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THE DYNAMISM OF POWER IN “WEIGHT OF WHISPERS” BY YVONNE ADHIAMBO OWUOR.



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ABSTRACT

Power is an abstract concept and the root cause of marginality, whose existence and concreteness can be seen effectively in its manifestations and outcome. Its paradox lies in its existence as weakness when deconstructed from below. According to Michel Foucault's understanding of power, it is based on knowledge and makes use of knowledge; on the other hand, power reproduces knowledge by shaping it in accordance with its anonymous intentions. This paper intends to analyse the forms of power and their repercussions in “Weight of Whispers” by Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor. Owuor's extended short story recounts the Rwanda post-genocide experience of a particular refugee who is the story's narrator. The paper is predicated on the hypothetical contention that power does not always

exist as a form of strength, but also as weakness when the oppressed react against their marginalization and when those in power migrate to other countries with a different culture and set up from theirs. The theoretical framework employed is the Post-colonial theory that addresses questions of power dynamics between colonial centres and margins with a focus on Abdul R. JanMohamed's notion of ‘alterity’ that places the ‘Other’ in a less privileged position as opposed to the ‘Self.’ New Historicism is also employed as a theory with close links to Post-colonialism in its flexibility to correlate the context and the text.

KEYWORDS

Power, Centre, Margin, Post-colonialism, Trans-deconstruction, Alterity.