

Forum for Life Writing Research (WWU Münster)

# **A defiant mind: Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's life-writing Reading and discussion**

**Thursday, 14 June, from 6.00 pm (s.t.)**

**Venue: Bezirksregierung, Freiherr-von-Vincke-Haus, Domplatz 36, 48143 Münster**

**Room: Freiherr-vom-Stein-Saal**

**Free event**

We warmly invite everyone to a reading and discussion with Prof. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o on 14 June 2018. After his highly successful visit in 2015, we are honoured to welcome the critically acclaimed novelist and renowned scholar Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (University of California, Irvine) at WWU Münster again. At this event hosted by the WWU's Forum for Life Writing Research, he will read from, and engage with, his recent memoirs.

Over the past twenty years, life-writing has gained considerable prominence in the literary marketplace as well as in university departments. As a distinct and differentiated literary genre, life-writing encompasses not only (auto)biography but also autofiction, letters, or memoirs and extends to other media including fine art and photography. The Forum for Life Writing Research at WWU Münster creates a space for intensive investigations and explorations of these texts and materials, as well as for systematic theoretical reflections on the genre itself.

Perhaps best known for his seminal *Decolonising the Mind* (1986) as well as several novels, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's recent work includes several memoirs of extraordinary scope. Detailing a long and eventful life at the pulse of Kenyan history, they stand witness to colonialism and postcolonial resistance, neo-colonialism, activism, and exile. His most recent publication *Wrestling with the Devil: A Prison Memoir* (2018), based on the 1982 *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary*, looks back on a year of incarceration in a maximum security prison following his severe criticism of the inequalities and injustices of postcolonial Kenyan government and society. Ngũgĩ is the recipient of many honours including the 2001 Nonino International Prize for Literature and numerous honorary doctorates.

The event will be chaired by Julian Wacker (Univ. Münster). All researchers, students, and those interested in life-writing or African literature are welcome to join in.