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**THE FALLEN WOMAN IN THE CAMEROONIAN  
COLONIAL LITERATURE: A STUDY OF MONGO BETI'S  
MISSION TO KALA**

**CAMPINA GRANDE - PB**

**2016**

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MISSION TO KALA**

**Monografia apresentada ao Curso de  
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## ABSTRACT

This research investigates the extent to which Mongo Beti emphasises on the concepts of otherness and “fallen woman” through the relationship between the male and female characters in the novel *Mission to Kala*. Citing Hegel, Nwoalezea (2012), claims that otherness is the act of identifying oneself as `me` and the person besides you as the `other` different from `me`, which sometimes lead to a situation where `me` imposes his superiority over the `other`. Mongo Beti, a critic of the colonial rule, writes in the XX century the novel *Mission to Kala* published in 1957 in which he portrays the ill-treatment and evils this system causes to the colonised. According to some authors, while sex is a biological consequence, gender is socially defined, meaning it is the society that establishes norms that must be respected by all individuals living in that society (BEAUVOIR, 1989; BUTLER, 1990; FUNK, 2011). Following Barnhill (2005) women who transgressed the norms were called “fallen women” and were viewed as ‘criminal’ not suitable for the society. The methodology was based on the rereading of the novel with the intuition of highlighting the analytical categories by bringing out the contributions of authors like Simone de Beauvoir (1989), Butler (1990), Funk (2011), for the discussion about the basic theory on sex, gender and woman. Regarding the concepts of fallen woman and otherness, Barnhill (2005) Swarnakar (1998) and Kain (2005) were considered. The study has revealed that the four characters treated as fallen women in the story suffer discrimination for being women, bold and sexually free since their behavior is considered deviant toward the patriarchal system in which they are inserted. It was concluded that other women in the book also suffer physical and psychological violence. Although the author seems sympathetic toward women by presenting the difficulties they encounter in the society, the fact that the narrator is a male protagonist turns his account less trustworthy.

Keywords: Fallen woman, Otherness, Cameroon Literature, Colonialism.

## RESUMO

Esta pesquisa investiga até que ponto Mongo Beti enfatiza os conceitos de alteridade e “fallen woman<sup>1</sup>” através da relação entre os personagens masculinos e femininos no romance *Mission to Kala*. Citando Hegel, Nwoalezea (2012), afirma que a alteridade é o ato de identificar-se como `eu` e a pessoa ao lado como o `outro` diferente do `eu`. Isto por vezes, leva a uma situação em que o `eu` impõe a sua superioridade sobre o `outro`. Mongo Beti, um crítico do regime colonial, escreve no século XX o romance “Mission to Kala” em 1957, no qual ele retrata os maus-tratos que este sistema faz com o colonizado. De acordo com alguns autores, o gênero é definido socialmente, ou seja, é a sociedade que estabelece as normas que devem ser respeitadas por todos os indivíduos nela inserida (Beauvoir, 1989; BUTLER, 1990; FUNK, 2011) Segundo Barnhill (2005) mulheres que desviavam as normas prescritas eram vista como criminosas, e eram chamadas “fallen women”. A metodologia foi baseada na releitura da obra com o objetivo de realçar as categorias analíticas através das contribuições e autores como, Simone de Beauvoir (1989), Butler (1990), Funk (2011), no que diz respeito às discussões sobre os termos sexo, gênero e mulher. Em relação aos conceitos de “fallen woman” e alteridade, os autores Barnhill (2005) e Swarnakar (1998) e Kain (2005) foram considerados. O estudo revelou que as quatro personagens apresentadas como fallen women sofrem preconceito por serem mulheres, ousadas e sexualmente livres, comportamentos esses considerados impróprios às leis da sociedade patriarcal na qual vivem. Foi também observado que outras mulheres dentro da obra sofrem violência física e psicológica no seu cotidiano. Embora o autor seja aparentemente simpático ao apresentar os problemas dessas mulheres, essa atitude é questionável no momento em que os fatos são narrados por um personagem protagonista masculino.

Palavras-chave: “Fallen woman”, Alteridade, Literatura Camaronesa, Colonialismo.

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<sup>1</sup> The nearest translation could be ‘mulher perdida/deca’

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION .....	8
2 THE 20TH CENTURY CAMEROON COLONIAL LITERATURE .....	11
2.1 Main authors of the Cameroon colonial literature .....	<b>Erro! Indicador não definido.</b>
2.2 The characteristics of Cameroon colonial literature .....	16
3 SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE FOLLOWING CONCEPTS: SEX, GENDER AND WOMAN .....	18
3.1 Sex or Gender .....	18
3.2. To be a woman or a fallen woman? .....	21
4 THE FOUR FALLEN WOMEN IN <i>MISSION TO KALA</i> .....	27
4.1 Aunt Amou- the widow .....	28
4.2 Niam's wife- the decamped wife .....	31
4.3 Eliza –The good-time girl .....	35
4.4 Edima- The half-woman, half-child.....	36
5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	40
6 REFERENCES .....	44



## 1 INTRODUCTION

Societies are made up of rules which must be respected by each individual living in them. As for women, they were defined by their responsibility over domestic roles and had no other right except the right to be alive. In the case of the African woman and the Cameroonian woman in particular, she lives in a patriarchal society, which gives more power to the male child than to the female one. Apart from filling her assignments as a wife to her husband, her duty is to take care of the household and her children. She has been taught how to fulfil all these domestic work since her childhood. Back in the XIX and XX centuries, the situation was a little bit worst because most of the children sent to school were boys. If being a woman already meant being inferior to man, then, women who attempted to disrespect the local traditions were inferior to other ‘normal’ women. This deviant woman known as “fallen woman” was to be exiled from the community to avoid influencing negatively other women as they were seen as bad examples to future female generations.

In this monograph, I explore the possible forms of prejudice present in the novel *Mission to Kala*, basing myself on the concept of “fallen woman”, which originated in the XIX century, referring to women who disrespected the societal laws imposed to all women. To understand this concept, I also consider the notion of otherness, which is the idea of seeing the person besides you as different from you and considering yourself as ‘me’ and the other as ‘not me’. Through these two concepts, I shall analyse four female characters in Mongo Beti’s novel *Mission to Kala* published in 1957.

Beti is a Cameroonian writer born in 1932 in Akometan. Educated in France under the French colonial rule, he engaged in the publication of fiction through which he criticised the evils colonialism brought to Africa. Before his death in 2001, he had written numerous articles and novels which are considered as great contributions to the Cameroon colonial and post-colonial literature, one of which is *Mission to Kala*.

The principal question of this work is up to which extent does the author emphasise on the theme of otherness and the question of fallen woman in the colonial context in which the novel is situated? In other words, I research on the possibility to identify aspects of prejudice towards four female characters that will be analysed in the novel *Mission to Kala*. I will also present the place of a woman and that of a girl in the Cameroonian culture as portrayed by men in the novel. In order to reach that objective, I will analyse the relationship between the male and female characters through the concept of otherness as well as some considerations regarding the feminist theory. As *Mission to Kala* is a colonial novel, I also aim at examining

four female characters to analyse the woman problem not just as a biological aspect but also as a social issue following the colonial context in which the novel was written.

One of the reasons why I choose this topic is because most academic works on African literature usually focus on themes and aspects of literature like characters, religion, poverty, war among others, which are of course important themes as far as portraying the realities of the African literature is concerned. However, nothing or less has been done so far, concerning the role played by women in the African novel and in the Cameroonian novel specifically. Furthermore, this novel is almost not known and studied in Brazil and I see the need to divulgate it and pave the way for other scholars who might be interested in working with this author's literary production and with the Cameroonian literature as well.

The methodology will be based on the rereading of the novel *Mission to Kala* with the aim of illustrating analytical categories by bringing out the contributions of certain authors cited below to establish a discussion around the main theme of this monograph. Thereby, my research will be mainly qualitative because I shall make a bibliographical study then, summaries on the different theoretical texts and the writing part will be the end of my methodology in which I shall match the literary texts with the theoretical framework.

This monograph is divided into three chapters. In the first chapter I discuss about the XX century Cameroon colonial literature, its main authors as well as the different characteristics that define it. I also present the author, his literary production and his importance in the Cameroonian literature. The following are some of the authors I used to support my arguments: Thompson (2008), Scott (1992), Eileen (1983), Eagleton (2003) and Habiballah (2009).

In chapter II, I present a discussion around the concepts of sex, gender and woman according to the following authors: Beauvoir (1989), Zolin (2009), Funck (2011) and Butler (1990). As the discussion in this chapter focuses on the woman and her place in the society, I found it necessary to present a definition of the patriarchal society in which she is inserted in the context of the novel. For this, Sultana (2011) and Brantlinger (2002) have been considered. I also define the main concept of this paper: "fallen woman" according to Barnhill (2005), Swarnakar (1998) and Kain (2005). The notion seems to be the most recurrent in the African history since the colonial period but, it happens to be a postcolonial term which helps to represent through literary works, the origin of the division between human beings: the division west and the east.

Finally, in chapter III I match the theory presented in chapters one and two in order to identify the various aspects which make the characters, especially those imbued of patriarchal

attitudes, to consider the four female characters as fallen women. I present a cross out of them in order of appearance in the book, which happens to be from the oldest to the youngest. In this part it is also observed the presence of prejudice as a sign of double subjugation, both as a woman inserted in a patriarchal community and as a colonised individual under the French colonial rule.

## 2 THE 20TH CENTURY CAMEROON COLONIAL LITERATURE

The blooming industrial revolution in Europe left many former black slaves wandering in the streets without employment, as well as a great need of raw materials for the European industries which could no longer withstand them in small quantity. As a result, many African countries were submitted to the European colonisation. The Europeans also needed to have the continent under control to have enough space to resettle their overloading population back at home as well as find a solution to the increasing unemployment that swept Europe at that time. As a consequence, Africa was the favourable place and an answer to all their problems.

Nwanosike and Onyije (2011, p. 625) define colonialism as the “policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.” The Europeans were convinced of their superiority over any other group of people different from them, and this led them to engage in the occupation of Africa which they regarded as a primitive continent. Through this fact, we notice in the above definitions their deep hunger for power and the demonstration of their superiority over the Africans.

Citing Said, Bonici (2009) states that colonialism is the establishment of colonies at a distant territory with the aim of exploiting it so as to help enrich the coloniser’s country. This reinforces the birth of several inequalities which has marked the great gap existing between the Europeans and their former colonies. Some of these elements are the race factor, power and the detention of knowledge, among others. The last being the most important, since it serves as a determinant to other elements.

Regarding power relations, we must consider Foucault’s *selected interviews* (1972-1977) in which he attempts to explain the relationship between power and knowledge. He uses the example of atomic bomb used during the Second World War. The author defends that knowledge is power by mentioning that the scientist who manufactured the atomic bomb, which had a lot of negative effect on many parts of the world, turned to be politically powerful due to the knowledge he had on how to fabricate the bomb, compared to other nations which did not even know of its existence, not to mention of how to create it.

Knowledge being a central point in our society today, it is rapidly understandable that a person who can manufacture a car may have a sort of monopoly and consequently exercise his/her power over others who cannot. This means that the manufacturer may impose his laws and prices to those who wish to buy the car. This shows the relationship that existed between the coloniser and the colonised. The coloniser imposed his dominion over the colonised due

to the advantage of the industrial development that Europe was witnessing by that time. It made many colonised people who did not want to suffer punishment, but instead wanted to win advantages beside their colonial master, to desire to be educated, dress and behave just like their masters. Automatically, those who succeeded in their studies had power over others who were not educated under the colonial educational system and were better treated by the colonial masters. This relation between knowledge and power still informs our social relationships in our society today.

Knowledge then becomes an important factor in the acquisition of power, even if it is just for a short period of time. The desire to resemble the coloniser, and also due to the pressure which was inflicted by the coloniser on the colonised, many Africans received this foreign education and some of them later on became writers. Most of them published books to protest against colonialism and to point out its consequences. A Nigerian author (West African literature) Chinua Achebe in his novel *Things fall apart* (1958) portrays the different social problems and consequences the Igbo village people suffered during their attempt to resist the British colonisation in their territory. This is also the case in Ngugi Wa Thiongo's novel *Weep not child* published in 1964, Leopold Sedar Senghor (of Senegal), Aime Cesaire (of Martinique), Camara Laye (of Guinea), Wolé Soyinka, among others. They all stood against the colonial rule and were considered the powerful by their counterparts, since they could read and write in the colonial master's language. Although some of them were forced to go to school, receiving the foreign education can be seen as a strategy to counter-attack their enemies. This means that they had discovered they were not that different from the masters and so they used that advantage to resist the European rule through the publication of books.

Although the African literary production is vast, this monograph limits itself on a writer who played an important role in the fight for decolonisation. Thus, an analysis of the Cameroonian colonial literary production is proposed as an attempt to contextualise and fit in the reflections in the Cameroon colonial context. It is acknowledgeable that, separating Cameroon literature from the rest of African literature is a little bit difficult, as almost all the literary work produced by that time had the same characteristics. All colonised countries had the same preoccupations and shared the same desires, that of liberating their people from the oppressor. As a matter of fact, it is relevant to present the role played by Cameroonian authors in the drafting of a particular literature for colonial Cameroon and outline the characteristics of this literature produced by Cameroonian during this period.

The democratic republic of Cameroon is situated in the centre of the African continent, in the north of the equator with an opening to the Atlantic Ocean. It is divided into ten (10) regions, with more than 250 ethnic groups. This division and language variety came about as a result of migration of the Cameroonian population in search for fertile soils and peaceful settlement. Discovered by the Portuguese in 1472, Cameroon remained under slavery and slave trade until the arrival of the Germans, and colonised by the Germans who began the colonisation process in 1884 and only concluded in 1885. The Germans named their new colony Kamerun and immediately started to construct infrastructures like houses and roads to ease their staying in the region and also to facilitate their movement into and out of Kamerun. Their numerous activities demanded skilled men and workmanship, but the indigenous people were reluctant to surrender their land, making the Germans to initiate force labour. (THOMPSON, 2008).

However, Thompson (2008) also mentions that the Germans lost the First World War, and all their colonies were seized by the allied powers. The British and the French both had interest on the German kamerun, so they partitioned the area into two unequal regions, giving birth to what was called the French Cameroon and the British Cameroon. Though the Germans had engaged in educating the indigenous people in the German language, the arrival of France and Britain in Kamerun after the First World War changed everything. The French used their language to teach their culture and also to rule, and the British did the same on their own part. This therefore accounts for the fact that Cameroon has both French and English as official languages.

On the side of French colonialism Eileen<sup>2</sup> (1983) states that the évolués<sup>3</sup> created a type of poetry that they called Negritude<sup>4</sup>. They suffered more than their British counterparts did, because the French policy was that of assimilation and was aimed at transforming all their colonial subjects into black Frenchmen. They had to think, eat and behave like Frenchmen and those who actually succeeded were sent to study in France. The negritude was then used as a means to divulgate the atrocities of the French colonial rule.

Ferdinand Oyono is one of the Cameroonian writers who became minister of government, and ambassador of Cameroon in different countries in Africa and Europe. He demonstrates the vulnerability of the French colonial rule in his novel *Une Vie de Boy* published in 1956 and translated into English as *The House Boy* (1966). He also wrote *le*

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<sup>2</sup> Eileen Julien, African Literature

<sup>3</sup> French Word used in the process of assimilation and it meant those who have been transformed into Black Europeans.

<sup>4</sup> Struggle by French colonies for freedom from the French colonial rule

*vieux Nègre et La Médaille* in 1956, translated as *The old man and the medal* (1969). He and Mongo Beti are considered the most important writers in Cameroon during this period (HABIBALLAH, 2009).

Born in French Cameroon, Mongo Beti was educated under the French educational system and, as a result, he wrote and published his books in the French language. Beti's first literary work was published in 1953 in a review called *Presence Africaine*, and was known as *Sans Haine et Sans Amour*. One year later, in 1954, he published *Ville Cruelle*, his very first novel which earned him the pseudonym "Eza Boto". Later in 1971, he published another novel called *Le pauvre Christ de Bomba* and translated as *The poor Christ of Bomba*, in which he exposes the French fragility and the infirmity of its colonial rule. Furthermore, Beti published *Mission Terminée* in 1957, the novel which earned him the prize *Sainte Beuve* in 1958, and that shall be analysed in this paper. After publishing *Le Roi Miraculé*, Mongo Beti had to stop publishing for almost ten years to take care of their children, since his wife was preparing her aggregation exam. But he reengaged in his writing and activities in 1972 and published *Main Basse sur le Cameroun*, both *Perpétue* and *Remember Ruben* in 1974. *La Ruine Presque Cocasse d'un Polichinelle* was published in 1979. It is important to note that after thirty-two years of exile, he finally returned to Cameroon and settled in Yaoundé with his wife, and they both opened a library called *Librairie des noirs*, which soon became one of the most famous libraries in Cameroon. Before his death in 2001, Beti had written numerous articles and novels which are considered as great contributions to the Cameroon colonial and post-colonial literature and which will always be in the memories of his readers (HABIBALLAH, 2009).

Mongo Beti is also known as a critic of colonialism and postcolonialism, not only in Cameroon but in Africa and in Europe as well. He presents himself as an engaged revolutionist, since his very first years at college during which he enrolled in a political party U.P.C, demanding for an immediate independence/freedom of his country. This strict but persisting fight is seen in all Beti's literary work, both in his articles and in the various novels he wrote. As an anti-colonialist, Beti knows his native land and all its problems very well. He portrays these situations in all his books, locating each fact from colonial to neo colonial periods. With the hope that one day his country will come to free itself from the colonial/neo colonial rule, Beti uses his narratives to teach, raise awareness and also to inform the society about the flaws of the colonial rule and this can be seen clearly in the novel we are going to analyse (SANOU. 1982). The following quote is a clear example that shows that colonisation was not welcomed by the colonised:

The more I think about it, the more certain I am that it is I who owes him a debt of gratitude for sending me on a journey which enabled me to discover many truths. (...) that the tragedy which our nation is suffering today is that of a man left to his own devices in a world which does not belong to him, which he has not made and does not understand (BETI, 2008. p. 166).

Beti does not hesitate to present the protagonist of *Mission to Kala* (Medza) as an example of the failure of the colonial education in the midst of the traditional colonised Cameroonian society. Written in the first person singular, we come to know about the development of the story through the main character, Medza, who narrates his trip to a neighbouring village. In a very simple and sincere way, he explains to the reader how he came to discover how enjoyable it is to live in the countryside (uncorrupted by colonial rule), and how sad he has been living in the city where the Europeans were concentrated.

Beti satirises the French ideology that a literate person or someone who has a lot of academic competency is the most powerful person, because the person being called formidable here has just failed his exam. It becomes more evident when he claims having learnt a lot from the “primitive” people of Kala. By this, the author seems to warn his fellow citizens that their culture is better than the French education. He, therefore, contrasts Medza, the educated child, with his cousin Zambo, who represents the village child, courageous and physically strong.

He was tall and flat-footed with a disproportionately length torso which nevertheless, he carried very badly. His buttocks were incredibly slender, yet he retained the country native’s slight pot belly, (...) he was like a kind of human baobab tree (BETI. 1957. p. 20-21).

Beti’s decision to let his main character spend some time with the villagers of Kala, seems to be a strategy to make him strong by going through training. His books are full of imageries and the novel being analysed here is not an exception. One of the themes treated in *Mission to Kala* is that of divorce. It is a social reality that could be related to any country in the world, because there are divorces everywhere. Nevertheless, Beti (2008) uses this social fact to criticise the colonial system of education, contrasting it with the Cameroonian traditional educational system. His desire to show to his people how far they were being oppressed by the colonial master helps enhance the development of the story in the novel via the various themes employed in the book: tradition versus modernism, lack of humility, sexual promiscuity, prejudice, love, exploitation, obedience, travelling, marriage, divorce, just to name but a few. He presents all these social realities as consequences of colonialism and hence calls for a rejection of this rule (SANOU, 1982).

Mongo Beti died in 2011 leaving behind a vast work of fiction non-fiction and poetry. The immense art shows his engagement as a writer and nationalist. It is a varied cultural



heritage through which is portrayed an image of a real Cameroonian thirsty of freedom and change. He wanted to see things changing and via his work, his moral voice shall continue to cry for a positive shift with a lot of hope and persistency. In order to understand his reasons and those of other writers, we need to see the characteristics of Cameroon colonial literature.

## **2.2 The characteristics of Cameroon colonial literature**

Most of the writers during the colonial period had a particular way of writing and many other aspects in common. Before explaining these characteristics, it is necessary to define literature. According to Eagleton (2003), literature can be anything, a speech, a song, a painting frame, a narrative textbook, a descriptive text and so forth. This is why it is difficult to find an objective definition to literature and trying to define it will be limiting its scope. He then argues it can be considered as a more important and valued writing. This means, in other words, that literature is constant. For example: a book that was written a hundred years ago will never change its context or its sense, but instead the different interpretations we give to it can change from one moment of the history to another.

If this is the case, it can be observed from the Eagleton's standpoints that Africans had been producing literature well before the arrival of the Europeans in the continent, through the numerous songs and stories that constitute the African and consequently Cameroon cultural heritage. The literature was mainly oral and was transmitted from parents to children over several generations.

The different aspects of colonial literature are varied. Eileen (1983) affirms that African literature can be well understood when grouped into different sub-regional groups. That is the east, northern, centre, west and southern African literature, which may be divided into nationalities, ethnic groups, and even sub ethnic groups. Its characteristics are diversified just as the literature itself and go from the most marking point, which is the language used in writing, to the type that is been exposed, and sometimes the themes that were debated during this period.

Generally, still according to Eileen (1983), the literature written by Africans, Cameroonian included, can be grouped under two main ideas: recognition and subjectivity as well as the critique and rejection of extreme dominion. The need of liberation by the Africans, made the évolués to start writing books in which they claimed immediate independence. They were against the European abusive power over their countries and some of them made their ideas explicitly clear, while others were implicit in their writings. This could be due to the fact

that literature during this period was mainly political and many writers saw their works being censored and some of them were even exiled in Europe to avoid rebellions. Even on exile, the writers could not stop questioning and exposing and denouncing the ill treatment they and their people were undergoing under the colonial masters. They published many books while on foreign land.

Another important aspect is the empowerment of the African culture in the colonial novel. The anti-colonialist writers privileged their culture in their books by valorising traditional aspects like storytelling around the fire, the worshipping of their gods, love for the nature, traditional games and musical rhythms as marks of their true identity. They had been refused any claim of identity based on their skin colours so quested recognition of their culture and respect for their traditions. Almost all of them wrote about their memories from their childhood and things they wished for the future (EILEEN, 1983).

However, all works emerged during this period were written in the colonial language and this is a remarkable aspect of the colonial literature. Eileen (1983) argues that the written colonial literature is any type of literary work written by Africans during colonial period and he terms it as Euro-African literature, since most of it was written in European languages because less or no African writer could write in his native language. The majority of the population was illiterate and could neither read nor write, so the only option was to write in the colonial languages. However, he also mentions that these writings were just a pinch of the large bulk of African oral literature that is still unknown to the world.

The questionable thing about colonial literature is; where were the female writers? The period was totally characterised by the male domination and as a result of that, all the literature produced during this period was done by men. We only find the presence of women in their novels. These women occupy the role of domestic women, mother of the ethnic group, working very hard in the fields, cooking and taking care of the household, but their role in the resistance against European rule is neglected or ignored. This brings us to the silence in which these women were kept. They did not claim any voice by the time and this explains why we do not have any book published by a female writer during the colonial period. This directly takes us to our next chapter in which shall be discussed the social inequalities and other forms of prejudice that women have been going through in our society.

### **3 SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CONCEPTS OF SEX, GENDER AND WOMAN**

What is a woman? If this question is to be asked to a person who recognises herself as a woman, of course she will not know how to answer or will obviously link the definition to her biological organ. However, it has been difficult to find a concrete clarification about what is to be a woman and centuries ago it meant being considered inferior to men, and eventually subjected to submission and oppression by them.

Scott (1992) states that the academic milieu has witnessed great advancement concerning the history about women subjugation, and the fight for their freedom. This issue has been a universal debate for the past centuries and is still one of the most common subjects in our time. As a result, many researchers and scholars are trying to focus on how to characterise women. They search for methods about how to tackle the different problems women encounter in their daily lives as well as means to empower them. Ergo, in part one of this section, it is necessary to highlight the differences between sex and gender, and also attempt a definition upon what is a woman as consequence of historical events, responsible for the advent of the quest for recognition and, finally, discuss some aspects of the concept of fallen woman.

#### **3.1 Sex or Gender**

The unfairness of the laws regulating the different human societies has been the main reason for several grievances, calling for justice worldwide. The origin of these problems has been laid on the relationship between men and women, which has led to a need to seek for understanding. Beauvoir (1989) perceives gender as both social and cultural products. According to her, a person is not born woman, but rather becomes a woman. It is observable that to her, the society dictates the rules to be followed by everyone. This might be the reason why women in some parts of the world are claiming the right to be considered equal to men and not just be restricted to some rules and characteristics attached to them as a result of their anatomy. The author asserts that if women demand recognition, it means that there is a problem in the system under which they are submitted. The system here refers to the various laws that reduce them into motherhood, domestic responsibilities and physical fragility.

However, Beauvoir (1989) also admits that even though men and women are all human beings, they obviously differ in their physical appearance, as well as in their personal behaviours. This thought therefore presents the society as a place with two types of beings:

male and female. The world of animals is not an exception to the rule. Yet, as far as individuals are concerned, the unequal division of rights between men and women is noticeable and this accounts for these differences as a social reality.

If the dissemblance is based on the sex, therefore, it is relevant to define sex. Some authors defend that there is a big difference between sex and gender. This is the case of Zolin (2009) who, in an attempt to define feminine, states that it is an ensemble of social characteristics attributed to those born with a female sexual organ. These characteristics are always contrasted to those of the opposite sexual organ reserved for masculine counterparts. This means that sex is directly connected to the word feminine and its opposite masculine, and consequently determines one's biological status.

It becomes clearer when Nwaji (2011) mentions that, apart from sex being a biological element, the roles attributed to it will also be determined biologically. Despite the evolution of science, the example she uses about a man being responsible to impregnate the woman, and the latter's responsibility to carry and breastfeed the child, is incontestable, because their nature has been made in a way that they cannot change these facts. Referring to science and its miracles, there is not any proof of a man having succeeded to breastfeed a child, thus, leaving this duty for women.

Following the same perspective, Zolin (2009) utilises the term in a very broad way. She considers gender as directly connected to sex. For her, it is in gender that a subject develops, considering the sex to which he/she belongs and is tight to the various cultural rules that regulate the society in which he/she is inserted, as stated below

... It is a category that involves sexual and cultural difference. The subject is constituted in the gender due to the sex to which it belongs, and especially because of the linguistic codes and cultural representations that produce it, established in accordance with social hierarchies<sup>5</sup> (ZOLIN. 2009. p. 218, my translation)<sup>6</sup>

It is observable that although both terms are closely related, they are however different in meaning. Considering the above definitions, it is obvious that, while sex is internal, gender is like an external force/input to a human being. When babies are born, irrespective of their sex, they are just equal and depending on the society in which they are born, several obligations, rights, responsibilities and certain modes of behaviour already established for all children born with a particular sex in a determined social context shall be assigned to them.

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<sup>5</sup> ...trata-se de uma categoria que implica uma diferença sexual e cultural. O sujeito é constituído no gênero em razão do sexo a que pertence e, principalmente, em razão de códigos linguísticos e Representações culturais que o matizam, estabelecidos de acordo com as hierarquias sociais<sup>5</sup> (ZOLIN, 2009, p. 218).

<sup>6</sup> All translated texts in this research are as a result of their original form not being in English, but all texts originally written in English shall not be translated.

As a result, in certain communities individual from a particular gender may be subjected to more injustice, due to the traditional rules that may favor one part and consequently leave the other in an unpleasant state.

Butler (1990), in turn, questions the following relationship: sex is to gender as gender is to culture. She mentions that, even if the binary conception of sex is taken as logic, male/female, it does not mean that what determines a man is the male characteristics and a woman her female formation. Accordingly, even if man is equal to male and woman to female bodies, it does not signify that gender and sex must also follow a binary pattern because gender is systematically independent from sex. The author reaffirms that the feminist idea about the word woman being the same to a category of individuals with the same characteristics is questionable as gender is not consistent and coherent in all historical contexts. This is due to its relation with race, ethnicity, and social classes, sexual and regional constituted identities which cause gender to be inseparable from politics. However, she defines gender as a performance with a punitive act. As a performance here, gender consists of distinct series of actions and responsibilities attributed to individuals in a society while the punitive act represents the coercions and obligations to these roles imposed to them as social sanctions.

In relation to culture, traditions or habits practiced by a group of people with the same historical background and aspiring to a common future, it is clear that as far as Christianity is concerned, gender differences have existed since the creation of the world. Right from the book of Genesis when God decides to punish Adam (man) and Eve (woman), for disobeying Him, He gives different punishments to each of them. To Adam He says in Genesis 3, verse 18 "...Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth..." then in Genesis 3, verse 16, He says to Eve "...I will multiply thy sorrows, and thy conceptions: in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee (THE HOLY BIBLE, 1609).

From the above quotation, through God's speech, it is observable that there is a difference between a man and a woman. By sentencing the man to hard manual work and giving him the power of domination over the woman, He reduces the woman to the position of a subaltern. Though she is given a tender heart to be able to fall in love and offer this big feeling to the world, she is however meant to suffer because of this same feeling. It is necessary to mention that it is not only the Christian religion that stresses on women obedience to men, but other religions also reinforce that all women should be submissive towards their husbands.

Related to the idea of the woman always giving part of what is hers to the man, Beauvoir (1989) mentions that women are not recognised as being individuals of their own, they must always be attached to men. For instance, in most parts of the world women still have to lose their names when they get married. The act of bearing the husband's name seems to perpetrate the belief which states a woman can only be respected if she is married to a man. In one way or the other, women still have to abandon their identity in favour of their husbands', of course not willingly, but because they are considered as the 'other' as compared to men 'self'. Before analysing the concepts of other and self, it is significant to briefly account for the XIX century women campaigns for equal rights.

The intention in this research work is not to discuss the 19<sup>th</sup> century women struggle, however, rather the concept of fallen woman which emerged in Europe during that period. Nevertheless, it is essential to highlight the events that led to the birth of literature in favour of those women who were characterised as societal failures. Before that, it is relevant to engage in the discussion on an aspect that might be seen as one of the most important in this monograph: what is a woman?

### **3.2. To be a woman or a fallen woman?**

The word 'woman' is repeated several times in this work and must be treated with care. The idea of having to define what is a 'woman or being a woman' here appeared crucial to me. After pondering upon the issue trying to define what a woman is and not being capable of finding an appropriate definition, I actually saw how serious and important this word is. Beti seems to bring forward the woman question through the presentation of a woman according to the patriarchal system and another group of women who question these societal norms.

Beauvoir (1989), in her discussion on what is a woman, states that she had to accept that she was a woman before attempting to prove or not whether she was right. She mentions the various definitions given by some famous philosophers, like Aristotle who, according to her, defines a woman as a person with natural defectiveness. She also mentions St. Thomas who defines a woman as an imperfect man. Thus Beauvoir bases herself on these definitions among many others mentioned by her to declare that men are those who own the world. This means that they are the ones who determine who can be called woman or not. The reason why Aristotle and St. Thomas see 'woman' as a being with flaws is found in the fact that men consider themselves as perfect beings. As previously mentioned, Beauvoir defends that nobody is born woman but rather becomes one.

When Beauvoir links sex to biological system and gender to cultural creation, and reaches the conclusion through which nobody is born a woman but becomes a woman, as such she seems to establish a connection between sex and gender. If it is according to these differences that gender is defined in a society, therefore, gender is a direct consequence of sex and being a woman. In this case, the three concepts are interconnected. Considering this thought, Beauvoir defines a woman as follows:

A woman is a free and autonomous being like all human creatures- nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the other. They propose to stabilise her as object and to doom her to immanence since her transcendence is to be overshadowed and forever transcended by another ego (conscience) which is essential and sovereign (BEAUVOIR. 1989. p. 229).

It is implied from the quotation that a woman, although seems to be free, is however limited in terms of actions and personal determination which are controlled by the opposite sex: man. This emphasises on the power of men as masters of the home, and the patriarchal society in which women do not have socio-economic and political freedom. Moreover, the following quotation presents a woman as a real human being, different from the definitions offered by Aristotle and St. Thomas in Beauvoir's book.

A woman is a concrete human being, understood as culturally feminine in a particular moment and in a particular location, and needs to negotiate her experience in discursive constructions which may or may not compromise her total development as an individual (FUNCK. 2011. p. 71, my translation)<sup>7</sup>.

Funck seems to align herself behind Beauvoir's idea of gender being a cultural construction. However, it is understandable when she defends that a woman is regarded as culturally feminine in a particular context, she is in one way presenting the idea through which woman and feminine are linked. This also shows the existence of characteristics used to classify an individual as feminine and consequently woman. The next part of the quotation reinforces the idea of culture being the master who defines what is to be a woman. The discursive constructions she mentions may be understood as the different rules/laws established by the society and which the woman is free to accept or not in the formation of her identity as an individual.

Taking the previous discussions into account, it is relevant to consider the various aspects mentioned in this study to the benefit of the analysis that will follow. However, the power of men over women in the society calls for the need to search for the origins of this rivalry. For this reason, it is mandatory to define patriarchy.

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<sup>7</sup> A mulher é um ser humano concreto, entendido culturalmente como feminino em certo momento e lugar, e precisa negociar sua experiência dentro de construções discursivas que podem ou não comprometer seu completo desenvolvimento como indivíduo. (p. 71)

According to Sultana (2011. p. 3), “patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices, in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women”. Men detain power over women in the political, social and economic institutions in a given society. This means that women have no rights in the presence of men, which implies in both household and social levels.

Citing Engels, Sultana (2011) attributes the origin of patriarchy to the historical period which accounts for the increase in the private property and the state. To her, women subjugation came into existence when men decided to accumulate wealth and ensure a long term economic prosperity which was to be left for their children and an inheritance. They had to stop women for demanding the wealth, as a result, they obliged women to abandon their rights to men. They reduced women to domestic roles and removed them the right to get married to many men, resulting to the birth of patriarchy, monogamy and women subordination. Sultana still states that, although different feminists groups attach the origin of patriarchy to sex and others to gender, it is clear in Engel’s idea that it is a man-made historical development of the society.

The desire by women to put an end to this ill-treatment led to the revolt in the XIX century and is still one of the most striking subjects in our society today. According to Brantlinger (2002), women, before the industrial revolution, were assigned to domestic roles and could not occupy the same position of employment like men. They were bound to an exaggerated submission to their husbands, limited liberty, no personal property and not even their own children belonged to them. Apart from being teachers, they could only work as governess with limited advantages. The only time they left their parents’ homes and stopped belonging to them was after marriage, and still they were just moving from one point of domination to another, becoming their husband’s properties. They had to serve in their new homes as housewives, mothers to their kids and perfect wives to husbands; in this way subordination over women could only come to an end after their death. The relationship between men and women living in a society where they were subjugated became unbearable to women. This injustice came to the summit in the XIX century, consequently many among them went to the streets to seek and quest for their total freedom. They organised secret meetings to discuss about the issue. The various groups they formed helped raise awareness in other women (who did not know) about their own situation. There was a great need to come out of the invented prison in which the patriarchal society in which they were inserted was keeping them (BRANTLINGER, 2002).



Groups created by these women were called feminist groups and were aimed at supporting the dominated women in Europe, and afterward they turned into a movement that advocated for the rights of women worldwide. Paraphrasing Zolin (2009), feminism is a movement that includes people claiming the political and civil rights of women and their inclusion in the social activities. In other words, for them, freedom of women here encloses the effective practice of the same rights and privileges men enjoyed in the society. Apart from having no rights in the society and even in their homes, some of them were suffered more than others: those who dared claimed their rights by breaking the laws. They were termed fallen woman. What is being fallen?

The idea of characterising things into good or bad has led to the creation of a binary stream of thoughts. Following Barnhill (2005), women were either beautiful or ugly, light or dark, angels or demons. They had to live according to the social norms which demanded of them kindness and purity, delicacy and patience, as well as being admirable, respectful and domestic angels. However, as nature proves to be more powerful than human being, some of these women behaved differently, thus disrespecting the social laws. Those who violated the regulations were criticised and termed fallen women.

Barnhill (2005) defines fallen woman as a woman with a deviant attitude or contrary to that which was conventional for all women. Some of them are the adulteress, fornicators, high level of seduction, widows, women who deserted their conjugal homes, and others who engaged in all type of sexual intercourse with men without valorising their womanhood as the society preached. Being different always caused some sort of estrangement and these women were distinct in the way they treated their sexuality. The alienation was so deep that it always led to the expulsion of these unscrupulous women from the society to avoid contamination with the ideal woman, making them willing to extinct these repugnant beings from the society.

However, if being a woman is already a burden in the Cameroonian patriarchal context, therefore, being a fallen woman must be complicated. Respecting the laws is the rule which must be respected by all women to whom the right to protest is withdrawn but which the fallen woman tries to recuperate. In this case, being a fallen woman may be regarded as a positive aspect as it stands against and criticises the patriarchal attitudes and laws which try to suffocate women in an unbearable situation of subordination.

Following the discussion about sex, gender and woman, one may question himself about the origin and implications of the everlasting rivalry between these terms. Men consider

themselves as ‘self’ regarding women as ‘other’. The following quote explicitly defends that the act of regarding the person beside you as the ‘other/different’ is inherent to human beings.

The category of the other is as primordial as consciousness itself. In the most primitive societies, in the most ancient mythologies, one finds the expressions of a duality- that of the self and the other. This duality was not originally attached to the division of the sexes; it was not dependent upon any empirical facts (BEAUVOIR, 1989, p. 223).

Beauvoir (1989) introduces the duality of self and other which represent ‘me’ and ‘you’, with ‘you’ being strange and different to ‘me’. She mentions that sex was not the first element used to establish the parity or the discriminatory intention of ‘self’ being better than ‘other’, but instead believes the division is older than mankind. In her book *The second sex*, she exemplifies with the European expansion in Africa. The colonial masters regarded themselves as better educated, beautiful and polite than the Africans, whom they termed as barbaric, ugly and uncivilised. Another example used by Beauvoir is that of sexual inequality. She mentions sex later on became a discriminatory factor through which men believe they are more powerful than women, thus denominating women was the ‘other’. The man is the original sex while the woman is the invisible one. This could be attached to the fact that men’s sexual organ is visible and that of women is invisible, showing their superiority in their biological anatomy.

Citing Hegel, Nwoalezea (2012), claims one comes to know who he or she is by identifying himself ‘self’ from the ‘other’. It is the act through which the most powerful/dominant group ‘self’ imposes its superiority over the weak/dominated group ‘other’, by creating a sort of stigmatisation based on aspects like the skin colour, social status and the sex. The concept being actual, it is used by post colonial theorists to defend the idea by which the European powers ‘self’, as well as any other dominant power developed their ‘super’ identity through the construction of the concept of the ‘other’. The post colonialists mostly use the example of colonialism to revindicate the recognition of the so longed discriminated identities of those that had been unfavoured by history.

Linked to the idea about dominator versus dominated, Kain (2005) states that self-consciousness only comes when one only knows himself and stands as being different from another person who is in front of him. According to him, God knows he is God only by identifying himself as being God. This means he differentiates himself from some other person who is not God, but instead animals, birds, men or angels. So far, by the knowledge that man (believers) has of God, God is God ‘self’ as compared to him ‘other’, due to his weaknesses (sins) and the impossibility to create another man.

Hitherto, being a fallen woman seems to emanate from the duality 'self' and 'other'. The nineteenth century was a period during which the patriarchal system prevailed. In agreement with Swarnakar (1998), the frame through which men were the fathers and leaders in the family and women merely servants without opinion continued until the twentieth century. Women maintained their position of the dominated, brutalised both physically and mentally, owing to their sexual behaviour in the society. The word wrongdoing/fallen attributed to women as a compensation or trophy for daring to behave like men, can be seen as fruit of this patriarchal society. The bare fact here is men could not stand to see women 'misbehaving' sexually as was costumed of men during the XIX century in England. Seeing themselves as 'self' and women as 'other', they found it necessary to maintain their position in the society as leaders and women as domestic utensil, so termed them as 'fallen' - failure as compared to those women that could actually earn the merits of good mothers, wives and daughters.

The wind of change brought over by the industrial revolution saw the birth of many problems in Europe, one of which was the women struggle to gain self-determination and the redefinition of certain laws which created a huge gap between men and women in the society. Many authors during that period, as well as others today, had seen the importance of upraising the various problems women encountered during that time, and still face today as a form of instigating awareness in people and also giving a voice to the silenced ones. Some of these authors are: Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855), Emily Brontë (1818-1848), Jane Austen (1775-1817), Kate Chopin (1851-1904), Emily Dickson (1830-1886), Alice Walker (1944-)<sup>8</sup>. These authors were mainly women and wrote about several themes that directly or indirectly concerned women, among which was the concept of fallen woman which shall be analysed in the next part of the next chapter.

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<sup>8</sup>GALE CENGAGE LEARNING. *Feminism in Literature: A Gale critical companion*, ed. Anne Marie Hacht, Dwayne D. Hayes. USA, 2004

#### 4 THE FOUR FALLEN WOMEN IN *MISSION TO KALA*

The book *Mission to Kala* is a memorial novel in which the narrator locates himself both in an internal and external trip. He goes to his village called *Vimili* for vacation and soon after his arrival, his cousin Niam sends him to bring back his wife, who had deserted her matrimonial home going back to her native village *Kala*. The story therefore emphasises the idea of movement, which is physical, as seen in the trip from the city to *Vimili* and later on to *Kala*, as well as in his memories, when he was a teenager. This idea of movement is portrayed right from the title through the word ‘mission’, which may mean journey as a life and hardship, or travelling into the inward memories. The narrator makes it clear in his prologue as follows: “All my other memories, exposed to the scorching light of maturity, break up, melt, and blur into nothing, like a block of ice out in the sun. But this adolescent adventure refuses to vanish” (BETI, 2008, p. vii).

Through this quotation, the narrator informs the reader about the fact that he is now an adult, but he is going to reveal some facts he remembers from when he was an adolescent. However, the reader confirms the story as a teenager’s remembrances in the epilogue, in which the narrator (Medza) gives the outcome of his story. Narrating is telling something/story to someone. It can be done in different forms and by different persons. The person narrating is very important in prose of fiction because, depending on his/her point of view, the story can take a particular direction or another.

It is important to note that *Mission to Kala* is narrated in the first person singular, making it necessary to highlight the relevance of the concept of narrator-protagonist, the features of a narrative from the point of view of the narrator and its repercussions in the development of the plot.

In addition, according to Gancho (2002), a character is one who helps in the advancement of the plot. He/she is fictitious, can act directly or indirectly, speak or not, and is part of the story because without him/her, the story is no more the same. There are different types of characters: protagonist, antagonist and secondary characters, and if a character in the story is telling the facts, he/she is called a narrator. A story can be narrated in the first or third person, depending on the personal pronoun being used. There are cases in which the narrator is the protagonist/antagonist or even out of the story. Gancho also mentions that the narrator-protagonist apart from being the main character, he takes part in the story like any other character in the story. He narrates events in which he was present, however, his vision is

limited in the sense that, he can only reveal things that are visible to him and does not know what other characters think.

Linked to the above, Candido (2002) affirms that the plot of a story is linked to the acts of the characters which, on its own, is connected to their thoughts, lives, problems and even successes inside the book. Therefore, the narrator-protagonist may inform the reader about his experiences moving back to his interior memories. He speaks directly to the reader but is incapable of informing the reader what other characters think. This makes his account unreliable since the reader comes to know other characters from the narrator's point of view which may be true or not.

Even considering the narrative perspective a remarkable aspect in *Mission to Kala*, it is relevant to mention that this is not the focus of this analysis, but instead, the representation of four female characters seen as fallen women. As Barnhill (2005) argues, a fallen woman is a woman who neither follows nor respects the laws and characteristics attributed to women in a particular society. Some of these characteristics are: obedience to their husbands, admiration, purity, kindness and total submission. This means that all adulteresses, fornicators, widows, women who deserted their conjugal homes, and others who engaged in all type of sexual freedom with no respect to their womanhood as the society desires, are fallen. This therefore opens the analysis of the four female characters considered as fallen in the story. The analysis follows the order of appearance of the women throughout the narrative.

#### **4.1 Aunt Amou- the widow**

She carries a plethora of significances in the book due to the fact that she is the first woman presented in the story on the arrival of the protagonist at *Vimili*. Amou is the protagonist's youngest aunt, who lost her husband when she was still very young. For that reason, she abandoned her late husband's house and returned to live with her family. She has no child and decided not to get married again. Amou is also the eldest among the four female characters, and the narrator seems to present them in a decreasing order: oldest to youngest.

As Barnhill (2005) defines fallen woman as a woman with a deviant attitude or contrary to that demanded and expected from all women, he gives the examples of an adulteress, a fornicators, those women with a high level of seduction, widows, women who deserted their conjugal homes, and others who engaged in all type of sexual promiscuity. Although aunt Amou does not match with all the examples cited by Barnhill, she is nevertheless a rebel

because of her decision about not getting married and abandoning her matrimonial home after the death of her husband.

Beauvoir (1989) in her book *The second sex* argues that the difference between `self` and `other` could be observed through the sexual inequality between the male and female sex in the society. She defends that individuals with a male sex otherwise called men, tend to base themselves on this duality of `self` and the `other`, regarding themselves as the most powerful and as a result, the power of domination over the female sex belongs to them. This means women are not supposed to have physical strength nor a strong character to the point of speaking in front of men. However, Amou is presented as being bold enough to affront the village men in a public discussion, and sometimes in a direct confrontation with other male characters when necessary. For instance, the following quotation shows her violently attacking Niam, when he proposes that Medza should go and bring back his wife from Kala: “Aren’t you ashamed to drag this poor boy into your dirty lies? He’s just a child- you were a grown man when he was born (...) you filthy beast!” (BETI, 2008, p. 11). Amou’s character not being conventional positions her as a fallen woman in the novel as she is the only woman who disrespects the law in this aspect.

Considering that gender is socially defined as mentioned by Beauvoir (1989), each individual is bound to fulfil his/her role without exceptions. This idea is more emphasised in a patriarchal society in which men own power over women. Repeating Swarnakar (1998), women as the subjugated gender were maintained under subjugation until the twentieth century when they worked for their husbands as prescribed by the societal norms. The narrator mentions that she marched towards Niam. Amou here can be seen as a courageous woman, because she does not fear men. Her marching towards Niam can be seen as a desire to speak as equal individuals. Amou again confronts Niam and publicly insults him after he proposed that her bicycle should be given to Medza, as a means of transportation to his journey to Kala. This is seen in the following quotation:

What’s got into you, you impertinent creature? *My* bicycle? What’s wrong with yours? Any man your age has got his own bicycle. Why haven’t you? Wouldn’t the shopkeepers touch your money? *My bicycle*, indeed! (...) where can you find me another bicycle? (BETI, 2008, p. 11, author’s highlight).

Amou lives in a patriarchal society and is subjected to obedience to the laws of the traditional group of the people of *Vimili*, the village where she lives. Both her culture and the laws of the society on the whole do not permit her to confront a man. She can be seen as proof of self-consciousness. Kain (2005) states that self-consciousness only comes when one only knows himself and stands as being different from another person who is in front of him. In

this case, she is conscious of who she is: a human being, and strong enough to buy a bicycle which was the means of transportation in the village by the time. She has a bicycle but Niam/man`, is unable to buy one for himself. Amou is hereby conscious of her self-determination which makes her different from Niam. Through this, it can also be inferred that she suits Beauvoir's statement that women are free and autonomous but happen to be discriminated and subjugated by men.

Apart from her strong personality, Amou appears at the beginning of the story as that character who announces the fall/victory of the protagonist, which comes as a result of his failure in his exams. She informs the reader that, due to that failure, the protagonist will face his father as shown in the following quote: "That's not good, you know, especially since it's the first time. Oh well, it's a matter for your father, you'll have to thrash it out between the two of you" (BETI, 2008, p. 5).

She announces the fight between the protagonist and the father, which will take place at the end of the story. Yet, at the end of the novel, exactly before the fight starts, she makes a remark about how the protagonist had changed in such a short period of time. She mentions that he was someone else, not knowing that he had actually gone into metamorphosis during his trip to Kala. By this, as highlighted in the following quote, she appears once more as the first person to discover that he was someone else: "Very, very, odd, (...) you're almost a different person. I couldn't exactly say. You're simply not yourself; it's as though you were another boy altogether who happened to be your physical double" (BETI, 2008, p. 157).

However, Amou does not defend Medza when he confronts his father, but rather makes a mere remark about his changes. The fact that she is presented as a very strong woman at the beginning of the story, and then as that woman who does not stand against Medza's father when he decides to fight his son, does not imply that she is weak. This act of hers could be seen as a way to avoid corruption. She sees that he has been corrupted by the society and therefore decides not to stand by his sides, but at the beginning when she defended him, he was weak/victim of the system. He is now bold, disrespectful, rude and drunkard, so she could not stand on his side anymore. It can also be seen that she maintains her strong character from the beginning to the end of the story, but yet is presented as fallen, because she acts without respecting the societal rules.

## 4.2 Niam's wife- the decamped wife

The next character in the order presented by Medza is the wife of Niam. She abandoned her husband's house and, as a result, she is the cause of the protagonist's journey to Kala. Similarly to aunt Amou, Niam's wife deserted her matrimonial home and returned to her village Kala, where Medza, the protagonist and narrator, is charged to go and negotiate her return to her husband Niam.

She does not have a proper name in the story and is only referred to as Niam's wife. This confirms the patriarchal tradition, according to which when a baby girl is born she carries her father's name and after marrying a man, she takes his name. Beauvoir (1989) mentions that women are not recognised as being individuals of their own as they must always be attached to men. Although Niam's wife is described as a brave, hard-working and courageous woman to betray her husband in a society where no woman was allowed to do so, she has no power of decision in the presence of her husband or any other men in her community.

Citing Engels, Sultana (2011) defends that patriarchal system came up as a result of the increase in the private property and the riches of the state. To her, women subjugation started when men decided to accumulate wealth and ensure a long term economic prosperity which they will pass over to their sons. Women had become part of this property as they could be given in marriage to any wealthy man who was interested in them. They had no personal belongings and could be counted together with any other material goods. Regarding the Cameroonian culture, a child as well as a woman belongs to the whole family because when a woman is getting married, the whole family members participate in paying her bride price. In the story, Niam's wife is being referred to as a common property to the community, as the narrator points out: "it isn't just my personal affair any longer. It's a tribal matter. My wife doesn't belong to me exclusively, if you follow me; she's a tribal property. So the present situation affects all of us" (BETI, 2008, p. 10). This quote reinforces the idea of a woman being imprisoned under the dominance of their husbands and the society in which they are inserted. It is confirmed through Medza's speech: "You've made it clear, and I accept the fact, that this woman was our common possession (...) and that the affair is therefore the common concern of our tribe" (BETI, 2008, p. 13). Certainly, this takes place when Niam and all the men in the tribe are trying to convince Medza to accept to go to Kala and speak on Niam's behalf. At this point, Niam's wife has gone and the only woman who dares affront these men is aunt Amou, confirming her boldness. This cultural aspect does not only reflect a patriarchal



attitude of the society but also reinforces the double subjugation which Niam's wife and other women in the village are forced to live with. Apart from being in a colonised country, dominated by the French rule, they are also forced to obey the societal rules as well as the tribal norms which altogether maintain them in a position of those without voice.

Another aspect that evidences Niam's wife as a fallen woman is the fact that similar to aunt Amou, Niam's wife does not have a child. Although the author does not mention whether she is barren or not, it is observable that the absence of a child in a couple is a serious issue in the novel, especially when women are the ones who criticise other women for not giving birth. This is seen when the narrator informs the reader about his mother's prejudice towards Niam's wife, as presented below:

My mother's prejudice against Niam's wife, however, was chiefly due to the fact that, after years of marriage, the woman for some inscrutable reason had still failed to produce a child. It is the usual thing among our people for all childless wives to suffer a curious kind of communal anathema, (...) (BETI, 2008, p. 7).

The narrator's mother has a patriarchal attitude as she considers herself successful, as well as her marriage, because she could fulfill all her duties as a housewife. In this case, Niam's wife, like other childless women, is a fallen woman, because she does not seem to respect this aspect of the law, which is being a good wife/woman in the eyes of the society.

Niam's wife, apart from creating scandals by quitting her matrimonial home all the time she also had adulterous sexual scandals with young men from her husband's village and from other villages. Although she does not seem to care about other people's opinion about her sexual 'disorder', the act is regarded as a big shame to her husband and to her family as a whole.

Nevertheless, through the narrator's speech, the reader is informed that having a child in his community is considered as a reason for pardoning women adultery: "Once a woman has had a child, all her caprices and infidelities are excused" (p.7). Thereby, Niam's wife's adultery cases are made public because she lacks a child. According to Beauvoir's theory gender is both social and cultural products. For her, a person is not born woman, but rather becomes a woman. This means that the society dictates the rules to be followed by everyone and by doing so, attributes responsibilities according to physical characteristics. Niam's wife, for being born with a female sex, is forced to give birth, as it is a rule in the society in which she lives. The failure to do so earns her the term fallen woman.

Niam's wife is also given the nickname: fly by night, which emanates from a custom in her village, according to which women who abandoned their matrimonial homes used to pack their luggage at night when their husbands and the whole community are asleep. People could

only realise their absence when they wake up the following day. However, whenever she is been referred to in the story, there are different nicknames/insults that come out to reflect how the society looks at her: filthy, slut, cow, pushover, tart and many others. Butler (1990) states that gender is a performance with a punitive act. This means that if any person belonging to a particular gender fails to execute his/her performance/ acts as needed by the societal law, in this case, if a woman does behave contrary to the rules, she must be punished. The various insults implies that Niam's wife is punished for daring to have several sexual partners, being disloyal and a disobedient domestic angel.

Another point which seems to relate her to the characteristics of fallen woman described by Barnhil (2005) in this study is that she is seductive. She is the one who goes on offering herself to men as shown in the following:

If one of these two had really gone after the other, had made provocative advances and all the rest of it, it must have been Niam's wife. You only have to look at the man to see that he wouldn't ever dream of seducing anybody, let alone Niam's wife, who was not lacking in a certain crude charm (BETI, 2008, p. 137).

Niam's wife, therefore, does have a motive for all her infidelities and other scandals in the village. She chooses her partners, manipulates them, making them victims of her decisions. She is married and whenever her sexual relationships out of marriage came up, both her and her partners were publicly discovered. She would go back to her husbands (her owner), but her partners were asked to pay indemnity to her husband for using her. This is clear in the following citation:

The sum, as you are all aware, amounts to two thousands francs. The payment must be made by this evening. According to the regulations, the co-respondent can offer four grown rams or two young ewes in lieu of cash, if he is without liquid fund (BETI, 2008, p. 136)

Niam's wife is very expert in what she does, as she seems to know what she wants. Although the author does not mention it clearly in the text, her attitude similar to that of a prostitute who offers herself, and even if the compensation does not go to her, but to her husband, the reason why she does that is intriguing. The narrator mentions it as follows: "I felt that he had been victimised (...) It was obviously Niam's wife who had taken the initiative in the whole and got him entangled up in these disastrous proceedings" (BETI, 2008, p.137). The tradition stated that no woman had to leave their husbands and she was aware of that, but she involved herself and other men in this act.

According to the narrator's mother, Niam's wife is an effrontery woman with a thirst for revenge against her husband's ill treatment towards her. After spending a long period of time

with another man in a village not far from where she was born, she finally decides to return to her father's village with her adulterous partner. She does not care about the scandal of gossiping her arrival with another man caused. She wants to make it clear that she is neither a queen nor a princess, but she is not out of men who can accept her the way she is. This could be considered as her way to declare equality between men and women. The reader may confirm this through Niam's father-in-law when he declares: "My daughter (...) is quite old enough to know what she wants – and, more to the point, what she *doesn't* want" (BETI, 2008, p. 9). Niam's father seems to disagree with the rules of the society by supporting his daughter's acts. He does not blame her either for leaving her husband or for having several sexual partners. His decision not to crucify the daughter could be considered as the author's sympathy towards Niam's wife against all those who criticise her, it could only come from the father, after all, if a father does not support the proper daughter, no one else will do.

Niam's wife is a 'free woman' or wants to be and she has her way of crying for this freedom. As Beauvoir (1989, p. 229) mentions: "A woman is a free and autonomous being like all human creatures- nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the other". Niam's wife lives like an autonomous woman, but the society in which she is inserted maintains her in a cage. They incriminate her for claiming her liberty and the fact that the author does not allow Niam's wife to speak in the story is also significant. The reader comes to know about her actions and speech through the narrator, who is also a man. It may be reinforcing the patriarchal voice, which states that only men have the right to speak.

After all the scandals Niam's wife caused, she always goes back to her husband. The latter also declares that the relation between him and his wife is like the leaf of a tree and the ground. The leaves will always fall on the ground, because they cannot remain on the trees forever. He regards himself as the ground on which she will always fall (fallen woman), after all her scandalous acts. Niam's wife appears to be indecisive. The matter being that she is not comfortable with her husband's ill treatment, but she always comes back to him after sometime. With this attitude she empowers her husband, making him claim more superiority over her.

As Beauvoir states, woman although seems to be free, she is however limited in terms of actions and personal determination, which are controlled by the opposite sex: men. Niam's wife lives in a patriarchal community, where her attempts to free herself are unsuccessful. She tries to prove that women can likewise be free, however the fact that she retreats to her husband's house shows she actually recognises that her powers/freedom are limited. She

cheats on her husband with other men, and when the reader thinks she is going to divorce by freeing herself from her husband's oppression, she returns to him. Through that, she seems to realise that she is nothing without him, confirming Beauvoir who mentions that a woman can only be respected if she is attached to a man through marriage. It also proves that her husband's speech was true, when he said that he was the ground and her, the leaf of a tree, which cannot stay on the tree forever. She therefore comes back to him as a leaf of a tree that falls on the ground (its destination).

### 4.3 Eliza –The good-time girl

Gorgeous, wonderful, attractive, extremely pretty, young and single with no child, are some of the characteristics that describe her. Eliza is from a different district and is spending her holidays in Kala. Since her arrival, all young men from the village move around her like bees on honey, in an attempt to conquer her, but she rejects everyone, choosing Medza as a good partner.

It is important to highlight that she is the one who wants to offer herself to Medza. She desires him and goes on gathering information about him. Recalling Barnhill (2005), a fallen woman is a woman with a deviant attitude or contrary to that, which was conventional for all women. The fact that she chooses who she wanted and did not wait to be wooed by a man was a sort of deviance for women in her community.

Even though the narrator informs that she is not married as result of being young, he also mentions that Eliza has provocative and seductive manners. She is experienced as far as relationships are concerned and is not a virgin anymore. Eliza falls under the characteristics of a fallen woman discussed by Barnhil because she is young and single, she is not authorised to fornicate with anyone. She is not submissive as the narrator mentions: "...you could tell her a mile off as a real emancipated city-girl. She was entirely lacking in that submissive innocence which characterises a dutiful wife or daughter up-country" (BETI, 2008, p. 64). This emphasises her subversive attitude of the patriarchal laws.

Eliza is so daring and bold that when she was in Medza's room, the latter felt diminished, weak and powerless in her presence. He desired her and she expected something to happen between them at that moment, but she seemed to neutralise him making him only admire her courage as stated below:

For a moment I thought I would really achieve some positive action. (...) I decided I ought to kiss her, but remained where I was, immovable. Oh Lord, I thought wildly, I must do *something*. But already I could imagine her contemptuous comment- 'my

God, you can't be *that young*, it's just not possible! (BETI, 2008, p. 65, author's highlight).

Following Sultana (2011, p. 3), "patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices, in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women". This means that men detain power over women in the political, social and economic institutions in a given society. Instead of Medza controlling the situation and representing the male supremacy of his society, he happens to be useless. It is observable that she did not take the first step as a challenge to him and she felt discouraged by discovering he was incapable of reacting. The narrator mentions that "Eliza waiting and me too plain nervous to move, she got up to go" (BETI, 2008, p. 67). Also, it is mentioned in the text that Medza was sent after Niam's wife, because he was an intellectual man. This means Medza had the power to influence others. Apart from that, the narrator reinforces the doubt upon the idea of Medza being young with italics in the previously mentioned quote. As such, it is remarkable that Eliza neutralises his movements at a point that he uses as an excuse the fact that she was wearing perfume. As shown in the following quote, it was believed in the country where Medza lived that all women who use artificial scent hide diseases:

...she smelt as though she had put on the faintest dab of perfume. At that period all country town folk, and even people like my family who lived near a country town, were absolutely convinced that the only reason a woman ever puts on scent is to cover up a nasty smell. The nasty smell, they reckoned, could only be caused by some unpleasant disease; (...) making me more frigid than before (BETI, 2008, p. 66).

Although Medza tries to ridicule her in front of Zambo, his cousin, Zambo recognises that no man in the village of Kala is capable of conquering Eliza. He states: "If Eliza was sick, everyone in the village would know about it. No, it's quite simple: we're not good enough for her. We're just not to her fancy, and that's that" (BETI, 2008, p. 69). This confirms her strong character. She is young, beautiful and extremely objective. When she wants someone, she demands for him and tries to pursue him, but his lack of experience and incompetency disappoints her.

#### **4.4 Edima- The half-woman, half-child**

Looking at Edima's physical appearance, she was just a fifteen-year-old adolescent: a child in progress. She looked like a boy, but was fragile and innocent. She was one of the chief of the village of Kala's daughters. Apart from the main protagonist, Edima is a character who grows throughout the story. Although her growth is not physical, she changes from a

merest innocent little girl to a marriage girl, and by the end of the novel, the reader is informed that she is a mother of three children.

Edima has a mixture of childish and adultery female characters in her. She is childish because in the course of the story, at a particular moment, Edima appears playing on the ground with her junior brothers. This is seen in the following quote: “she was literally grey with dust; she must have spent all morning rolling about on the ground with her brothers, like the child she was” (BETI, 2008, p. 98). In another moment, she proves to be possessive and bold like an adult. This is portrayed as follows: “when the meal was over, Edima came and perched on my knees, without being asked (...) she showed remarkable boldness, and I admired her for that” (BETI, 2008, p. 99).

Edima presents some sort of wisdom when she explains to Medza the reason why she is singing a song usually sung by orphans. For her, everyone in life is orphan of something or somebody. As seen in the following:

...it's true some children do die before their parents. But it isn't the least normal. In the general way, parents die before their children. (...) anyway, there are thousands of orphans, all over the world. I'm singing for them. Besides, we're all of us orphaned of something- or somebody (BETI, 2008, p. 126-127).

She is intelligent in her words and very confident. This confirms her as both woman and child in the same person. Following Barnhill (2005), women were either beautiful or ugly, light or dark, angels or demons according to the patriarchal stream of thoughts. They had to live according to the social norms which demanded of them kindness, purity, delicacy and patience, as well as being admirable, respectful in other way, domestic angels. Edima is presented as an angel, soft and innocent in the story, but disrespects the societal laws when she behaves as an adult and responsible of her acts through her love making with Medza. The fornication act seen in the following quote is described as violent: “Edima had come to see me while dancing was going on at her father's. We had made love with pleasurable violence: she was a very grown-up girl now” (BETI, 2008, p. 127).

Edima's mother, after discovering that her daughter is sharing her intimacy with Medza, the city boy, makes a scandal. She publicly insults Edima, by calling her a fallen woman, shameless hussy and a trumpet, pulling her naked out of the bed as presented below:

... a child, a mere infant- in bed with a man! Oh, Lord, have mercy on me! What a wretched unhappy woman I am! My own daughter, and it seems only yesterday I bore her! Couldn't this – this town rake find anything more mature in the whole village? (...) Get up, you shameless hussy, she bellowed, you strumpet, you fallen woman! I don't know what your father and I have done to deserve such a child (BETI, 2008, p. 128).

The mother beats her, disregarding her cries for forgiveness. As Swarnakar (1998) mentions, women maintained their position of the dominated, brutalised both physically and mentally, owing to their sexual behaviour in the society. The word wrongdoing/fallen attributed to women as a compensation or trophy for daring to behave like men, can be seen as fruit of this patriarchal society. Edima dares to expose herself in a love affair with Medza and receives psychological and physical damages from a brain-washed mother, who treats the daughter with disdain just like men do in the community in which they lived.

It is worth noting that apart from the fact that she is the only female character who is called a 'fallen woman' in the text, the insult also comes from another woman. This calls for an observation about women who behave like men by considering other women as 'others'. As Barnhill (2005) asserts, the alienation towards 'fallen woman' was so deep that it always led to the expulsion of these unscrupulous women from the society, to avoid contamination with the ideal woman, making them willing to extinct these repugnant from being higher. Although these women who treat others as repugnant do not expel them from the village, it is quite noticeable that they seem to regard them as bad-luck women. They put themselves in the position of 'self' meaning excellent examples of good housewives and dislike other women, 'others', as a sign of avoiding contamination. They use the patriarchal discourse to maltreat and discriminate other women as it is seen when Edima's mother discovers her secret love affair with Medza. It is also present when Medza's mother criticises Niam's wife for not having a child.

Another point to be considered is that Edima is a victim of her parents' interest. Although Medza and she loved each other, they had not planned to get married. After being discovered in Medza's bedroom, she is forced by her parents to marry him. Even though she fell in love with Medza, it is clear in the book that she was almost forced by Zambo, who charged himself in bringing young girls to Medza, making Edima a victim of his plans. The narrator mentions: "...my cousin returned, dragging Edima by one hand. Poor little Edima, it was difficult to tell whether she had come of her own free will or not, and she probably wasn't sure herself" (BETI, 2008, p. 124). Zambo entered and handed her over to Medza as if he was giving out a loaf of bread to someone or any other thing meaningless. At the end the narrator also informs the reader that Edima must have slept with Medza's elder brother and was discovered by Medza's father. The latter probably forced her to marry the elder brother, since Medza had run away after fighting with his father.

Remembering Beauvoir (1989), gender is both a social and cultural product. She defends that nobody is born a woman, but rather becomes a woman. This means that it is the

society which decides whether one is a woman or when you can become a woman. In this case, Edima is a victim of the system in which she lives, she is a mere adolescent full of childish manners, who is forced to become a wife and consequently a mother. Also, the fact that she is being forced by others into situations which were not willingly chosen by her reinforces the superiority of men in the patriarchal community in which she lives.

Edima is therefore treated as a property/good that can be moved from one person to another. Just like the narrator mentions: “As a result, in Kala a woman is an infallible sign of male property, equivalent to a good refrigerator and automobile in America (...) In the same way, it was essential to be married in Kala if you wanted public esteem” (BETI, 2008, p. 92). Sultana (2005) mentions that the patriarchal system was a system where marriage was regarded as a source of wealth to some poor families. In the case of the Cameroonian culture, it could be both a source of wealth and a moment of too much enjoyment because some poor families will like their daughters to get married to a man with enough money to take good care of her and her family as well. These women end up being perfect domestic angels to their husbands as states their traditions and the society as a whole. They are therefore considered as material objects in their husband`s homes because they do not have any influence in terms of decision making.



## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

After the discussions taken so far in this research, it is important to mention that it was necessary to carry out this analysis because it helped to realise that although, *Mission to Kala* was written in the XX century, it is still a very current novel. The question of woman has become one of the most important topics in our society with many feminist groups fighting to give voice to the unvoiced (women).

Regarding the presence of prejudice towards women in the book, the research has revealed that the four characters treated as fallen women in the story do suffer discrimination for being women. They are not supposed to be bold and disrespectful and yet they are which earns them a series of insults. Just as Butler (1990) states that gender is a performance with a punitive act, they are in a society in which they have to behave in accordance with the rules otherwise they will be punished. The insults they receive can be seen as the punishment reserved to them for badly playing their roles and also for the lack of choice.

Also, these four ladies' sexual appetite disturbs all men in the novel, especially those who find themselves threatened in the presence of these women. For instance, Zambo calls Niam's wife a slut due to the fact she can have as more partners as she wants. He seems to hate her because she is supposed to be the 'other sex', weak and also a domestic angel just like his mother is, but she is almost like him, very sexually active. Perhaps he sees her as a competitor and thus the reason for the hatred. Another example is when Medza declares that Eliza must be suffering from a sexually transmitted disease after he was incapable of satisfying her while she offered herself to him in his bedroom.

Men in the novel see women as prostitutes especially those who try to change partners the way they want. This can be seen when Zambo tells Medza that Niam's wife will not be seen in a few days because she is with another man, as follows: 'I know that sort of tart; she will be off doing the round with all her old chums' (BETI. 2008. p. 35). The fact that she changes partners makes him to call her prostitute whereas he himself goes around searching for women to offer to his cousin Medza. Therefore, it is clear that it is because they are men that they see themselves free and societally authorised to change partners the way they want and since women are not supposed to do the same, he considers them as deviants-prostitutes. Moreover, the narrator-protagonist as stated by Gancho (2002) may inform the reader about his experiences moving back to his interior memories. He is incapable of informing the reader about what other characters think and this may make his story untrustworthy. Considering this definition, it can be observed that Medza as a male character telling the story of the female

ones in the novel thus making his account unreliable. On one side, he is a man and he may simply be reproducing the patriarchal discourse which sees women as inferior/`other`. He may be portraying them as fallen because he feels threatened by them. On the other side, because he is a narrator-protagonist who can only account for the various experiences he witnessed and does not really account for what others feel or think. This therefore presents his story about these women as a third person`s judgement which may be regarded as a truth or not.

I try to conclude by arguing that not only these four ‘fallen’ characters suffer prejudice but other women in the novel also do. They are being described as spending more time working in the fields, giving birth early and in a repeated manner. Thus getting weary physically due to lack of care and excess work. For example: Zambo’s mother is described as a woman of about thirty-five and her husband as having at least fifty, but still she seems older than him. Apart from that, she is an example of a domestic angel and a perfect woman to her husband but it is observable that, she neither speaks nor has a name in the story because she is known through her husband’s name. Therefore, this confirms Beauvoir’s idea according to which women are not recognised as individuals on their own so, must be attached to their husbands. Her invisibility is clear because she had a visitor in her house, but at no moment, she is seen interacting with him. Only her husband and son take care of the visitor.

As Brantlinger (2002) mentions, women under the patriarchal system, are subordinated to their husbands to the point of becoming their properties. This means that, women are equivalent to any other material goods. This is what happened to the women in the novel. The narrator mentions that: “... in Kala a woman is an infallible sign of prosperity, equivalent to a good refrigerator and automobile in America” (BETI, 2008, P. 92). This shows how insignificant they are in the eyes of their husbands and the society in which they live.

Some of them even suffer physical violence from their husbands. The narrator explains that his father used to whip his mother as well as his children as stated in the following quote: “... my father thrashed his children with a fly whisks and his wife with a thin, whippy cane which looked like a snake and stung just as hard” (BETI, 2008, p. 158). Women could be whipped like animals. This can also be compared to the treatment the colonial masters inflicted on the colonised. They were whipped in case of disobedience they did not have any opinion to make and had to be invisible in the presence of their leaders. In this case, women in the novel suffer a doubled prejudice: for being women and for being colonised.

As Beti decided to bring out all these aspects of prejudice and ill treatment which women in the Cameroonian patriarchal society suffer, may be considered as an act of sympathy toward them. In the XX century when he wrote the book, Cameroon was about to

get its independence, so women were still under total submission to both their husbands and to the colonial master as their society prescribed. The movement of change had just begun at least a century earlier in Europe with the industrial revolution and due to lack of communication means by that time, it was difficult for the Cameroonian women to follow the wind of change. Therefore, their voices were the writers, who had spent part of their lives in Europe studying and living with the European culture.

As such, Beti can be regarded as one of the enlighteners who not only wanted a political movement in their country but also wanted a change in the societal laws, including the beliefs people had in relation to women. Beti seems to raise a question about to be or not to be a woman in the Cameroonian cultural context by presenting two models of women inserted in this context; the model of women who suit the societal norms and another which is out of the ideal. When Beti, an engaged critic of colonialism highlights the problems women go through in the society, he somehow criticises the Cameroonian socio-cultural practises and the following aspect of his life may be regarded as an example of his open minded concerning the woman question, or how he wishes women were treated. The fact that Beti stopped publishing his books to allow his wife to finish her Phd can be considered as his appeal toward the necessity of a reform on the societal norms. He may be trying to let other men perceive that women also do need to be respected and considered individuals just as men are. However, it is difficult to know up till which point the author has sympathy toward women in the novel.

Another aspect that makes his sympathy to be blurred is the fact that he is a man in the middle of the XX century writing in favour of women. The way these women are presented in the novel may be seen as a mere reproduction of the patriarchal discourse already inherent to the society in which he was inserted as well as the women were. Maybe, he was just portraying an image of how the relationship between men and women looked in the Cameroonian society and not necessarily trying to make an appeal to stop the bad treatment men reserved to women in this society.

One of the difficulties encountered in the course of the research was to find what these four 'fallen women' think of themselves, other women and of men in the story. Apart from aunt Amou who publicly faced Niam, it becomes clear that, the fact that these women do not give their opinion about their own situation or what others were treating them, may be a way through which the author wanted to point out their limitations. Although they attempt to behave as free women, they are still without voice because they are women. This can be confirmed when Niam's wife returns to her husband after roaming around with other men. Also, when Edima ends up getting married, living with the husband in the village and having

three children. This means she becomes like any other woman in the village. Eliza disappears in the book as if her participation was not important and aunt Amou appears in the end incapable of defending Medza against her father's anger.

At the end of this monograph, it can be concluded that the African/Cameroonian literature is a vast world that is still unknown to the Brazilian scholars and since there is a long historical link existing between these two countries, there is a necessity to exchange their cultures. This may be done through the reading and studying of books like *Mission to Kala*. Also as these two countries were both colonised and placed under the patriarchal system, it is also important to engage in the debate about gender inequalities that may lead to the freedom of women and to the reduction of other common social problems like poverty. Besides that, this monograph has just limited itself to a suggestion of an analysis but it is worth noting that the novel *Mission to Kala* deserves other points of view as well as other possible interpretations that could be developed in future work.

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