concept of anchorage citing that “linguistic elements can serve to anchor the preferred readings of an image.” (Chandler 7)

In *From Heartbreak to Daybreak (2012)*, one can see the connection between the dedications at the beginning of the autobiography to the photographs at the end. Some photographs indicate desperation. An example is the second photo on page 207, showing Asunta on one of her ‘committing suicide trips’. Other photographs validate reconciliation like the ones on page 219 showing herself, the mother and the siblings. Most of the other photographs serve as a symbol of hope. This includes those ones that she is attending international conferences, speaking with prominent people like the Kenya’s second president Daniel Arap Moi and those showing her enjoying her life with her children. These ones show that all was not lost even after contracting the disease.

Muchiri also asserts that autobiography is the “form of a ‘coming-of-age’ story” (28). This is true as it depicts the journey of the narrator’s life from childhood to adulthood, from the innocence of life through to the acquisition of experience, knowledge and understanding. In the prologue of her book, Wagura wonders where to start writing about herself.

I do not even know where to start. I have more questions than answers but only I can set out to get the answers; so I will unpack my life and begin where it all started. Do I start as far back as I can remember about myself or when I got infected with HIV? I cannot start from when I got HIV because, who in their right minds would go out to get HIV? (V)

She therefore decides to narrate her story from when she is born. She explains several episodes of childhood innocence. For example, when her grandmother dies and is buried in a deep hole, she cries as she could not understand why people did that to her. (14) She also recounts days when she did not understand how people conceived. (3) With time, she is able to understand things. Her physical and intellectual growth through the different levels of schooling makes her gain new knowledge and experience. She moves away from her innocence. She is able to narrate who she is and how she became who she is as a result of the wide knowledge she has gained.

Autobiography is also marked by the element of experience. Pascal calls them “the interaction of man, facts and events which had and have meaning in the formation of his personality.” (16)

Denzin in *Interpretive Biography (1989)* says that persons as selves have experiences. Experiences here refer to the individuals meeting, confronting, passing through and making sense of events in their lives. Muchiri contributes to the aspect of experience and

says that, “Autobiographical narrators do not predate experience, but instead, they come to be through experience.” (30). She further argues that experience is authoritative.

“Experience is authoritative in the sense that it is the primary type of evidence in autobiography and the basis on which readers are invited to consider the narrator a uniquely qualified authority. An autobiographer’s investment in the authority of experience serves a number of purposes: it invites the reader to believe in the story and veracity of the narrator, it persuades the reader of the narrative’s authenticity, validates certain claims as truthful and justifies writing and publicizing the life story. In the autobiography, narrators claim the authority of experience both explicitly and implicitly.....the author’s name in the autobiography is a signifier of identity and it contributes to the autobiographer’s replication of the real.”(31)

Wagura may be a case of a person who is not so widely known as compared to other autobiographers like Barack Obama in *Dreams from My Father* and Nelson Mandela in *Long Walk to Freedom* among others. Therefore, her authority of experience may be explicit. Her appeal is only made through her HIV status and confers communal credibility. In this case, a voiceless narrator is able to speak publicly. She appeals to the authority of experience by indicating her HIV status on the title of her autobiography *From Heartbreak to Daybreak: My journey with HIV*. Also in the prologue, she indicates that her name is so closely associated with her HIV status by those who know her.

“HIV is just a small component of my life even though I cannot escape the fact that my name is always associated with it. It is always intriguing to think that HIV and my name have become synonymous.” (v)

The autobiographer also relies heavily on memory and recollections. Balch Marston in *Modern Short Biographies and Autobiographies (1940)* gives a concept that autobiographers recall life from the age one acquires memory to create impressions that they can later reconsider. The autobiographer usually sets out to write his autobiography in a point of significance in his life that calls for looking back to discover “what is of fundamental significance as regards a self- revealed personality (20). As most

autobiographers are usually adults, memory and recollection is very useful in recounting their past lives. Muchiri says that “autobiography relies on memory and recollections as writers dialogue with themselves to reconstruct and to mediate a present identity from the memories that emerge.”(29)

Wagura questions herself on whether it would be right to only remember the incidences surrounding her HIV contraction. However, she decides to include her childhood memories to assure her children that she had a normal childhood and teenage life before HIV gate crushed later on in her life.

Muchiri continues to argue that “the contexts of remembering are charged such that what is remembered and what is forgotten, and why, change over time and this influences what autobiographers recollect and record. For example, autobiographers may easily remember and narrate about certain achievements in their lives and conveniently forget painful events such as the death of a loved one or a mistake that they may have made and which they are embarrassed about,” (29)

For example, Wagura remembers with Nostalgia:

I went and sat on a bench outside and my mind flashed back to how, three months before, I had sat at the very same bench as we planned my going to the nursing school. I recollected how I had planned to study hard, get a well-paying job and liberate my family from poverty and misery. It seemed incongruous to me that I had sat at the bench planning my future and yet here I was, on the same bench, now, thinking of my death. That bench bore some significance for me. For a moment, my mind began replaying the occasions during which I had sat on it, trying to convince myself that it would yet again symbolize some redeeming of some sort.” (97-98)

This memory takes us through her journey of hope to hopelessness.

Memory is also said to be a collective activity. Wagura narrates about how her family came to be:

I am the firstborn in a family of twelve children; six boys and six girls. Because of my mother’s teenage pregnancy, there was a barrier to frank discussions between us. It must be that she was embarrassed of being a mother at such a

tender age because she would not tell me anything; whenever I asked about the circumstances of my birth, my dad was always the one who provided the answers. He happily talked about it. Mum has always been shy talking about how she and my father got involved.” (1-2)

This is Wagura’s memory combined with her father’s memory taking us back to her origin. Wagura straight away indulges in giving us the story surrounding her birth but later on in the first paragraph admits that she was told about it. This confession is good because we do not expect her to have a memory spanning from when she was born.

Muchiri says:

People afflicted by traumatic memory due to certain crises in their lives are beset with memories that keep interrupting a present moment and insist on being present. These memories may come to the surface of consciousness in bits and fragments, time and again, despite the passing of years. Such memories are often embroiled with difficulties such as sexual assault, imprisonment, disability and chronic illnesses among others which may be expressed only in halting fragments of traumatic memory. (30)

This adheres to the basic tenets of psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud that bringing information from the unconscious into consciousness can lead to catharsis. This is the process of releasing strong/repressed emotions and it allows people to deal with the issue. He also argues that people utilize a number of defense mechanisms to protect themselves from information contained in the unconscious. Emotional and psychological problems such as depression and anxiety are often rooted in conflicts between the conscious and unconscious mind. For this reason, people who are able to speak out or write about their painful experiences term it as therapeutic. Wagura in a newspaper interview once said that when she was given the final copy of her book to proof read and approve, she broke down and cried many times. She says that she cried because she realized how far she had come. This comes as a result of the painful memory that had re-emerged.

The photographs that Wagura attaches to the story help to authenticate her memory and provide a rich source of information to her story. Generally, photographs take us down the memory lane. The photographs range from when she is in secondary school to when she is in college, when she receives a state commendation from the then president Daniel Arap Moi, herself spending quality time with KENWA children and the good times with her family. These photographs provide useful material for her self-narration.

Autobiographies are also marked by the principle of selectivity. Autobiography deals with strongly felt personal basis discussions of individuals and thus an inward quest.

Peter Abbs says “Each autobiographer is at the service of own intentionality, (hence) recreates those memories which they are ready to take some stand towards (9).

Muchiri also says that:

The author deliberately selects what or who to include or leave out of the narrative thus determining where and how the autobiography starts, proceeds and ends.

The autobiography is a story in the first person point of view where the narrator owns and controls the narrative so that readers get to know only what the narrator tells them. (32)

For instance, among the many siblings that Wagura has, she chooses to journey more with her brother Ruga. He did not reject her when her family rejected her. He was a source of support and hope for her. She also chooses to paint her father positively as far as the relationship between the two of them is concerned. She tried to imagine that he would have treated her well even after contracting HIV. In her early life with HIV, she portrays the mother as insensitive and cruel towards her. She does this to clearly bring out the theme of desperation. Later on, she says that she and her mother had made up.

From a Kikuyu cultural perspective, it is deemed not right to discuss a deceased person in a negative light and it is wrong to harbor bitterness with one's parent. These could be the reasons she chooses to portray the father as a good person and also portrays reconciliation with the mother.

Muchiri also says that autobiographers write their stories mostly as adults who are able to look back in time and pass judgment on others and also on themselves depending on how they have led their lives. Asunta in her concluding remarks decides to pass her judgment on her family.

My family is divided into camps: There are those who accepted that things did go wrong, forgave me and moved on. This group supports me. Then there is the other camp that vilified my actions. They believe that my ways led to my getting HIV and so the mistake was mine, not others or anybody else's. They even refuse any assistance I extend to them. They reacted the best way they knew given the circumstances. They are yet to come to terms with reality but I forgive them and hope that one day they will overcome denial and embrace reality. I bear no ill feelings towards any member of my family and pray to God every day that they will accept me as I am. (201)

Asunta chooses to use a reconciliatory tone in the last chapter so that we cannot vindicate her of having ill feelings towards people who did not treat her right. She does this to also teach us that it is important to cultivate a sense of forgiveness to those who do wrong to us.

2.2 Portrayal of the Feminine World in Wagura's Social Cultural Context.

My interest in the portrayal of women in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* (2012) springs from my curiosity about the disparity between the societal expectations and judgment on the ideals of womanhood as compared to the men. Wagura has portrayed women as vulnerable and resilient.

She sees them as mothers, daughters, wives and sisters. The woman character can be viewed from two perspectives. Some women are portrayed in a positive light while others are portrayed in a negative light. This means that women can be a source of strength to each other and at the same time, women can really play a role in bringing each other down.

I feel that Miss Biffen brings Asunta down by insensitively revealing her HIV status in the presence of people. These included her mother and her tutors. This was embarrassing for Wagura and also heartbreaking. Miss Biffen made things worse by dismissing Wagura from school. This, I can say is equivalent to killing someone's future. The choice of teachers is usually done with consideration of gender. Head teachers in girls' schools and colleges are mostly female. Kirk Jackie in her study on the *Impact of Women Teachers on Girls' Education (2006)* says that the placement of a woman teacher can support and encourage girls to successfully complete their studies. Women are able to advocate for a better learning environment for girls, representing their perspectives and needs. Miss Biffen did not take it upon herself to defend Wagura by retaining her in school regardless of her HIV status.

Wagura's mother mistreats her daughter when they go home from school. She stigmatizes her and tells the other children to avoid her. Her sister Martha too mistreats her and her son Peter. She refuses to stay with her and reminds her that she looked so deathly and pale. This really hurt Wagura because this was her closest sister who she had highly defended from their step mothers as they grew up. Martha even refused to touch

Peter saying that he was about to die. Martha had also betrayed her sister by informing the landlady that Wagura had HIV and she was kicked out of the house. The land lady too, as a woman did not for Wagura and her child.

When she was admitted at the hospital to give birth to Peter, the midwives at the hospital refused to attend to her after realizing that her serology test was positive. She gave birth without assistance. This reveals inhumanity of the midwives who are expected to help in delivering the children of their fellow women.

On the other hand, women can come together to support each other for a productive living. Wagura is introduced to Kenya AIDS Society by Josephine and this becomes the turning point of her life.

The group formed by the HIV positive women gained momentum. The women helped each other in their difficult situations. The group had difficulties in registration and acquiring furniture for office use as well as donors. However, Pauline Ngunjiri, a lady Wagura had met in one of the offices was sympathetic to their group despite the fact that she was HIV negative. She helped them draft a constitution and also taught them how to write introduction letters and how to approach offices for support for women living with HIV. It is as a result of this collaboration of women that KENWA is born.

There also seemed to be a masculinity bias against women as far as education is concerned. Asunta says that her mother had wanted to go to school but her grandfather viewed that as a waste of time for girls, something that was only meant for whites and boys. This showed ignorance because the notion that girls would finally move to their husbands should not translate to mean that they cannot be useful to their parents. While in school, Wagura promises to work hard so that she could get her mother out of poverty.

A woman's role in a family is very significant. Women are known as builders and keepers of their respective homes. They are saddled with the task of raising and upbringing children. For example, Wagura remembered how her mother would secretly sell cows so that she could pay their school fees. She also recounts the endless quarrels and fights that her mother had endured just to keep her family intact.

Tong, Rosemarie in *Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction* (1992) discusses Sigmund Freud and says that psychoanalytic feminists found in his writings clues about how better to understand the causes and consequences of women's oppression.

The transition from a female to a male love object begins when the girl realizes she does not have a penis. "They notice the penis of a brother or playmate, strikingly visible and of large proportions, at once recognize it as the superior counterpart of their own small and inconspicuous organ (the clitoris) and from that time forward, they fall a victim to envy for the penis. Preoccupied by her deficiency, the girl somehow discovers her mother also lacks a penis. Distraught by the sight of her mother, the girl looks to her father to make

good the deficiency she shares with her mother.the girl tries to take her mother's place with her father. As a result, the girl comes to hate the mother not only because of her mother's supposedly inferior state of being but also because her mother is a rival for the father's affections. (131)

This explains the closeness that was there between Wagura and her father. She says:

Dad and I were close and I would innocently ask where he was at certain times, a question that earned me beatings from my mother. I loved Dad and was always on his side. I was his special child. I would often accompany him on his drinking sprees to the local bars. (5)

She further expresses that her mother was not comfortable with her closeness with the father. She narrates:

Mum did not take these excursions kindly as dad was taking vital labor force away. She must have felt he was neglecting her and paying a lot of attention to me. She would beat me up without provocation and tell me to report to him. (6)

She still states that her father treated his children differently favoring the girls over the boys. He never beat the girls and he would protect them from the reprimands of their mother.

Kolawaye, Mary in *Womanism and African Consciousness* (1997) says that a womanist is decidedly pro-woman.

A womanist, may therefore, be an advocate of women's interest, equity and enrichment within familial community, religious, educational, economic, political and social relationships and institutions....womanism seeks to accommodate as much the interest of affected women as those of the marginalized and the oppressed. Perhaps the strength of womanism is that, even as it treats within its focus everything that would engender the empowerment of women, it solicits the support and solidarity of every other person. (49)

This can be easily explained through the establishment of KENWA. This organization was formed with the purpose of benefitting HIV positive women and their families as well as HIV orphans. It started with a small number of five to around ten thousand women. The organization caters for holistic growth of the members especially offering psychological and economic support to the members.

Njau Purity in her unpublished MA thesis: Single Mothers and Parenting in Kenya: The case of Zimmerman, Nairobi County (2017) discusses the socio-economic challenges faced by single mothers. She says that good parenting includes supporting a child financially by providing the basic needs like food, clothing, shelter and school fees. Being the sole provider, most of these mothers have limited financial resources hence the struggle that at times lead to their depression. After Wagura is abandoned by George, she goes through many hardships. She could not afford proper housing. She had no money to buy herself and Peter food. They had to go out and work while still very sickly. She really suffers financial constrains until she is offered a job by Kenya AIDS Society. She also mentions other single mothers that they lived with in Kayole. She says that they were all below the age of thirty years and having lost their marriages they had to look for jobs, however poorly paid to cater for their own needs and those of their children.

She also shows that men were actually oppressing women and the culture of the society seemed to protect them. She cites different cases of wife battering. In her own case she says:

George became violent....he would beat me weekly, sometimes for two consecutive days to the extent that my body swelled and bled. I took it patiently hoping that it would stop after sometime. I remembered my mum's suffering at the hands of dad and consoled myself that it would come to an end. (147)

Almost all the young women that they lived together with admitted that they had left their marriages as a result of physical abuse.

Wagura presents women as being highly vulnerable. This is first revealed with the case of her mother's marriage. She says that her dad was thirty years older than her mother:

Dad, being much older, thirty years her senior to be precise, emphasized on how young and vulnerable my mother looked. (3)

Her dad had been a supervisor at the farm her mother was working. He had used his position to give her his house chores to perform and finally converted her into a wife. She had given birth to Wagura at only fifteen years of age. This vulnerability might have resulted from lack of education for young girls. These girls went to work in farms together with adults instead of being in school. This exposes the girls to adult life and hence their vulnerability.

Asunta had also fallen prey to George. She was a naive college girl. She was rather a poor dresser having little exposure to good clothes and needed to style up. She used Vaseline oil for her hair, face and body. This surprised her friends but she explains to them that she would have liked to use nice smelling lotions and make up but she did not have money to buy them. From these sentiments, her friend Rose introduces her to George, her boyfriend's friend. He was rich and would adequately provide for her.

Just like Virginia Woolf, Simone De Beavoir and Kate Millet, Wagura acknowledges that the lifestyle of an economically empowered woman is different from that of a woman who is not empowered. Kate Millet categorically says that ideological indoctrination as much as economic inequality is the cause of women's oppression. Wagura's life is much better than her mothers. As she seeks a partner to have a child with, she demands to have

80% of the birth rights alongside the naming rights and the name on the birth certificate. This reveals her empowerment after growing financially as compared to when she struggled financially. Being the Executive director of KENWA proves that women can occupy very high positions in institutions and organizations

2.2.1 Social Reaction and Struggle with HIV

News of HIV infection deals a blow not only to the victim but also those associated with them. The members of the society are told that they are either infected or affected. This means that if an individual is free from the disease, chances are that they have a close relative, distant relative or a neighbor who is infected. This narrative mirrors Kenya as a diseased nation. It calls upon a positive outlook in interpersonal relationships in regard to the disease. It is also a call for HIV victims to be accorded their humanity so that they can benefit from their rights.

The narration of the events that define Wagura as a HIV patient implicate her as having led a promiscuous life. The tension between her and the society is heightened by her failure to conform to the society's code of behavior which expects her to abstain from sex until marriage. She is accused of having contracted a disease for prostitutes. This is in line with a research done by Tanguy Carolyne on the Impact of Stigma of Stigma and Discrimination on Uptake of HIV voluntary Counseling and Testing in Olenguruone Division of Nakuru County in Kenya (2012). This is what she found out:

From the study findings, it can be interpreted that the perception that HIV/AIDS belongs to people who are promiscuous is high among the residents of Olenguruone division. This is in line with the results of a study that was done in Tanzania as documented in the Tanzania Research Bulletin (2002) which found

that HIV/AIDS in Tanzania is associated with promiscuity and bad behaviors. People think that if they are tested positive, then they are regarded as unfaithful, immoral or promiscuous because they believe HIV/AIDS belong to the wicked who are just receiving what they deserved. (71)

Her mother rejects her and ensures that her siblings do not interact with her. She ostracizes her because of her status.

Due to the experience of a sense of loss, guilt and deep betrayal by the society, Wagura contemplates suicide. Suicidal thoughts show that she was at the end of her hope. It reveals the depth of despair she finds herself in. She is just a representation of many other people in our society who decide to commit suicide to avoid societal judgment.

The society portrays HIV as a highly contagious disease. When Wagura goes to collect her items from the dormitory after being expelled from college, two *askaris* in their protective clothing enter the hostel cubicle with a big polythene bag in which they put her bedding. They had gloves and protective masks. They wanted to spray the room immediately to clear it of all lingering vermin. This was the highest form of stigmatization especially when we consider that HIV is not as contagious as people believed it to be.

There was known social gossip about HIV. Wagura remembers that even before she went to college, she would sit at Wahiga's shop where Wahiga would tell her about the disease, its ravages and the recent AIDS victims in their locality. They used the word *slim* to refer to AIDS. The word "AIDS" was not openly used. Wahiga explains how they had thrown out the cup, teaspoon, kettle and sugar dish that had been used by Wangari, a girl who was rumored to have been infected. This means that people were ready to lose their material possessions used by those they suspected to be ailing from AIDS. She uses her

brother Ruga to show the value of fair treatment of the HIV victims by the society. She says that Ruga gave her tea in cups used by the rest of the family, bring her books to read, go to her room and even share stories. This would rekindle a lost sense of joy.

Wagura satirizes religious hypocrisy in the society. She shows a society that is so judgmental despite their religious beliefs. She expected the man of God to have a heart full of compassion and also give her a sense of hope. On the contrary, he uses her as an example of sin. This made her to stop praying and even stop going to church. Miss Biffen too had been highly judgmental on her due to her status yet she was a catholic nun. She says that Ruga her brother was not a strong Christian but he gave her hope and encouragement.

There is also the problem of the society comparing the HIV patients to those who are not infected. Wagura's mother would always tell visitors that Martha was doing well and is still faithful to God. She said that Martha would soon be getting married and go to America. This was a way of retribution to the victim. The mother did this to show that the "holy" one had a future as compared to the evil one who was headed to her grave.

Her own sister betrays her by informing the landlady of a house that Wagura had rented that Wagura was HIV positive. The house help overheard this and left. She is ready to lose her job instead of being associated with a HIV positive employer. The landlady also evicts her without notice. Her household items were thrown out. This also means that the landlady is ready to lose revenue other than having a HIV victim in her house. When she finally found another house, the previous landlady informed the current one about the

HIV status of the new tenant. This shows how HIV victims went through a chain of stigma in the society.

The society also denies HIV victims their fundamental rights. Joe Muriuki had lost his job at the city council after testing HIV positive. Wagura too had been discontinued from schooling. This shows that the two had been denied their basic rights in the nation. At the registrar's office, they are denied registration of their group 'Kenya Association of HIV Positive Women'. They wanted to give it legitimacy but they were told it would not be registered under that name because it would tarnish the name of the nation bringing down the business of tourism. However, this has improved over time as the current Kenyan constitution calls for indiscriminate employment of members of the society to any job regardless of their HIV status or any other health status. The children rights act also allow children to continue schooling for as long as they would wish regardless of their health status or pregnancies.

Wagura portrays the recklessness and ignorance of the people as far as their safety from the disease is concerned. On the advert she makes on one of the dailies looking for a partner to sire a child with her, she insisted on a HIV positive man. However, she receives many text messages from HIV negative men who told her that they did not mind her status. By mentioning this, she portrays a society of people who do not mind contracting the disease.

The society had also placed a lot of do's and don'ts for people living with HIV/AIDS such that enjoying a healthy sexual life and getting babies had become a big deal. That is the reason Wagura puts an anonymous advertisement on the local dailies looking for a

partner to get a child with. She wondered who would accept to be her partner. Asunta feels that the society thinks that those who have HIV have lost a part of their humanity expecting them to be saved and more religious and not have sex or demonstrate other basic feelings. She says that the reality is that people with HIV/AIDS go about their lives normally; doing what everyone else does, regardless of the tag placed on them. From this discussion, it is clear that the society is as highly affected by HIV alongside the victims. Wagura seems to be a voice of other HIV patients calling upon the society to stop ostracizing people living with HIV and take them as human beings with equal rights like everyone else

2.2.2. Individual Struggle and Reaction towards the Disease

On receiving the news that she had HIV, Wagura experiences a psychological shock. The distress and the trauma that she undergoes is made worse by being rejected by her family. She presents her illness as a disease full of stigma. She reacts to the fact that AIDS is said to be a disease of prostitutes by telling us that she had had forced sex. Before she tests positive, she also had the notion that the disease came as a result of promiscuity. She remembers when Miss Biffen announced that all girls would be tested for HIV. She says that some girls were so panicky and she remembers wondering why they were panicky yet they were not prostitutes.

Wagura also feels that the news that she was HIV positive were broken to her in a very insensitive manner.

Miss Biffen then burst the bubble. ‘We have called you in the presence of your mother. I am sorry Asunta but you have AIDS.’ (91)

After this revelation, Wagura swims in a sea of confusion. She says that she went blank for about 30 seconds, started sweating and feeling very hot. She also recalls another part of the long admonishing speech:

Now that you have AIDS, and will be dying soon, we cannot keep you in the college. Secondly, you are a risk to the rest of the students. (92)

This reveals a lot of stigma and ostracism towards the AIDS patients. Though she does not say it, I feel that there is need to have both pre-testing and post-testing counseling to avoid such a traumatic experience.

Adding salt to the injury, Miss Biffen's word of encouragement sounded as the last nail to her coffin. As she stood to leave, Miss Biffen called her back and said:

Asunta, this doesn't mean you will die immediately. You may live for some time. You may even live up to six months. (93)

We are told that East or West home is best. However, things were at their worst for Wagura when she goes home. She feels completely dejected and sidelined. Her mother tells her other children not to share bedding and utensils with her. She explains her feeling of dejection:

I felt a big knot form in my throat but I was still numb; it was barely two hours since I received the news and now this. (97)

This was quite hard for her because she receives the worst treatment from those closest to her even before coming to terms with the shocking news. As if she had not done enough to kill the spirit of the daughter, her mother tells her:

I buried your father and now I am going to bury you too. But I will not bury you next to your father. You have to look for somewhere else. You've brought shame and embarrassment to the family and made a total disgrace of all of us. (98)

This means that the mother was ready to sideline and ostracize her both in life and death.

On hearing these words, Wagura just buried herself in silence. She was not able to give the mother a patient's perspective as she does to us through the narration. She says that whatever had happened was not by choice. She wished that she could explain to the mother that she had not gone around shopping for the disease. She wished that she could explain so much but she had no words to do it. She was still thinking it was just a bad dream from which she would wake up. This shows an aspect of denial on her part.

Wagura also reveals other reactions to the news that one is HIV positive. She says that it can easily result to drug and substance abuse. She had decided that one of the best solutions was to go to a bar, drink and forget her stress. She thought that alcoholism would bring her peace. The other option for her was to kill herself. She had several suicide attempts but by God's grace she survived all.

With time, Wagura becomes unruffled by the stigma she had gone through from her family and neighbors. People would lower their voices speaking in hushed whispers and stare keenly at her without hiding their curiosity. She says:

I felt their stares penetrate through my skin, reach inside and see the HIV virus in me. This became routine and by the fifth month, it did not bother me at all. I became immune to their stares. (106)

By doing this, she tries to show that one can survive stigma by embracing a spirit of indifference or lack of concern for what other people say.

From her own experience, Asunta also shows that AIDS patients at times deny their HIV status to avoid stigma. When she called a counseling centre which she had seen advertised in a newspaper, the receiver of her call asked her whether she had AIDS. She lied saying that she did not have it and was calling on behalf of a friend. Also at Nazareth hospital, after being tested for HIV during the prenatal care, she lies to the doctor that she had never heard about AIDS.

Asunta also reacts to the insensitivity of the AIDS sensitization campaigns. There were different forms of sensitization ranging from posters, videos and songs among others. She recalls a poster she saw at the counseling Centre which had a picture of a ripe apple with a worm coming out of it. Other videos showed emaciated patients with their eyes staring hollowly out of their sockets. These videos and music would always end with the deaths of the victims involved. She feels that these were messages of hopelessness for people living with HIV. She hated the placards written “help crush AIDS”. She felt that the message being sent was not about crushing AIDS but crushing people with AIDS. She did not like watching the hopeless messages. As she once watched a video, she recalls talking to God:

God, if you give me a chance, I will reverse the message in these videos. My message will offer hope. (111-112)

By doing so, Wagura brings us the awakening that, as much as we need to show the HIV negative people that HIV is a deadly disease, we need to remember that there is the other side of the coin; we need to mind the feelings of those who are already HIV positive because what they need more are messages of hope.

Wagura also reveals that being a HIV patient and having gone through a lot of stigma can lead to projection of one's feelings towards innocent people. She remembers a day she decided to ignore the precautions given to her by her mother to prevent infecting the other family members. She got water from the family *mtungi*, used the family *sufurias*, went to Martha's room and took her dress, panties and slippers. All this time no one asked her what she was doing, they simply stated at her. She says:

I was spoiling for a quarrel, waiting to erupt in the face of anyone who dared say a word to me. I had so much pent up anger and was ready for a confrontation. I was bitter that death, my family, the society and the world had rejected me. It was as though I did not belong anywhere. (131)

Her family members were lucky that they did not question her. Otherwise they would have faced her wrath.

Wagura was also contemplating vengeance since people did not want to understand her condition. She had thought of going to town, become a prostitute and infect as men as she could. She would infect husbands who would then infect their wives and they would all have AIDS and they would know what it felt like to have AIDS. We have heard such confessions from other HIV victims. Some even go to an extent of revealing the number and the names of people they have infected. These thought crosses the mind of HIV victims to punish those they feel do not mind their status.

Wagura also faced several dilemmas in life when she felt that she wanted a child of her own. She wondered how people would react to her desire for another child. She wondered whether to leave the country, have a baby and then sneak back. She also wonders who would accept to be her partner. This last dilemma made her place an advertisement in the dailies stating that she was HIV positive, financially stable and was

looking for a partner interested in getting a child. To her surprise, she received many positive responses. However, she opted to settle for an old friend who had expressed interest in her three years before.

After getting her baby, Wagura expresses the fears that she had just in case the baby was HIV positive. Her tension is further heightened when the doctor tells her that she had to wait for the baby's results a bit longer to confirm the status. She says that she had gone through two harrowing weeks of waiting. On confirmation that the baby was negative, she is very happy about it and she became the first HIV person in Kenya to publicly declare that she had given birth to a HIV negative baby.

She was also faced by a lot of desperation to see her colleagues dying. She remembers being an only survivor out of six colleagues at the Kenya AIDS Society. This resulted to hopelessness and it would make her wonder whether she would really survive.

2.2.3 Hope and Final Triumph

Despite the numerous challenges that Wagura has gone through in life, all was not lost. She gets a life changing moment after the meeting she held with Muriuki at his office. She had felt a sense of belonging for the first time after being diagnosed with the disease. She says that she had a new lease of life with a redefined focus. Her new philosophy became:

It doesn't matter when I die, what matters is the quality of life I live. My business is not when I will die; my business is how I live between now and then. (165)

When she tells Muriuki about Miss Biffen's prediction that she only had six months to live, he had told her that she wouldn't die because people say so. He tells her that she would only die if her time had come. She says that she uses these words to encourage others. The chapter in which she encounters Muriuki's given the title "Daybreak". She does this to show that finally streaks of rays of hope had started streaming in her life.

Kenya AIDS Society gives her a job, a daily allowance of two hundred shillings and money to buy clothes. This was a good deal. At least she could manage her life and that of her son as well as make some savings. This could not be compared to the days when she worked herself off while very sick to earn fifty shillings.

Wagura confesses that the moment she revealed her HIV status was the best day in her life. She felt peace sweep over her like a warm blanket. She states that her acceptance of her HIV status started then. Saul.M.Kassin and Gisli .H. Gudjonsson in *Psychology of Confessions (2004)* state the following:

In psychotherapy, the image of the emotionally distressed patient lying on a couch, often in tears, while disclosing personal secrets to a therapist illustrates the widely held belief in the healing power of 'opening up' the past-including memories of one's actual or imagined misdeeds. (35)

Wagura communicates the fact that self- confessions on one's HIV status would make the victim live a free life. It would also open up an avenue for discussion on the topic of HIV which most people do not discuss often. In her research at Olenguruone division of Nakuru County in Kenya, Tangus observes the following:

Disclosure has been considered a proxy measure of stigma and discrimination and has been shown to have some potential benefits for the individual; including increased antiretroviral treatment.....people should be encouraged to disclose their HIV positive status so as to encourage those who do not know their HIV status to seek testing. (75)

Wagura raised an interest to have a meeting with women who were HIV positive to start a group. They all confessed their HIV status and these confessions bonded them closer. They had a very strong sense of sisterhood and they agreed that if one of them died, the group would take it upon themselves to give her a decent burial and take care of her children. They also agreed that in case one of them fell sick, members of the group would take care of each other's children.

This group was later registered as Kenya Network of Women Living with AIDS (KENWA). She is happy that the group started with five women to over ten thousand women. She cites different achievements of KENWA:

We have eight branches in Nairobi and Central province, a care and support program, an orphan and vulnerable children's program and an advocacy and lobbying program. We also have hospitals, clinics and HIV Counseling and testing programs with a team of one hundred and twenty three staff including counselors, accountants and other professionals. We have nine vehicles and our food support program serves four thousand people. Our total budget comes up to about sixty million shillings annually. (178)

This revelation cultivates a sense of hope and encouragement as Asunta becomes the Executive Director of KENWA. This is a true reflection that one can move from grass to grace.

Wagura is also able to give birth to two more children in her narration. These children were HIV negative. By narrating this part of the story, she reveals that there is hope for HIV patients to live normal lives and experience the joy of motherhood like anyone else. Wagura can be used as a role model to people living with AIDS. She does not regret the life that she has lived:

Looking back, I have no regrets or apologies. We may have our plans but God holds our destinies. I went through a traumatic experience when I got HIV/AIDS and faced not only rejection but became a victim of stigma and discrimination from my family and society. It may have been very bad then but I do not think anything else would have prepared me better to deal with my role in giving hope to people. When I advise them on how to deal with stigma and discrimination, it is because I have been there. (200)

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter sought to define the art of autobiography and identify the parameters and the nature of autobiography that distinctly makes it an independent genre of literature. I have situated *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* to the genre of African autobiography.

The chapter also examined how Wagura projects her personal agency and that of other HIV victims. She shows the value of empowering women in the society. She projects the female agency to show how vulnerable women are in the society. However, their resilience makes them sail through the challenges of life.

Part three of the chapter examined the kind of reactions elicited by the general society towards HIV. It sums up to be one full of stigmatization and lack of acceptance that HIV is a reality. It also discusses Wagura as a person caught up in the traumatizing reality of HIV. She acquires the consciousness of the need to speak up about the challenges that HIV patients go through and calls upon the society to accept and support the HIV victims. The chapter ends with a sense of triumph. It communicates a sense of hope amid the challenges of HIV.

CHAPTER THREE

STYLISTIC DEVICES USED IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

3.0 Introduction

In autobiographical artistry, the narrator consciously chooses the stylistic devices at their disposal to fit the different effects that they would like to achieve at the end of the narration. According to Muchiri artistry in autobiography comprises the first person narrative voice, the journey motif, the setting and characterization.

Autobiographical artistry is different from other prose writings in the sense that it relates to real life experiences of the narrator while in fictional prose the author applies the artistry on an imagined storyline.

The author's inclusion of certain literary features in the text is intentional. It is a conscious undertaking which contributes to our view of the author as a literary artist. Use of literary features helps the author to tell his story better by adding beauty to the author's narration of the drama that constitutes his life. In this case, I will consider the use of symbolism, imagery, dialogue, rhetorical questions and code switching.

3.1 First Person Narrative

The first person narrator in an autobiography differs from the first person narrator in fiction by having the advantage of being involved directly in the conflict. In an autobiography, the narrator is the main character in the story and becomes a self voice while the persona in ordinary prose is created. This narrator provides a stronger sense of

conflict to the reader and even more dramatic participation in the conflict than with another narrator in an imaginary story.

In an autobiographical narrative voice, there is closeness of the author and the authorial voice is more credible and the readers' empathy is greater. In this narration, the story is already there so it is not being created as is the case with a fictional story. In an autobiography the narrator only requires the skills and techniques to assemble the different segments of the story to make it one narrative therefore it becomes less involving than what we have in a fully imagined narrative.

However, there are challenges that come along with the first person narration in an autobiography. For example, how is sincerity tested? There are so many inclusions and exclusions in the narrative because the narrator chooses what to tell us and what not to tell us.

Wagura's first person narrative voice pleads innocence and honesty. This makes her story believable as she chooses to own the deeds in her story in spite of them sounding immoral and imperfect to a great extent. She does not shield her close family members from public scrutiny too as she reveals how her mother and her sister Martha mistreated her.

Balch (1975) explains that the use of the autobiographical form as a means for self. Perpetuation may be looked at in various ways. It can be treated as a way of recording the past. For listing achievements, for collecting one's thoughts, for laying the ghosts of the past, for confession, for erecting a personal monument, for defending or explaining one's

behavior or deed, for remembering earlier friends or scenes and as a means of achieving self esteem. *From Heartbreak to Daybreak (2012)* has performed these functions for Wagura. Through it, she has defended herself, making us believe that she had forced sex. She remembers this with nostalgia, regret and repulsion:

We did not sleep the rest of the night as George ravaged me till morning, grunting and groaning, enjoying himself. I hated the whole episode, experiencing pain and no pleasure at all. George was strong, powerful and heavy. I simply gave up fighting....
(87)

However, after this admission, there is the omission on whether she loved George or not. This makes us see Wagura as a very innocent and naïve girl in the whole episode. She has also outlined her various achievements in life despite the disease, the most important being the formation of KENWA. Through the narration of these achievements, she seems to have erected a personal monument in the book and achieves self esteem by standing out to be a strong character amid the storms. The Wagura who emerges at the end of the autobiography is no longer the naïve girl who comes to us at the beginning of the story. After naivety she moves to a life of worries and frustration when she contracts HIV. She finally paints herself as a person who has conquered her bitter indignation at having been treated unfairly. Her transformation is self-induced and comes after the author overcomes all the challenges that many HIV patients face. She manages to reconcile her divided self. She does not harbor bitterness due to bad treatment from her relatives. She openly confesses that she had forgiven her mother and her sister. Yet again, she chooses to be silent on whether she had forgiven George or not.

3.2 Use of Literary Features in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak*

The formalist approach is relevant as it entails “how a literary work comes to mean what it does,” (Diyanni 1893). A literary work can exist independent of the reader and that literature is ultimately metaphorical and symbolic. (Gioia and Kennedy 2005). This is useful in interpreting how symbolism and imagery are used to communicate meaning in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak*. (2012)

Wagura uses symbolism in the autobiography to help her attach meaning to the circumstances that surround her. In symbolism the writer uses a person, an event, an object or a word(s) to represent an abstract idea that is much deeper and more significant. The meanings of symbols are different from their literal sense and needs unraveling of the meaning.

The title of the autobiography for instance *From Heartbreak to Daybreak (2012)* itself is symbolic. “Heartbreak” is symbolic of the despair she finds herself in after realizing she had contracted the disease. It refers to the many dark moments of her life. For example, the day Miss Biffen bombards her with the information of having contracted HIV in the most humiliating manner, being rejected by close relatives, being thrown out of rental houses by landlords after discovering she was HIV positive, herself and her son Peter falling so sick and being on the verge of death, George physically assaulting her and rejecting her when she needed him most. “Daybreak” on the other hand symbolizes hope and new meaning for life that she later found. Daybreak comes after a long night that one would have liked so much to pass. It was a new dawn for her after she accepts that there

was life ahead even with HIV. For example, she says that the birth of her son Peter had given her hope. When she meets Muriuki, he assures her that she would not die just because people said so. He encouraged her to focus on living her life fully as opposed to waiting for death. Muriuki's organization offers her a job and it was a new beginning for her. Different titles of chapters in the autobiography are also symbolic. Chapter eight is titled "**The deep, dark valley**". This is symbolic of the desperation and frustration she is put through by Miss Biffen when she is revealed to her HIV positive status. It reflects the unknown alienation she is put under, the ignorance and the evil deeds of the members of her society. She goes through a lot of humiliation and stigma from the school staff and her own relatives. She is treated with cruelty by the nurses at the hospital where she goes to deliver Peter. They fail to offer her any assistance during delivery because they had prior knowledge of her HIV status. It resulted to a lot of turmoil in her and blacking out of all she thought as beautiful in her life. Chapter eleven is titled "**The sun peers through**". This is symbolic of hope. This is the chapter in which she goes to Greenfield Kenya AIDS office where she encounters with Muriuki who inspires her to live and it becomes her turning point. The last chapter titled "**Looking over my shoulder**" is symbolic of moving on with life disregarding the bitter moments that she had encountered. She crosses over to a life of hope and forgiveness for those who had wronged her. She says that just like Moses of the bible she would deliver others who are HIV positive from the world of stigma. She also feels that just like Jonah, she had been vomited by the whale in Nineveh to preach that there is hope even after contracting the disease.

In addition to using symbolism on titles, she also uses objects as symbols. She also describes a poster on HIV awareness that had a picture of a ripe apple with a worm coming out of it. A ripe apple with a worm coming out of it should be rejected. It symbolizes rot and uselessness that deserves to be discarded. It symbolically cautions people against beautiful women and handsome men represented by the apple who could be infected with HIV which is represented by the worm. She notices the poster because she already has a feeling of rejection.

The dwindling lights of lamp in Wagura's room are symbolic of dwindling hope. The lamp almost went out and needed refilling of kerosene. Wagura tells her brother not to refill it. This shows her pessimism that her life would dwindle out in the same way and it symbolized that the end of her life was near and the only person who always came to her rescue with a sincere heart was her brother Ruga.

There is also the use of heavenly bodies to depict hope. Wagura looks up at the sky and notices how dull and cloudy it was. The weather was grey, with not even a bit of sunshine peering through. The dullness symbolized the sadness and the despair that she was going through. While spending a night in an unfinished building after being kicked out of the house by the landlord, there was neither moonlight nor a star in the sky, again this symbolized hopelessness for her. From the bible, the name Peter means Rock. Wagura names her son Peter because he symbolized a new ray of hope for her.

In the last chapter, through biblical allusion, she symbolically compares herself to the whale that swallowed Jonah and vomited him in Nineveh to preach. She says that she was vomited into a world of HIV/AIDS, stigma and discrimination to preach compassion and understanding.

In addition to symbolism, there is also a wide range of imagery used in terms of similes, metaphors and personification.

In the use of a simile, the author makes a comparison of one thing to another by using the comparatives*like*.....or.....*as*.....*as*.

This comparison is important because it easily relates an unfamiliar idea to one that is familiar hence creating a mental image in the reader.

For example, she states that the news of her HIV positive status had spread around the school *like a wild fire*. This shows how fast the news spread. This automatically came along with stigma. Wild fire is known to spread so fast and therefore one can relate that the news of someone having HIV spread at an alarming speed because it was a misunderstood phenomena. Fire also brings an aspect of fear and death. Fear instinctively makes people run for their lives. It leads to the stigma that HIV patients experienced in the society.

When she goes to college, she says that they exited the gate and went to town and did as they pleased. She says that just *like a newly-freed chicken dithers at the place it has always been tethered*, she did not go very far at first. This simile shows her innocence

and lack of exposure at first when she got to college before she messes up her life. The world was opening at her feet for the first time and it tragically took her to the world of HIV due to lack of exposure. The use of the word chicken is also used to indicate something that is edible-it might show the vulnerability of a naïve girl who for the first time goes to a world of predators and finds herself in deep trouble.

She says that until when she was fourteen, the father's beatings to the mother were *dispensed like drug prescriptions: two or three times per day*. This simile is important as it reveals the extent of physical abuse of the mother in the hands of her mother. It is important as it brings out the resilience in her. Drugs must be taken as instructed for them to be effective, similarly her mother had to be beaten up by her father. It shows the frequency of the cruelty of her father.

By using a metaphor, the author makes comparison of one thing to another by calling it the name of the other directly without using*like*.....or*as*.....*as*

It aids in making comparison as well as creating a mental picture.

HIV/AIDS was metaphorically referred to as *slim*. This name was derived from the fact that many people who had the disease would waste away and become so thin before they died. There is euphemism in the use of the word *slim*. Thinness horrifies people and so just by the use of this word, it would caution those who aren't infected against the disease. After being thrown out Martha's house, she says that two weeks later, *her savior* came. Her savior in this case refers to Ruga who was always there to rescue and save her

from bad situations. It is a biblical allusion to Jesus who saves. Wagura depended on her brother for positive socialization and moral support. For example, he took Wagura and her son to hospital for treatment and also took them in his house.

There is also the use of personification. In personification, the author gives inanimate objects animate features. A thing, an idea or even an animal can be given human qualities. She says that after the revelation of her HIV status, *it seemed like the clouds did not want to open up and give space for the sun to shine. The air was still, the wind refusing to blow.* This personification that everything including nature seemed to be working against her and that she had no hope at all.

Wagura also employs the use of dialogue on different parts of the autobiography. In dialogue, we get the words from the horse's mouth. This creates originality of the message and hence renders it credible. Through dialogue, we can get the character traits of the characters, themes are developed and it also breaks the monotony of narration of the story.

For example she brings in word from George:

“Si we go sleep? ” George told me

“You are not a child anymore.” (87)

Wagura gives her explanation she asked George about the sleeping arrangements and he responded that if she was afraid of him, he could get a room with two beds. At the reception they were told that there was no room with two beds and left without an option,

she followed him to the room. She says that when they got there, he immediately grabbed her, tore her clothes and forcefully had sex with her.

This dialogue helps Wagura to convince us that it is George who coerced her into having sex with him against her will. She uses it to plead innocence as well as appealing for sympathy from her readers. However, her part of the bargain is written in prose not a dialogue. This dialogue also reveals that Wagura got into trouble through casualness. The language that George uses “si we go sleep” sounds so casual and fashionable. It triggers some urbanism and he seems to be challenging her to behave maturely.

She also quotes her mother’s whenever she was asked about her sister Martha.

“Oh, she’s doing very well. She is still faithful to God. She is getting married soon and after that they will leave for America. She works with World Vision you know. She is not like some other people you see here.”

These words are directly quoted so that we can get the contempt from the horse’s mouth. From this, we are made to believe that the mother was condemnatory and very insensitive towards her. Wagura felt that her mother played a big role in dressing her down instead of protecting her from the public judgement.

She also reveals her apprehension in Muriuki’s office through a dialogue.

“Please assure me that you won’t tell anyone that I have the disease,”

“But Asunta everyone here has AIDS.” (164)

This dialogue sets a stage for comfort for her disclosure of her status. Muriuki addresses her in a friendly way and after their talk she gains a new purpose for life.

Wagura also employs rhetorical questions to express the different emotions that she found herself in. Rhetorical questions are questions that we ask without necessarily calling for an answer but rather to provoke our listeners or readers to think about the point being put across.

How could God, mum and the entire world be so unfair to me? How could God allow this to happen to me? Did He exist? And if He existed, had He taken leave? How could He let me go through all this if I was really His child? (104)

These rhetoric questions invite us to feel the denial Wagura was in and also takes us through the strong sense of rejection in her life. The questions move us towards empathy. The rejection almost drives her to the danger of being agnostic. She doubts whether God really exists. She felt that God had been indifferent. She feels the pain of rejection from her mother who is expected to be the most loving and caring unconditionally.

In addition, at some point in her life, she asked herself:

Should I kill myself because people hate me? Will that change their perception of me? What if I do something about my situation and prove them all wrong? (151)

These questions make us see that after a long struggle with rejection, Wagura finally comes to a point that she has to accept her status regardless of how people viewed her. It shows that the turmoil in her mind is almost audible. She feels that she needs a turn-around in her life and live a better life for her own sake. The last question infers something positive and it is a statement towards recovery.

Due to the stigma that Wagura goes through, she develops some criticism for Christianity as a religion through satire. In satire, the author brings in the criticism of a certain behavior and often in a laughable manner. It is laughable that those who should be

preaching healing are the ones casting accusatory fingers. To a great extent, it borders on irony. She resents her mother's pastor and the other followers of the church for condemning her. They once went for final prayers awaiting her death in her mother's house as the last ritual. On this day they read from the book of Deuteronomy, quoting the verse about wages of sin being death. They said that it was God's time to deal with her ruthlessly for being a sinner. They insisted that her destination was hell.

“ *Kuria arorete ni mwaki-ini wa tene na tene,*” he said, literarily implying that I was headed for the eternal sea of fire. That did not affect me much. I was already living in hell and I did not think it could get any worse. (116)

Wagura felt more helpless. Religion is said to be a source of hope for the oppressed but in her case it brought her more pain as she was judged so harshly for her mistake. She completely ceased listening to the sermons and gave up on religion making her stop going to church as well as praying. Wagura seems to have the pastor as the target. He sounds so ignoramus and speaks with a lot of finality on a message of condemnation. She highly resents the pastor and his supporters. She contrasts the pastor and his staunch followers with Ruga her brother who gave her hope.

He would tell me quite confidently. “You won't die sis. You will see.” He was not a strong Christian but he seemed to have this strong vision and faith which no one else had.... He genuinely believed that I would survive. (120)

From this contrast, she satirizes the hypocrisy in the attitude of Christians towards HIV patients. Christianity teaches on kindness, forgiveness and compassion to all humanity. These are values that the pastor and his congregation ignored. Instead, her brother who she says is not a strong Christian is the one who gives her hope. By using this satire,

Wagura is calling upon religious bodies to be supportive even to HIV patients instead of condemning them.

Use of code switching is very important as it gives us a better sense of place, characterization and elaborates on the social background of the characters. The narrator wants the setting to be clear and makes it real for the reader. The narrator uses other languages other than English. Inside Miss Biffen's office, we are introduced to a dialogue in Swahili.

"Mtoto wako ana ugonjwa," he told her

"Ugonjwa gani?" she asked looking at me.

"Ugonjwa wa umalaya."

"Kwani motto wangu ni Malaya?" she asked (92)

This dialogue reveals a very blatant use of words to describe Wagura's promiscuity. It also shows that the mother too is not spared the stigma. From a Swahili context, the word *Malaya* sounds very brutal and offensive as compared to the English version which is "a prostitute". This word causes a lot of injury to her personality. Secondly, the use of Swahili language reveals the illiteracy of Wagura's mother. She could not keep up with English during the proceedings and therefore, one of the tutors had to translate for her. Also by referring to Wagura as *Malaya*, her mother's faith in her was eroded. This is likely reason her mother treats her harshly and sidelines her in the family.

She has also employed the Gikuyu dialect at some points in the text. At the beginning, she quotes how her father humorously revisited his first conversation with her mother.

“*Kairitu urenda wira uriku?*” (Little girl, what kind of job do you want?)

“*Wagutua nyeki?*” (To cut grass)

“*Na niukuhota uguo uri munini?*” (Small as you are, will you manage?)

“*Ii ninguhota.*” (Yes I will) s

This dialogue in Gikuyu reveals her mother’s innocence and vulnerability at her tender age of fifteen because she was desperately looking for a job. This dialogue makes us not judge her mother so harshly for falling into her father’s trap and getting married so young. It proves how naïve she was back then. In addition, this language gives the story a local flavor of the community that Wagura comes from as well as the social status of the mother at that time. It gives us a reason to understand the mother’s trauma. We can link the cruelty of Wagura’s mother to the fact that she had suffered in the hands of a man.

3.3 Setting

Setting is very significant because it serves as the backdrop against which the characters act out the story and also creates the atmosphere of the story. Setting includes the time, the place and the social environment in which the story is created. Time in a story has a big role to play. Literature is known to endure across time. It occurs at a given time and remains invariable over time. For example, Wagura contracts HIV in the nineteen eighties when HIV was a very new phenomena. It was a time of illiteracy and ignorance on sexual matters and therefore, this led to a lot of stigmatization. This included handling any stuff belonging to HIV positive people with protective clothing and also burying them in polythene bags when they died. They were openly sent away from schools and this happened to Wagura. The constitution of Kenya then, could not have defended her

from discrimination as it does today. Today the Human Rights Acts dictate that whether one is HIV positive or not, they have equal right to job and education opportunities. As much as stigmatization is still there today, there is a lot of improvement in the treatment meted towards HIV patients. For example, they have the right to education, health and employment without discrimination.

The story ends at a relatively advanced time when we see formation of non-governmental organizations which fight for people living with HIV advocating for their rights. The birth of such organizations has contributed to the sensitization against stigmatizing HIV positive people today and ensuring that their rights are well guarded.

In terms of place, her story starts from her rural home where she lived with her both parents. The rural set up is presented as an environment that was somehow hostile to the girl child. For example, she says that in her mother's time, education was basically for boys. In her own time, she says that girls went to school but there are those that conceived and dropped out of school. After giving birth, they wouldn't go back to school but went on working in the plantations.

She describes her high school life where she significantly learnt a lot. Here, she learns about lesbianism when a girl named Grace forced her to share a bed with her. In high school she discovers the existence of disparities in class between the girls who came from the villages (seemed rather naive and from poor background) and those that hailed from urban areas (who were deemed worldly wise and with some exposure). She describes the

village girls as naïve while the city girls are depicted as immoral because they would have sexual encounters over the holiday and proudly narrate them to their peers on return to school. These girls could even boast of having old men for boyfriends because they were given money. Psychologically, it can be inferred that she admired the girls who were given money and this later makes her fall prey to George.

She later moves on to Olkejuado High School and in this school she gets saved. She is a staunch Christian and is appointed as head girl. At Olkejuado High School, she was worried because her schoolmates warned her that two of her predecessors (who had been head girls) had fallen pregnant while still in school and casually warned her that she would also follow suit. Consequently, she was extra cautious now that she knew how children were conceived.

In college, we see a complete turn of events. She joins the company of Rose who misleads her. She is introduced to the lifestyle of going out for parties with friends. Shortly after, she meets George who infects her with HIV. Through the presentation of the story through these places, we are able to see her movement from innocence to knowledge and experience.

The narrator presents to us her social environment. She first brings in the marriage institution. She starts with her mother's marriage in which we see a helpless woman who went through wife battering. The father was a drunkard and somehow irresponsible. He married several wives and she felt that this could have contributed to his irresponsible

behavior. The mother had to hold on this marriage for the sake of her children and by this time, women were totally silent regardless of the way they were treated by men. At some point, Wagura and her brother Ruga lived alone as the mother went to live with the father in Nairobi.

Staying in the village on our own was challenging and being the head of our house at ten years was no mean task. I did not have a chance to be a child as I learnt to be responsible at a very tender age. I had learnt how to cook, ration food and carry out other “motherly” chores. I would serve food sparingly until mum or dad arrived with additional supplies.. Back at the village and nearby ridges, my brother and I were known as the children left by their parents. P21

This affected her emotionally and it distanced her from her mother. She is not free to share her problems with the mother. She also felt that the fact that her mother had given birth to her while so young could have contributed to their lack of closeness as mother and daughter.

Her own marriage to George was not any different from her mother’s. She too, experienced violence from her husband.

He would beat me weekly, sometimes for two consecutive days to the extent that my body swelled and bled. I took it patiently hoping that it would stop after some time. I remembered my mum’s suffering in the hands of Dad and consoled myself that it would come to an end. It was when he attempted to abuse Peter physically that I put my foot down. He would come home drunk, throw my clothes out of the house and tell me and Peter to leave. (147)

She later divorces George on grounds of abuse and being neglected financially. She takes stern measures in her second marriage to prevent abuse and a feeling of being controlled by a man.

The narrator presents the environment of Greenfields Kenya AIDS which was her first friendly place to be after her infection. Her encounter with other HIV positive people changes her perspective. She has a new way of looking at things. She has hope to live and gets a new purpose for life. This comes as a reprieve from the environment of family alienation and stigmatization from the general public.

3.4 Plot

Macmillan English Dictionary states that in Literature, plot is a series of related events that make up the main story in a book.

Aristotle in poetics argues that situations and human beings are represented better through literature as compared to the real life. This can only be achieved if the level of language use is embellished with magnitude and artistic management. Aristotle insists that what makes a work of art universally appealing is the work of the poet as the “maker” of plots. (Kaplan 31).

Plot in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* is a premeditated and deliberate product of the author. The events in Wagura’s story are recalled and presented as significant with the interpretive discernment of the author.

This narrative uses a progressive plot with a chronological structure which begins by establishing the setting and conflict, then follows the rising action through to a climax and concludes with the wrapping up of the loose ends in a resolution.

The narrator develops her narrative by taking us back to when she is a child. Through this, she makes us understand where she is coming from. We can see her growth from innocence to experience. We see a significant pattern of action in her life. The story begins with her childhood life and the challenges she encountered in this period. She portrays herself as a good girl. Obedient and hardworking in school despite being a victim of circumstances surrounding the wrangles in her parents' marriage. In secondary school she learns more from the world about same sex relationships as much as intersexual relationships. The climax comes when she indulges in premarital sex and contracts HIV. The climax heightens with the stigma and the despair she goes through. She attempts suicide but survives. She suffers deeply with her son Peter after the divorce but they still survive it.

We get a falling action with her encounter with Muriuki. She seems to have settled down her mind on living at this point. She gets help and starts her life afresh. She picks up her broken pieces of life and moves on.

We finally get a conflict resolution at the end of her story. She seems to have succeeded amidst all odds. KENWA is operational at the end of her story and it helps to solve many problems among the HIV patients. She forgives all the people who put her through hell and finally shows us that there is a life even after contracting HIV. Through this kind of sequencing of events, we end up seeing a solution to a problem she had and she successfully becomes a voice of other HIV patient.

3.5 Characterization

In characterization, characters are used to develop the plot and the themes. Characterization is the central thread that knits the story together preventing it from falling apart. In different stories we have different types of characters ranging from dynamic characters who change greatly to static characters who remain the same. We also have round characters who are very complex as well as flat characters who are highly predictable.

In characterization, somebody's personality is revealed and developed as events unfold in the text. Characterization is achieved through the description of the character, through a dialogue in which a character is involved, through what other people say and also through the characters actions. For example, I would comfortably conclude that George is brutal when Wagura says that he would beat her weekly, sometimes for two consecutive days to the extent that her body swelled. In a dialogue, Ruga tells Wagura:

“You won't die Siz, you will see”

This shows that Ruga is loving and caring from his own words.

Characterization is key in any work of art. Wagura presents her characters differently. There are those who contribute to the process of her growth from innocence to knowledge and those that have shaped her life to who she is. She portrays how her interaction with different people shaped her life both positively and negatively.

In an autobiography, the first character is the persona. Wagura herself is the main character. She acts as a symbol of resilience and hope to the HIV infected people. Regardless of being labeled a prostitute, she overcomes and becomes a source of hope to

others that there is a life after HIV infection. Wagura's life goes through a wide range of dynamics, from hopelessness to optimism, from fear to courage and from innocence to experience. She has seen it all.

Wagura is seen to be resilient. She overcomes and recovers from the pain of stigmatization. Together with her son Peter, they are kicked out of houses by relatives and landlords, they lack food and medication but later on she gets to her feet again and chooses to support others.

I have often been asked what I would like to be best remembered for. I want to be remembered as someone who fell many times and stood up, as someone who pulled herself out of the muck, moved on and never stopped dreaming. (204)

Wagura is also analytical. She analyses the lives of her parents. She feels that her mother distanced herself from her (Wagura's) life because she had conceived at a very early age and maybe felt that she had nothing much to guide her daughter. She also observed that her mother would often fall out with her father and she would still go and look for her father in Nairobi. She notes that every time she would go to Nairobi, she would come back pregnant. Wagura also knew that her father loved her so much that he would buy her anything she wanted despite their financial status.

I threw tantrums when my Dad was around and this often worked as he would get me what I wanted even if there was little money. (11)

Wagura is ambivalent. She has fluctuating emotions about her mother. She feels that her mother mistreated her when she discovered that Wagura was HIV positive. She would have expected unconditional love from her mother but on the contrary the mother tells her siblings not to share household items and bedding with her. Her mother had been very insensitive towards her:

I buried your father and now I am going to bury you too. But I will not bury you next to your father. You have to look for somewhere else. You have brought shame and embarrassment to the family and made a total disgrace of all of us. (p98)

However, Wagura seems to understand why her mother treated her badly.

I understood what she was going through. I pitied her even more than I pitied myself. She had suffered, poor mum. She had buried her husband and now she had to bury me as well, her only hope. I remembered how she would secretly sell cows so that she could pay my school fees.....all her hopes had been dashed. Death beckoned; not just death but shamefully dying of AIDS. (99)

In the last chapter, Wagura explains that her mum remains her best friend and her pillar despite their prior misunderstandings. She says that she takes good care of her mother and loves her dearly.

Wagura is optimistic. She always believed that all would be well. After giving birth to her son Peter, she looked at him as a symbol of hope. Later on she desires to have more children and believed that she would give birth to children free from the virus and that they would live. True to her hope, she gives birth to Joshua and Israel who are birth HIV negative. By bringing together HIV positive women, Asunta hoped that they would have a strong organization that would help them support themselves and their children. Her hope led to the birth of KENWA.

Wagura is resentful/bitter. She feels that the mother was sterner with her than with any other child. This mostly came when the mother felt that Wagura's father was neglecting her and paid a lot of attention to Wagura. Wagura felt that she was beaten even without provocation.

Until I was fourteen, the beatings were dispensed like drug prescriptions; two or three times per day. Sometimes, when she had not beaten me by early evening, I would wonder why and wish she would do it sooner rather than later so that I could get over with it. I was the only child in the family who went through this, she never beat my sisters or brothers. (7)

Wagura's mother takes the centre stage in her personal development. At first, Asunta seems to be in total antagonism with her mother.

Her mother is seen to be insensitive. Wagura detested the admonishing words she got from her mother after receiving the news that she had AIDS. Her mother was among the first people to stigmatize her. She separated her utensils and bedding from those of her siblings. She would compare her with Martha who she thought as the good one. She felt that Wagura had come to this down fall as a result of being "spoilt" by her father. She treats her daughter as a reference point to show what one becomes as a result of being a sinner.

Wagura's mother is also resilient and loving. She has persevered numerous beatings from her husband and still continues to give birth. She explains to Wagura that she only persevered staying with an abusive husband because she wanted her children to get an education. She secretly sold cows to pay school fees for her children.

To some extent, Wagura's mother is irresponsible. She could travel to Nairobi to live with her husband and leave Wagura and her brother Ruga to live in a rented house back in the village all by themselves at a tender school going age. She should have been responsible enough to either travel with them or remain behind with them.

However, despite all these, Wagura finally ends in reconciliatory note with her mother.

Even when she was a child, she did not hold grudges with her mother at all times.

Even though I hated it when she beat me, I thought she was the most beautiful woman in the world and I wanted to be like her. I almost envied all that she did; I wished I were as graceful as she was..... looking back, I am able to understand why mum was so harsh to me; she was very young and her father and in-laws made her feel that she a terrible mistake by getting pregnant and marrying my dad. (26)

In her last chapter, she states that her mum remains her best friend and remains her pillar in spite of their earlier misunderstandings.

Wagura uses Ruga as a symbol of fair treatment towards people suffering from HIV. He is loving and caring .Wagura says that he would bring her tea in the cups that the rest of the family members used. He would go to her room, sit on her bed and tell her stories.

He is supportive. He would bring her books to read. He even gave her fare to go and see a counselor along Ngong road. She felt his love and she knew that he did not want her to die. He even supported her in her illness:

Ruga was extremely sympathetic to find me in that state. Peter and I looked sickly and ugly as we had a skin disease. He promised to take us to Nairobi for treatment and use whatever money he had to ensure we were well taken care of. (154)

Ruga and his family are accommodating and warm. His house was small but he warmly welcomed Wagura and her son to live with them.

...we went to Nairobi where he welcomed us to his one-roomed house in Kayole. It housed Peter and myself, Ruga and his wife and their two children....he gave me fifty shillings in the mornings to go and look for casual jobs even if he did not have much himself. (154)

Ruga was optimistic about his sister's life. He encouraged her to have hope that she would live.

“You are not going to die,” he said, as if reading my thoughts. “One day you’ll look back and wonder how far you have come.” (127)

In her last chapter she says:

Ruga remains my good friend and brother and I know I can always count on him in times of joy, pain or trouble. He loves me unconditionally and I, him. (201)

Wagura also develops the character in George that brings a turn of events in her life. She describes her innocence during her encounter with George. Wagura describes George as a systematic seducer. They went out on dates and he bought her niceties like chips and fanta. George tricked her that he would get a room with two beds but later said that there was no room available with two beds. They ended up sharing a bed and had sex with her.

George is also revealed to be opportunistic. He takes advantage of Wagura’s naivety and lures her with gifts and money. He later on takes advantage of her and sleeps with her infecting her with HIV.

George is cruel. When they got into the room, Wagura says:

.....he locked the door and immediately grabbed me, tore off my clothes and forcefully had sex with me.....he ravaged me till morning, grunting and groaning , enjoying himself. I hated the whole episode, experiencing pain and no pleasure at all. George was strong, powerful and heavy. (87)

From this, I can say that Wagura portrays a rape incident which seemed to have been a painful one for Wagura. Later on after marrying Wagura, George also became physically abusive on her too an extent that her legs would get swollen.

George is also promiscuous. He had incidents of sleeping around with numerous women. This resulted to being infected with sexually transmitted diseases which he transmitted to Wagura and he would beat her up in case she questioned him about it. This also shows that he is careless. When one is HIV positive, they are told to guard against re-infection from other people. George did not take any precautions. This could be the reason he dies quite early as compared to Wagura

Miss Biffen also comes in Wagura's most defining moment in life. She is insensitive and bereft of emotional intelligence. She is the one who broke the sad news concerning her HIV status and she does so in a very insensitive manner:

We have called you in the presence of your mother. I am sorry Asunta but you have AIDS.....Now that you have AIDS and will be dying soon, we cannot keep you in the college. (91-92)

This was equivalent to declaring a death sentence. Receiving news of being HIV positive and being discontinued from school was a double tragedy for her. It really broke her heart and thus Wagura cannot keep Miss Biffen out of her memory. Miss Biffen did not consider the emotional implication of revealing Asunta's HIV status so blatantly both on Wagura and her mother.

Miss Biffen is also seen to be a frank character. She hits the nail on the head and tells Wagura that she was HIV positive. There was no beating about the bush.

Miss Biffen is ignorant in matters concerning HIV just like most members of her society at that time. She did not consider that there are other ways of HIV transmission. Everybody thought that HIV can only be spread through sexual intercourse and that is the reason the victims were treated with a lot of contempt.

Wagura's encounter with Muriuki leads her to daybreak. He marks a turning point in her life. She says that she felt fatter, richer and happier after meeting Muriuki. Her self esteem had increased. She says that he had given her a new lease of life and a redefined focus.

Muriuki is understanding. Having noticed Wagura's discomfort in lack of confidentiality for her status, he tells her that everyone in his organization had AIDS and promises her that he would not tell anyone about it. He understood her fears having walked in her shoes before.

Muriuki through his organization is very supportive. They offered her a job and a daily allowance of two hundred shillings and some money to buy clothes. She was also promised that she would take a tie and dye course. This encounter became the starting point of Wagura's long journey to healing and self acceptance.

Muriuki is also courageous in the face of HIV/AIDS. He had founded The Kenya AIDS society after testing positive and losing his job at the city council. He uses it to encourage other HIV positive people and help them uplift their own lives.

The narrator brings in her children in the story. However their characters are not well developed. Probably she does so to protect them from the prying eyes of the public and chooses to concentrate on her own life. Her children's names allude to biblical figures. The children she mentions in the story are Peter, Joshua and Israel.

From the bible, Peter means "the rock". At some point in the narrative, she says that Peter was her hope and pillar. In her most desperate point in life, she consoled herself that she had to live for this particular child.

Joshua is a Hebrew baby name in the bible signifying that Jehovah is generous. Before Wagura got this baby, it had been difficult for her to conceive and had even had a miscarriage. This child had been like a miracle child to her. She felt that God had been generous to her. It also means that Jehovah saves. This child would symbolically save her generation.

Joshua brought a lot of hope not just to me but to the HIV/AIDS world, to people living with HIV and to childless women. That is why I called him Joshua. Like Joshua of the Bible who conquered Jericho despite its enormous walls. (198)

The third child is Israel. This name also expresses the virtue of wrestling, holding on firmly to God, overcoming and a confirmation of God's covenant with Jacob.

In conclusion, in examining artistry and other literary strategies in *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* (2012), this study has tried to show how the narrator adopts the literary techniques, the first person narration, the setting, the plot and characterization.

All these intertwined give the story a very interesting and beautiful reading and at the same time makes the readers understand her individual struggle and final triumph. She uses very relevant literary techniques like symbolism, similes, personification, satire, dialogue and allusion among others to steer her story forward. The use of first person narration, symbolism and figurative language are well coordinated with relations of events, setting, characterization and the narrator's day to day experiences in order to move the conflicts towards a resolution.

She succeeds in overcoming the stigma and other challenges coming with the disease and finally embraces forgiveness towards the people that put her down. Through her artistry, she evokes empathy in her readers by vividly describing and narrating her painful experience.

CONCLUSION

Autobiography is meant to reconstruct the movement of life in the actual circumstances that the life was lived. In as much as its centre of interest is the self, the outside world, influence from other people as well as fate play a vital role in shaping of the personality. I therefore related how the autobiography *From Heartbreak to Daybreak* reconstructs the life of Wagura involving the interpretive shaping of the past as a revelation of the present.

I discovered that Wagura's life as revealed in the autobiography is shaped by the impact of her family members like her mother, George, her sister Martha and her brother Ruga. Social issues like stigmatization, irrational religious views and other persons she encounters in her life have also contributed in a big way to the shaping of her consciousness and philosophy.

In an attempt to project this reality, the autobiographer selects and presents the events and experiences that contribute to her becoming an advocate or a voice of the people living with HIV. We can therefore conclude that memory consciously selects what is recalled to put it in perspective. In this particular autobiography, the narrator presents most of her experiences chronologically but there is re-ordering to reveal causes and effects. The

reshaping is a function of the particular standpoint of the writer at the moment which she reviews her life, and within the purpose, interprets her experience.

In this study therefore, I had set to pursue two objectives: to analyze the presentation of the illness of HIV in the autobiography by focusing on the theme of despair and the theme of hope from a feminine perspective and also to evaluate the effectiveness of the stylistic devices employed by the writer. I proceeded from two assumptions: that Asunta Wagura's autobiography is a journey trailing from desperation to hope and that she has employed different stylistic devices to effectively pass across her message.

In the study, I examined how Wagura uses self narration to present the impact of HIV on the patient. In it, she also advances a call for female agency. I have examined how from Heartbreak to Daybreak enables Wagura gain therapy for her suffering. The autobiographical memories bring about her painful experiences which helps to relieve suppressed pain in the narration. She explains how the struggle with the disease affects women in particular and the general society at large. I discussed the despair of HIV patients and those close to them. However, at the end of it all, there is hope for HIV patients and the nation at large through the journey that Wagura walks. She uses a patient's narrative voice to elicit empathy on the reader and show the degree of inhumanity among the members of the society. At last, she wins over stigma and becomes a source of hope for many. One can move from nowhere to somewhere and become someone who the society can look up to. Her experiences become a point of reference in bringing in solutions to problems. The story is not only a source of

inspiration for people living with HIV, it can serve as a reference point for people living with other challenges like physical disabilities, drugs addiction among others to show that the future belongs to those who fight for themselves by refusing to be brought down by stigma and self pity.

Wagura's narrative employs several artistic strategies. This shows her creativity which somehow fictionalizes her story. She exploits the use of symbolism, imagery, dialogue, rhetorical questions, vivid descriptions, hyperbole, suspense and code switching among others. These stylistic devices have been used as the ship through which the narrator used in the deep seas to bring her cargo (the themes of despair and hope while living with HIV ashore).

As I conclude, I would also wish to highlight the need for further research on unresponsiveness from HIV patients and those close to them. I intended to use interview as a basic research method to get further information but my subjects Wagura and her brother Ruga often failed to give prompt responses and I could read avoidance of my questions.

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