

NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S FIGHT AGAINST COLONIALISM
AND NEOCOLONIALISM: AN EXPLORATION
OF THE THEME OF BETRAYAL

by

James Stephen Robson

B.A., Simon Fraser University, 1972

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
in the Department
of
English



James Stephen Robson

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

December 1987

All rights reserved. This work may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the author.

A P P R O V A L

NAME: JAMES STEPHEN ROBSON
DEGREE: MASTER OF ARTS
TITLE OF THESIS: NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S FIGHT AGAINST COLONIALISM AND NEO-
COLONIALISM: AN EXPLORATION OF THE THEME OF BETRAYAL
EXAMINING COMMITTEE: Chairperson: David Stouck

Malcolm Page
Senior Supervisor
Professor of English

Chin Banerjee
Associate Professor of English

Diana Brydon
External Examiner
Associate Professor of English

Date Approved: December 4, 1987

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis, project or extended essay (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/~~Project/Extended Essay~~

Ngugi Wa Thiong's Fight Against Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism:

An Exploration of the Theme of Betrayal.

Author:

(signature)

JAMES STEPHEN ROBSON

(name)

Jan 5, 1988

(date)

A B S T R A C T

The literary work of Ngugi wa Thiong'o is a socio-political tapestry of the hardships and divisions present in both the birth and the struggle of a colonial and neo colonial Kenya.

As a revolutionary writer, Ngugi has, through both fiction and nonfiction, illuminated the problems of underdevelopment, class exploitation, and state repression.

In his first four novel's Ngugi has consistently explored the political division created in the Kenyan nation, community and family from the consolidation of colonialism in the 1920's to the problems of class conflict in the post-colonial state of the 1970's. The most serious problem on Ngugi's literary landscape has been the issue of betrayal.

The divided community in The River Between is in part already structurally separated by the Honia River before the arrival of colonialism; yet the independent community of Kaneno and Makuyu are further weakened by the betrayal of the forces of traditionalism, evangelicalism, and colonial education. Weep Not Child explores the betrayed community from the point of view of the victimized family of Ngotho. The near destruction of his family results from inaction, lack of

leadership and colonial exploitation.

A Grain of Wheat presents the village of Thabai as a community whose characters are obsessed with the discovery of a betrayer of the "Mau Mau" Revolution in the week before Kenyan independence. While uncovering the "Judas" betrayer other betrayals of the community are explored.

In Petals of Blood, Ngugi's elaborate attack on neo-colonialism identifies two levels of betrayal: the personal betrayal of the four protagonists who are victimized exiles within their own country, and the political betrayal of the parasitical national bourgeoisie who abuse and exploit those they have sworn to protect.

Ngugi's pursuit of the betrayal theme in his first four novels combines the political didacticism of a "living past" with the need to promote a revolutionary resistance for the future. The obstacles to a betrayed Kenya are not permanent and can be overcome by cultural and political renewal initiated by the community itself.

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

Approval	ii
Abstract	iii-iv
Chapter One:	
i) Ngugi wa Thiong'o - A Revolutionary Writer:	
Background and Focus	1
ii) Ngugi and Historical Tradition of Resistance .	18
iii) Ngugi and the Critical Response	26
Notes	34
Chapter Two: The Land and Colonialism: The Foundation	
of Betrayal and Resistance in the Novels of Ngugi	
wa Thiong'o	42
Notes	69
Chapter Three: The Seeds of a National Betrayal in	
<u>A Grain of Wheat</u>	74
Notes	106
Chapter Four: A Country Defiled: The Neo-Colonialism	
of Betrayal in <u>Petals of Blood</u>	110
Notes	161
Conclusion	166
Notes	174
Bibliography	175

NGUGI WA THIONG'O'S FIGHT AGAINST COLONIALISM
AND NEOCOLONIALISM: AN EXPLORATION
OF THE THEME OF BETRAYAL

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION: i) NGUGI WA THIONG'O - A REVOLUTIONARY WRITER:
BACKGROUND AND FOCUS

Kamiriithu' village has been the centre of Ngugi's life. Born there on January 5, 1938, Ngugi has used this centre both as a model for the results of political change in Kenya in his novels and as an experiment for a communally developed theatre between 1977 - 1982. Kamiriithu village is just 12 miles north of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. Ngugi, although not actively involved in the 'Mau Mau' independence movement, experienced the division that this revolutionary period produced within his own family. Much later in life, Ngugi would seek to activate memories of this anti-colonial period to act as a touchstone against a government which he felt had betrayed the people of Kenya. Kamiriithu Community Education and Cultural Centre was a short-lived attempt to provide alternative theatre which would be community based, created with the help of the village of Kamiriithu itself. Ngaahika Ndenda (I Will Marry When I Want) in 1977 and Maitu Njugira (Mother Sing for Me) in 1982 were two attempts to have a Kamiriithu community relive the tradition of resistance in the colonial and neo-colonial stages of Kenyan history.

The son of a tenant Gikuyu farmer and one of twenty-eight children in an extended family, Ngugi was able to observe a number of conflicts and divisions within his family that reflected the struggle against the British Colonial government in the Emergency Period 1952 - 1962. The closest we can come to understanding the significance of the Emergency Period as an early catalyst to Ngugi's writings is in a summary account of the problems and conflicts within his own family in the preface to Secret Lives:

As I write I remember the nights of fighting in my father's house; my mother's struggle with the soil so that we might eat, have decent clothes and get some schooling; my elder brother, Wallace Mwangi, running to the cover and security of the forest under a hail of bullets from Colonial policemen; his messages from the forest urging me to continue with education at any cost; my cousin, Gichini wa Ngugi, just escaping the hangman's rope because he had been caught with live bullets; uncles and other villagers murdered because they had taken the oath; the beautiful courage of ordinary men and women in Kenya who stood up to the might of British imperialism and indiscriminate terrorism. I remember too some relatives and fellow villagers who carried the gun for the white man and often became his messengers of blood. I remember the fears, the betrayals, Rachael's tears, the moments of despair and love and kinship in struggle and I try to find meaning of it all through my pen²

Because of his elder brother's involvement in the Land and Freedom Army ("Mau Mau"), Kamiriithu village was destroyed. Ngugi described his reaction to the rubble that was once his

village home and to the construction of a "new Kamiriithu" within the structure of the colonial government strategic hamlet policy in 1955:

I came back after the first term and confidently walked back to my old village. My home was now only a pole of dry mud-stones, bits of grass, charcoal and ashes. Nothing remained, not even crops, except for a lone pear tree that swayed in sun and wind. I stood there bewildered. Not only my home, but the old village with its culture, its memories and its warmth had been razed to the ground....

Kamiriithu was now no longer the name of a trough with a defiant pool of water surrounded by a few Swahili houses, but the name of a new 'emergency village' on one of sloping ridges next to the path I used to follow on my way to Kamaandura. I walked through the present site of Kamiriithu Community Theatre. All around me, I saw women and children on rooftops with hammers and nails and poles and thatch, building the new homes because their men were in detention camps or away with the people's guerrilla army (73-74)³.

First attending Kamaandura School until age 11 and then Karing'a Independent School in Maangua, Ngugi later entered Alliance High School, a model used for Siriani school in Petals of Blood and other novels. Reverend Livingstone from Ngugi's first novel, Weep Not Child, was modelled partially on Carey Francis, a principal of Alliance School. "Boro's" circumstances in that novel also bear resemblance to Ngugi's brother, Wallace Mwangi. The name and the death of Ngugi's stepbrother, Gitogo, parallel that of the plot in A Grain of Wheat, Ngugi's third novel.⁴

Alliance School's Christian teaching gave Ngugi a thorough knowledge of the Bible which he acknowledges to Micere Githae Mugo in her thesis:

Gikuyu society is lacking in mythological background. The Bible provides a convenient framework. For example, the idea of destiny with regard to the Israelites and their struggle against slavery. Gikuyu people have had similar experiences.⁵

As the only student from the region of Limuru to attend Alliance High School at this time, Ngugi later looked back at this school as a training ground for colonial administrators:

In his lectures [Carey Francis].... would always emphasize that we were being educated to rule... as responsible human beings who would not become political agitators. What he actually meant was that we were being trained to become obedient servants of Her Majesty the Queen of England, to serve her and the British Empire, and never to question the legitimacy or correctness of that Empire. Therefore politics were frowned upon: African nationalists were castigated, they were seen as irresponsible agitators, as hooligans.⁶

One humiliating memory for Ngugi was the punishment of students who were caught speaking Gikuyu instead of English:

The culprit was given corporal punishment—three to five strikes of the cane on bare buttocks — or made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I

AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY. Sometimes the culprits were fined money they could hardly afford. And how did the teachers catch the culprits? A button was initially given to one pupil who was supposed to hand it over to whoever was caught speaking his mother tongue. Whoever had the button at the end of the day would sing who had given it to him and the ensuing process would bring out all the culprits of the day. These children were turned into witch hunters and in the process were being taught the lucrative value of being a traitor to one's immediate community.⁷

Ngugi followed his studies at Alliance School with an inspirational stay at Makerere University of Uganda. Here he began writing short plays as part of a competition in the university, followed by his first major play in 1962. The Black Hermit was an undertaking requested by students at Makerere to celebrate Uganda's independence. Not published until 1968, this play was the first major play to be written in English by an East African and was the first performed at the Uganda National Theatre.⁸

Ngugi published his first short story, "The Fig Tree" among others in the literary magazine, Penpoint in 1960. Other stories were published in 1961 and 1962 in the conservative settler magazine, Kenyan Weekly News as well as in the Sunday Post and Sunday Nation.⁹ Also during this productive period he wrote his first novel, The Black Messiah, renamed The River Between. Weep Not Child, although published first was his the second novel. The former was published in 1965; the latter in 1964. Of importance to Ngugi intellectually was The Conference

of African Writers held at Makerere in June 1962. Here Ngugi met for the first time other African literary figures of significance: Chinua Achebe, Gabriel Okara, Christopher Okibo, Wole Soyinka and many others. According to Ngugi his readings of Achebe's Things Fall Apart, George Lamming's In the Castle of My Skin and Peter Abraham's Tell Freedom were instrumental in stimulating his reading of West African, Caribbean, and South African Literature. After graduating from Makerere, Ngugi worked as a columnist for the Daily Nation, producing articles under the heading, "As I See It." Cook and Okenimpke see these articles as "A chronicle for us [of] the early stages in the formulation of his ethical and political viewpoint."¹⁰

Post graduate work at Leeds University in England in 1964 followed his work at The Daily Nation. Cook and Okenimpke call this phase in Ngugi's writing "... a period of maturing vision ... a focus on events such as "Mau Mau", capitalism, socialism and nationalism. [An earlier phase at Makerere is referred to as one where he]... evinces an essentially moralist humanist outlook on human affairs."¹¹

Ngugi's M.A. work at Leeds was in Caribbean Literature under the supervision of Douglas Grant. Ngugi's first draft of his thesis was supposed to be revised. He did not do this, but instead he continued work on his third novel, A Grain of Wheat. At this time Ngugi was exposed to a radical environment at Leeds. He credits Grant Kamenju with introducing him to Frantz

Fanon's Wretched of the Earth in 1964. Political conditions at Leeds and the world at large were sources of radicalization for Ngugi:

The Vietnamese people's struggle had a lot of impact on the students at Leeds, as did the Palestinian struggle. The beginnings of a student's movement all over Europe also had an impact on us at Leeds. As for socialist writers, my first exposure to Karl Marx's works and ideas was at Leeds University. Reading novels like Robert Tressell's The Ragged, Trousered Philanthropists and Brecht's works was also important to the development of my ideas.¹²

One recent revelation by Ngugi in this period in his life is the technical growth of his novel, A Grain of Wheat was undergoing. Unhappy with the simple linear plot structure of Weep Not Child, Ngugi experimented with variations in narrative voice in which he acknowledges the influence of Conrad's use of "multiple voices" that brought more "evidence" or "information" on an "event."¹³ Lamming's work was also inspiring for Ngugi, especially the use of: the omniscient narrator, drama, the diary, reportage, third person narration and direct authorial intervention. The role of personal conversations also influenced Ngugi, especially in the areas of "interventions, digressions, narrative within a narrative and dramatic illustrations."¹⁴

Together these techniques produced in A Grain of Wheat a new novel form for Ngugi, one beyond the linear narratives of

The River Between and Weep Not Child.

By July 1967 Ngugi had returned to Nairobi to accept a lectureship in English at Nairobi University. Over the next year he was deeply involved in a debate over the creation of a new World Literature Department which was designed to replace an outmoded curriculum left over from colonial Kenya. Ngugi, Henry Owaor-Anyumba, and Taban Lo Liyong proposed that African literature be the core study area.¹⁵

The proposal to replace the English Department was not accepted. A University crisis ensued which divided the academic community and the students. Ngugi resigned because of the suspension of five students.¹⁶ While not successful in re-orienting the English Department at Nairobi University in 1968, he found his new role as Fellow in Creative Writing at Makerere was more satisfying as the African literature programme there had already entered an advanced stage.

After a year there, he did not return to Nairobi, but instead went to Northwestern University in the U.S.A. in the fall of 1970. He refuses to discuss this period other than to say he taught African literature.¹⁷ However, what is clear is that Ngugi preferred exile to censorship and repression at home in Kenya. His own views were becoming more radicalized. In a paper written in June 1969 for a UNESCO conference on cultural policy in Africa he defined the necessity of a socialist

economy for the development of National Culture.¹⁸

A year later Ngugi had begun writing his fourth novel, Petals of Blood at Evanston, Illinois. It would take him five years to complete it, encompassing time spent at Northwestern, at home in Limuru, and later at Yalta in the Soviet Union as a guest of the Soviet Writer's Union. Ngugi discusses his experimentation with narrative techniques begun in A Grain of Wheat in Decolonizing the Mind:

Petals of Blood had taken a stage further the techniques of flashbacks, multiple narrative voices, movement on time and space and parallel biographies and stories. The technique allowed me to move freely in time and space through the centuries and through all the important landmarks in Kenya's history for the early times and back to the twelve days duration of the present of the novel.¹⁹

At the launching of Petals of Blood in July 1977, Ngugi bluntly explains his motive for writing the book:

... I came to realize that Kenya was poor, not because of anything internal, but because the wealth produced by Kenyans ended in developing the western world.... Their aid, loans, and investment capital that they gloat about are simply a chemical catalyst that sets in motion the whole process of expropriation of Kenya's wealth, with, of course, a few leftovers for the 'lucky' few....

This was what I was trying to show in Petals of Blood: that imperialism can never develop our country or develop us, Kenyans.

In doing so, I was only trying to be faithful to what Kenyan workers, peasants and workers have always realized as shown by their historical struggles since 1895.²⁰

This public display of resistance to the established political order of Kenyatta must have contributed to Ngugi's detention without trial six months later. Earlier in October 1976 Ngugi had publically criticized the Kenyatta government in an article in the Daily Nation for cramming The Trial of Dedan Kimathi, a radical play written jointly by Ngugi and Micere Githae Mugo, between two imported shows, Jeune Ballet de France and A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum. Ngugi felt that The Trial of Dedan Kimathi deserved better treatment as it was a national selection to compete at the Pan African Festac '77 in Nigeria in six months time.²¹ In addition to this public critique, the content of the play was used as an attack on the national bourgeoisie's betrayal of "Mau Mau":

The authors have used the historical Kimathi as raw material because of their attitude in the fight against colonialism ... they see certain characteristics which are crucial to any creative political fighter against the present-day [neo] colonialism.²²

Brian Crow sees it in a similar way:

Dedan Kimathi is an expression of radical left wing nationalism, vociferous in its denunciation of neo-colonialism and the

Kenyan bourgeoisie's collusion in it, and its overt aim is to stir up the Kenyan masses to fight, by violent means if necessary, against it²³

Ngugi had been active in the University of Nairobi since his return in August 1971 and had been named Chairman of a newly created Literature Department in 1975. Yet the publication of The Trial of Dedan Kimathi: and of Petals of Blood as well as the production of Ngaahika Ndeenda (I Will Marry When I Want) at Kamiriithu, all undertaken in 1977, was more than the government of Jomo Kenyatta could tolerate. In an interview with Anita Shreve in July 1977, Ngugi attacked the capitalist system in Kenya which he saw as:

... the root cause of evil. Our economy is dependent on international capitalism. And capitalism can never bring about equality of people. The exploitation of one group by another is the very essence of capitalism. The peasants and workers are very much exploited in this country. They get very low pay, very poor housing, and unemployment effects them more than anyone else. Now, women form the majority in this category of peasants. Women are doubly exploited and oppressed.²⁴

Most likely the decision to intern Ngugi arose because of the success of the Gikuyu language play, Ngaahika Ndeenda.²⁵ The play was a community production in which workers and peasants contributed additions and adjustments to the original script. They designed the open air stage and the audience seating. As Ngugi suggested, it "... was part and parcel of

their own lives and history."

Ngugi has never been given any official reason for his detention,²⁶ but it is likely because of this play. Two reasons seem apparent. Firstly, the play was not just a radical presentation to an isolated academic community; it was a grassroots community production in an indigenous language and therefore more threatening to the national bourgeoisie. Secondly, its theme dealt with the struggle for land and freedom, a sensitive issue that led to the "Mau Mau" revolution in the first place, but one also persistent in land speculation and peasant alienation in Kenya today.²⁷

Ironically, Ngugi's detention, designed to ostracise and punish him for challenging the establishment, had the opposite effect. In jail he produced two important works, Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary and Gaitaani Mutharabaini (Devil on the Cross).

The detention order was signed by Daniel Arap Moi, the Minister of Home Affairs and now Prime Minister of Kenya. Yet Ngugi, since he was released after December 12, 1978, has been careful not to blame individuals for his imprisonment, but the ideological system of "dependent capitalism."²⁸ Detained adds clear insight into the nature of political detention and repression in Kenya as Ngugi was not the first or last to be imprisoned for political and cultural activities by either the

Kenyatta or Moi governments.²⁹

Detained also generalizes the attack on colonialism from its roots in settler colonialism to what Ngugi refers to as the role of a comprador bourgeoisie:

... a dependent class, a parasitic class in the Kupe (tick) sense. It is in essence a mnyapala (overseer) class, a handsomely paid supervisor for the smooth operation of foreign economic interests.³⁰

Devil on the Cross³¹ is Ngugi's most radical contribution to Kenyan literature. It sold out in two Gikuyu editions as well as in one Swahili edition in less than two years. The novel has also been read orally in rural restaurants and bars. The history of the writing of this novel is heroic to say the least. Written on toilet paper, Devil on the Cross, the first novel written in Gikuyu, took almost a year to write and it was temporarily confiscated while Ngugi was still in detention in September 1978. Ngugi explains the anguish that this three week confiscation caused him as well as the determination to keep writing.

It was as if I had been drained of blood. Nevertheless I made a new resolution: no matter what happened I would start all over again. I would reconstruct the novel in between the printed lines of a Chekhov, or a Gorky, or a Mann, or of the Bible... or of any book in my possession. It would not be the same novel, but I would not accept defeat.³²

Unlike in Petals of Blood the proletarianization process in Devil of the Cross is nearly complete. The divisions between country and city are more pronounced. Even capitalists hope to make good air a commodity. Escape from exploitation by the national bourgeoisie is limited. As a woman victimized by an "evil" economic system, Wariinga must struggle against a number of personal betrayals from lovers, employers, and seducers to sustain her self-respect and independence. In a journey to Ilmorog, Wariinga and four other passengers travel in Mwaura's matutu taxi; each has received a written invitation to the "Devil's Feast." Once they arrive they witness a gallery of capitalist rogues who try to out do one another by bragging of their ability to steal and betray the people of Kenya.

After his detention in 1978 Ngugi was not re-instated by the University of Nairobi despite the fact that he had never been charged with any crime. Writing in Gikuyu became a political commitment for him. The popular response of the publication of Caithaani Mutharabaini (Devil on the Cross) and Ngaahika Ndeenda (I Will Marry When I Want) encouraged him to continue to write in Gikuyu.

Ngugi decided to work independently. Work in Gikuyu continued with the Kamiriithu Peoples Theatre production of Maitu Njugira (Mother Sing For Me).³³ Internationally, Ngugi began a debate to reassert the value of writing in traditional

languages. In December 1980 Ngugi, in a talk at the Africa Centre in London, attacked the African writer as "a petty-bourgeoisie product of colonial and neo-colonial imperialism whose production was an "Afro-Saxon" literature, a perpetuation of cultural and linguistic oppression."³⁴

Other African writers are beginning to support Ngugi, although they are still a minority.³⁵ Ngugi's own response to the liberation of language in Kenya is to write Decolonizing the Mind, which Chinweizu has called an "African intellectual's account of his withdrawal from the Eurocentric culture of the neo-colonial state in which he was nurtured."³⁶ In Decolonizing the Mind, Ngugi states that this book will be the last he will write in English. Nevertheless he promises to continue to do his own translating as in the cases of Devil on the Cross and I Will Marry When I Want.

Mother Sing For Me was a collective village effort. As was the case in I Will Marry When I Want, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ngugi wa Mirii only provided the initial draft of the play. This time it was a musical. Songs were considered "functional" and they represented the way the people of the 1920's and 1930's responded to adversity. In addition it provided a means to communicate to different nationalities in one performance. The play, although set in the inter-war years, was designed to educate people of the fact that the nation had been betrayed by a national elite who accepted the cultural habits and economic

pay offs offered by the world capitalist system.³⁷

Ngugi sees an important comparison between the 1920's and 1980's:

Fifty years ago, the singers of the people were imprisoned by the British. Today they are imprisoned by their fellow-countrymen. Maitu Njugira is made up of songs from the 30's which were forbidden then. It pictures the social reality of the 30's. And it is forbidden today. One can have no clearer illustration of how those in power today have disassociated themselves from their own people and have identified with the former colonial power.³⁸

The Kenyan government never allowed the play to be staged at The National Theatre. A licence was never given. Again as in the case of Ngugi's detention, no official reason was given for not allowing the play to go ahead. Instead, Mother Sing For Me was performed in rehearsal for 10 days at the University of Nairobi. An estimated 10,000 people saw it in February 1982. Yet by March 11 the government had banned Kamiriithu performances and closed the centre. A day later the centre and theatre were torn down by police. Even a request to take Mother Sing For Me to Zimbabwe was denied.³⁹ Ngugi returned to London shortly after this set-back.

After each difficult struggle in Ngugi's life, he spent a short period in exile. However, after the destruction of the Kamiriithu Cultural centre and rumors of his arrest in August

1982 if he returned to Kenya, he is unlikely to go back to Kenya until a major change in government has taken place. Exile in London has had some rewards. A new pan-African production of The Trial of Dedan Kimathi was performed by the Wazlendo Players in November 1984. Rehearsals were performed in different parts of London in the same way the Kamiriithu Cultural Centre used to do them in Limuru and Nairobi. Critical acclaim for the play has brought protests from the Kenyan High Commission in London who attempted to stop the performance of the play.⁴⁰

Ngugi continues to be active in the literary and political scene in London. Besides involvement in the African language debate, he has written a new novel in Gikuyu, Matigari ma Njuugi (Those Who Survived the Bullets). He is also actively involved in the Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners in Kenya and according to some sources he is a leader behind the underground opposition in Kenya, called "Mwa-Kenya."⁴¹

Even in exile Ngugi is a political force of influence. He continues to fight against the injustice of neo-colonialism and the betrayal of Kenyan heritage by the Moi government. The tradition of resistance against foreign invasion and social injustice has a history which has inspired and influenced Ngugi in the writing of his novels and plays. A brief overview of political and historical influences will now be outlined.

ii) NGUGI AND HISTORICAL TRADITION OF RESISTANCE

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's historical inspirations came from a number of primary sources. The most obvious is the independence movement of the Land and Freedom Army ("Mau Mau"). Yet recently in his essays in Barrel of a Pen and Decolonizing the Mind as well as in the novels Petals of Blood and Devil on the Cross, Ngugi has begun to look at a wider range of nationalist resistance in the roles of : Me Katilili, woman leader of Giriama resistance in 1913 - 1914, Koitalel's leadership in the Nandi resistance movement 1895 - 1905, the Gikuyu movement against the Imperial British East African Company led by Waiyaki, the namesake of Ngugi's tragic hero in The River Between, Markan Singh, the General Secretary of the Labour Trade Union of East Africa in the 1930's, and during the 1950's the role of the Kenyan African Union leader, Pio Gama Pinto.⁴²

According to Ngugi, his most recent play Mother Sing For Me is set in the 1920's and 1930's:

... because that was when British colonialism introduced capitalism into Kenya In order to obtain efficient control of the Kenyan labour force the colonial government passed several labour laws, for example the native registration ordinances, which made it compulsory for adult African workers in Kenya to wear a chain and metal container around their necks. Inside the container was an identification paper with information

useful to the employer. Together with the paper the container was called the Kipande. Not carrying a Kipande was considered a criminal act and carried severe punishment.⁴³

Another important historical and literary actor in Ngugi's earlier anti-colonial novels was Jomo Kenyatta, former nationalist leader and Prime Minister of Kenya from 1963 to 1978.⁴⁴ Ngugi's assessment of Kenyatta began to change with the publication of A Grain of Wheat in 1967. Later in detention, under Kenyatta's order, Ngugi's view was obviously even more critical:

In the novel A Grain of Wheat, I tried, through Mugo who carried the burden of mistaken revolutionary heroism, to hint at the possibilities of the new Kenyatta. But that was in 1965-6 and nothing was clear then about the extent to which Kenyatta had negated his past, nor the sheer magnitude of the suffering it would cause to our society today.⁴⁵

Ngugi sees Kenyatta's role in pre- and post-independence development as a political evolution of four stages:

There were then several Kenyattas, but they can be reduced to four. There was the Kenyatta of the KCA era who made anti-imperialist statements.... He was then truly a spokesman of the peasants and workers and he took up the cudgels against the British imperialist bourgeoisie for its brutal, oppressive exploitation of the peasants of the various nationalities in Kenya....

Then there was the Kenyatta of the KAU era: this Kenyatta was a graduate of Malinowski's school of anthropology at London University, a cultural nationalist (he had written Facing Mount Kenya in which politics was deliberately cut out), who for fifteen years had quite literally been out of physical touch with the living struggles of the Kenyan people....

Then there was the Kenyatta of the KANU era: he was a prison graduate, an ex-detainee who had once again been out of physical touch with the living struggle for nine years. Mau Mau, through forcing the political pace of events, had been weakened and the anti-imperialist movement was led by the petty bourgeoisie....

Then there was the Kenyatta of KANU in power, who made sure that the petty bourgeoisie in its new role of a comprador was fully entrenched in the party organization, in administration, anywhere, and who made sure that anybody associated with militant nationalism or with true worker/peasant organizations like Mau Mau were never anywhere near the seats of power.⁴⁶

Although often associated with the Land and Freedom Army by colonial references such as the Cornfield Report, Kenyatta had played no role in "Mau Mau" and had officially sought to silence or ignore the role of former freedom fighters, claiming the need for national reconciliation.⁴⁷ Jomo Kenyatta and his family wealth has received little or no critical attention in Kenya, but some information has been accumulated by John Barry.⁴⁸

The issue of "Mau Mau" in Ngugi's fiction needs a larger focus. "Mau Mau" has always had a revolutionary perspective in

Ngugi's writings from the revengeful Boro in Weep Not Child to the messianic Kihika in A Grain of Wheat to the maimed storekeeper Abdullah in Petals of Blood. However, the clearest and most revolutionary focus of "Mau Mau" is in The Trial of Dedan Kimathi, written by Ngugi and Micere Mugo in 1974 - 1975. Here Ngugi was not only linking the anti-colonial struggles of the past by linking Kimathi to the resistance of Me Katilili, Koitalel and Waiyaki⁴⁹, but he was also pointing out the problems of neo-colonialism. Kimathi is presented as a Christ-like figure whose spirit must endure four separate trials. Although there is some justified criticism by Crow for a racist caricature of the Indian banker in the play, the play's criticism of both a white colonial administration and a neo-colonial national bourgeoisie is successful.⁵⁰

The origin of the word "Mau Mau" is unclear. Karari Njama relates it to several misconceptions: Firstly, a mispronunciation of "uma uma" (out out), a Gikuyu reference to oust European rule. Secondly, misperception by European journalists at the Naivasha Trial in 1950 of the expression, "mumumumu" which means "whispered voices within an oath-taking hut." Thirdly, a "secondary usage" invented after the term became popularized in Swahili, "Mzangu Arudi Uingereza, Mura Africa Apote Uhuru" (Let the European return to England and the African obtain his freedom.)⁵¹

In fact the name "Mau Mau" did not exist, but the word had

come into use to explain the existence of the Land and Freedom Army during the Emergency Period in Kenyan colonial history from 1952 - 1962. "Mau Mau" was a revolutionary movement, although not a successful one. I disagree with David Maughan-Brown's view that it was an "unsuccessful revolt."⁵² It is more than that as Ngugi, Maina wa Kinyatti and others have kept it alive through drama, fiction and song.⁵³

The roots of the "Mau Mau" movement come from the alienation of land from a largely Gikuyu peasantry as well as from the exploitation of surplus labour through the Kipande system.⁵⁴ Another factor come from the tradition of political resistance to colonial rule presented by the Gikuyu Central Association (KCA) and the Kenyan African Union (KAU) after 1946.⁵⁵

The arrest and internment of the leaders of the KAU in 1952, including Kenyatta, Kaggia, Koinange, left the Kenyan nationalist movement disoriented. Reorganization in the countryside took place under the new leadership of Dedan Kimathi and Stanley Mathenge. The use of oathing was the key to organizing support for a new guerrilla organization that depended on peasant support. Oathing was not a new method of organization but had been used earlier by both the KCA and the KAU.⁵⁶ The betrayal of the oath was seen as a betrayal of the nation and tantamount to collaboration with the colonial administration. The consequences of the betrayal of the unity

oath by Mugo in A Grain of Wheat will be discussed in Chapter 3. Besides oathing other political activities were organized by "Mau Mau" including the boycotting of European goods, combating of prostitution and the elimination of traitors and informers.⁵⁷

One of the most important myths, that "Mau Mau" was primarily a Gikuyu tribalist movement, has been exploded by research by Barnett, Kinyatti and Maughan-Brown. The land alienation affected the Gikuyu the most because of their location in the Central Highlands. While they were the largest group active in "Mau Mau", the Cornfield Report also indicates that thousands of Kamba were detained as well. The largest member of detainees at the most infamous detention camp at Hola were Luos.⁵⁸

Repression of the Kenyan people by the British colonial administration far out stripped reported "Mau Mau" atrocities. According to Kinyatti:

By the end of 1954 about 150,000 workers, peasants and patriotic elements of the petty-bourgeoisie had been herded without trial into prisons and detention camps where they were to undergo unspeakable tortures. Many died, others lost their limbs, others went insane while, some were even castrated.⁵⁹

After Kimathi's capture in October 1956, colonial repression continued with accelerated confinement of Gikuyu and

other people, the creation of strategic hamlets or "emergency villages," and the recruitment of forced labour to dig trenches around guerrilla sanctuaries such as Mount Kenya and the Aberdares. The confiscation of livestock occurred as well.⁶⁰ Casualty figures vary. According to the official Cornfield Report figure 11,503 "Mau Mau" guerrillas were killed in the Emergency period. Kinyatti contests these figures and says a conservative estimate is 150,000 Kenyans lost their lives; 250,000 were maimed for life.⁶¹

"Mau Mau" "atrocities" were sensationalized for colonial propaganda purposes in order to discredit the independence movement and to justify the role of the British army in repressing it.⁶²

The political consciousness of the movement is rarely discussed. One small, but significant example comes from Njama. After the loss at Ruthaithi in September 1954, the guerrilla forces visited the farm of a Major Owen Jeffreys and stole various articles from him when they failed to retrieve guns that he had taken from them. Njama also left a letter whose sentiments confirm a "Mau Mau" nationalism:

You cannot kill ideas by killing people. Since the declaration of emergency almost two years ago you have neither killed the idea nor won the battle. Our battle is really between right and might. The six million Africans standing for right will

definitely beat sixty thousand Europeans standing for the might, irrespective of your army strength.⁶³

However, "Mau Mau" nationalism is of little value to the neo-colonialist governments of Jomo Kenyatta or Daniel Arap Moi. A whole school of reactionary thinking has formed the basis of study at the University of Nairobi which has reduced the movement to one that is either primitive "tribalist" or "Gikuyu expansionist."⁶⁴

Through the work of Ngugi and Maina wa Kinyatti, "Mau Mau" lives on in a cultural resistance movement despite repeated attempts by the Moi government to silence a Kenyan cultural and political renaissance.⁶⁵

Poets, historians, and artists, and most revolutionary agitators, who are perceived as threats to the security of the state, are regularly interned without charge especially since the attempted coup d'etat in August 1982. Moi's "Nyayoism" (Follow In My Footsteps) must be taken literally in Kenya as anyone who advocated an alternative political or cultural perspective than that advocated by Moi or the ruling party KANU is arrested, detained or driven into exile.⁶⁶

As an exile and activist Ngugi recently made it clear that he had:

... no choice but that of aligning himself with the people - their economic, political, cultural struggle for survival... to rediscover the real language of struggle in the actions and speeches of the people; learn from their great heritage in orature; and above all, learn from their great optimism and faith in the capacity of human beings to remake their world and renew themselves.⁶⁷

The history of traditional resistance movements against colonialism from Waiyaki to "Mau Mau" will certainly furnish Ngugi with enough inspiration and commitment to continue to communicate with those who oppose the exploitation of neo-colonialism in Kenya.

iii) NGUGI AND THE CRITICAL RESPONSE

Literacy criticism of African literature is a relatively new field. Since the publication of Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart in 1958, hundreds of African novels, plays, and short stories have been published by the Heinemann African Writers series or by Longman's Drumbeat Series. Critical studies of African writers has been limited for the most part to the last fifteen years. Few book-length studies of individual writers exist. In the case of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, four such studies exist.⁶⁸ Only seven journals regularly contain articles about Ngugi and his literary and critical work: Research in African Literature, Ufahamu, and African Literature Today are explicitly concerned with African

literature while Journal of Commonwealth Literature, World Literature Written in English, Commonwealth Novel in English and Kunapipi are concerned with Ngugi's role in Commonwealth Literature.

In terms of the research for this thesis, the most significant book was Cook and Okenimpke's Ngugi wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writings, published in 1983. It is the most comprehensive text written to-date, including informative chapters on all the novels as well as useful biographical and critical information on the political issues surrounding Ngugi's work. The index is helpful, and most importantly all major quotations from Ngugi's novels have page references to two editions of Ngugi's novels. However, a bibliography of Ngugi criticism has not unfortunately been added to the text.

G.D. Killam's books, Introduction to the Writings of Ngugi, in 1980 and his collection of critical essays, Critical Perspectives of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, in 1984 have some value, but lack the comprehensiveness of Cook and Okenimpke. In Introduction to the Writings of Ngugi the chapter on Petals of Blood was the most useful. In fact Killam is at his best when he is discussing this novel. The biographical outline at the beginning of the text is incorrect. Killam has Ngugi join the Sunday Nation in 1964, when in fact he was writing for that paper as early as June 1962.⁶⁹ However, the introduction to this text is far more effective than the one Killam uses in

Critical Perspectives on Ngugi, which is uncoordinated, essentially descriptive and without reference material to Devil on the Cross or Mother Sing For Me. In the introduction Killam mistakenly documents Ngugi's acceptance of a teaching position at Northwestern in 1968 instead of 1970, omitting the year Ngugi taught at Makerere University in Uganda. The selection of essays in Killam's Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o, particularly those on Weep Not Child, The River Between and A Grain of Wheat is essentially balanced and readily available from other sources, but references to Ngugi's journalism and political views are lacking with the exception of the Bettye Parker interview. References to any of the plays or Devil on the Cross, whose English edition had been published two years before Killam's book was published, are missing from the text as well. In addition, considering the significance of Petals of Blood to Ngugi's critical reputation and Killam's own work, it is difficult to understand why only the articles by Triester and Sharma were included.⁷⁰ Despite these faults Critical Perspectives on Ngugi has one of the best bibliographies available in Ngugi criticism to date.

The fourth text, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, by C.B. Robson is part of the MacMillan Commonwealth Writers Series. Published in 1979, it was the first full length text on Ngugi. However, it is also the weakest. While the first few chapters are thorough studies of Ngugi's first three novels, Petals of Blood is treated with hostility because the novel is seen as a

ideological attack on the rottenness of neo-colonial government:

Ngugi goes beyond what is acceptable in fiction; he is giving us polemic. Basically it is a question of balance, and Ngugi's concern that we should not miss a detail sometimes results in a dominating and intrusive authorial presence.⁷¹

I would have to concur with Sharma's assessment that "... Robson doesn't like Petals of Blood and therefore is unable to understand and appreciate it."⁷² The text has an adequate bibliography, but it lacks an introduction.

Its assessment of Ngugi as a writer and activist is a scant thirteen pages, while literary texts receive one hundred and twenty-two pages of discussion.

Two articles which are particularly useful in the wider issues of feminist writing and the exploitation of women in Africa are "Women as scapegoats of Culture and Cult: An Activist's view of Female Circumcision Ngugi's The River Between, by Tobe Levin and "Mother Africa and the Heroic Whore: Female Images in Petals of Blood" by Jennifer Evans.⁷³ The single most important literary text that is effective in analyzing A Grain of Wheat, Petals of Blood as well as the origins of "Mau Mau" and literary reactions to that movement is David Maughan-Brown's Land, Freedom, and Fiction: History and Ideology in Kenya.⁷⁴

The work of Bu-Buakei Jabbi was most helpful in assessing both the value of symbolism in A Grain of Wheat as well as Conrad's influence on Ngugi.⁷⁵ A special issue of Research in African Literature, 16.2(1985), is devoted to Ngugi criticism. It contains thoroughly organized, diverse criticism on Ngugi's early novels by Maughan-Brown and Sekyi-Otu, symbolism in A Grain of Wheat by Harrow and Jabbi as well as an original case study on "The Journey" in Petals of Blood by Pagnouille and a reprint of Ngugi's defense of writing in Gikuyu. A special issue of English in Africa 8.2(1981) contains articles by Maughan-Brown, Glenn and Vaughan concerning the political contradictions in "Mau Mau" with special emphasis on A Grain of Wheat. In a special Symposium on Ngugi wa Thiong'o Petals of Blood, The Journal of Commonwealth Literature 15.1(1980) published three short noteworthy articles by Stratton, Killam, and Chileshe, any of which would have been welcome addition's to Killam's Critical Perspectives. In fact, Killam's article, "A Note on the Title of Petals of Blood" is one of the best articles he has written on Ngugi.

Articles published in the U.C.L.A. journal, Ufahamu are generally more critical of Ngugi, pointing out contradictions between his historicism and ideology. The article "The Divergence of Art and Ideology in the Later Novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o," by Lisa Curtis, is probably the most critical article from a Marxist perspective published to date. The following comment is on Devil on the Cross:

Ngugi's repeated failure to find a solution to the problems he systematically exposes undermines the potential for real change which he ascribes to the political sentiments expressed in his works. It would seem that this failure cannot simply be overcome by the creation of new novel forms. If the new breed of novel is to adequately articulate the spirit of the people, it must express their fears and aspirations, their strength and power to effect change in a manner which is closely allied to that elusive quality: the people's culture.⁷⁶

A special edition of the French publication, Echos du Commonwealth, 6(1981), published a number of articles on Petals of Blood. The most useful were those on symbolism by Albrecht and Bardolph. One brief yet informative article that would be recommended for those who are reading Ngugi for the first time is Ime Ikiddeh's "Ngugi wa Thiong'o: The Novelist as Historian."⁷⁷

World Literature Written in English regularly publishes articles on Ngugi. Two of the best in the last ten years are Bernth Lindfors' "Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Early Journalism." and Govind Narain Sharma's "Ngugi's Apocalypse: Marxism, Christianity and African Utopianism."⁷⁸

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's writing has spanned the last twenty-two years of Kenya's tumultuous history. During that time as a novelist, playwright, and essayist, he has been able to record the socio-economic crisis that have played the development of the new state of Kenya, whether it be the legacy of colonial

oppression implemented through missionary schools or the terrible effects of prison camp detention during the "Mau Mau" Revolution. Whether it be the alienation of communal land through settler colonialism or the rise of a parasitical national bourgeoisie, capable of betraying and willing to betray the nation in order to build a neo-colonial state that favoured international business interests. Ngugi's novels have chronicled both the destructive capacity of colonialism and neo-colonialism as well as the collective and individual resistance to these forces.

It is the intention of this thesis to focus on the theme of betrayal in Ngugi's first four novels. The consequences of betrayal vary from each historical community that Ngugi presents in the four novels. Some circumstances demand that a Kenyan community extract revenge for a betrayal as is in the case of Mugo in A Grain of Wheat or Boro in Weep Not Child. Other situations portray private betrayals of the community that are not culpable, especially where the betrayer is victimized by the social or political oppression of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Mumbi in A Grain of Wheat, Wanja in Petals of Blood are discussed in this perspective. Despite their limited betrayals, they are capable of regeneration. Their struggle provides hope for the future. Finally, other characters exist in the community whose betrayal is potentially permanent either because of a distorted social perspective in the cases of Karanja in A Grain of Wheat, Kabonyi and Joshua

from The River Between, Munira from Petals of Blood, or because of parasitical class interests in the case of Jacobo and Howlands in Weep Not Child, the M.P. in A Grain of Wheat and Nderi, Mzigo, Chui, and Kimeria in Petals of Blood.

FOOTNOTES

1. David Cook and Michael Okenimpke, Ngugi wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writings (London: Heinemann, 1983) 11.
2. Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Preface to Secret Lives and other stories (New York: Lawrence Hill, 1975).
3. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary (London: Heinemann, 1981) 73-74.
4. Cook and Okenimpke 2.
5. Micere Githae Mugo, "Vision of Africa in the Fiction of Chinua Achebe, Margaret Laurence, Elizabeth Huxley, and Ngugi wa Thiong'o." diss., (University of New Brunswick, 1973) 43.
6. Amooti wa Irumba, "The making of a rebel," Index on Censorship 3(1980) :20.
7. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature (London: James Currey, 1986) 11.
8. Kenneth Parker, "Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o" Marxism Today September 1982 :35.
9. Bernth Lindfors, "Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Early Journalism," World Literature Written in English 20.1(1981) :23-36.
10. Cook and Okenimpke 4.
11. Cook and Okenimpke, 13; see Lindfors, "Early Journalism" 38-41 for a complete list.
12. Amooti 22.
13. Ngugi, Decolonizing the Mind 75-77.
14. Ngugi, Decolonizing 77.
15. Ngugi, 89-95. See Ngugi's Homecoming. (London: Heinemann, 1978) 145-150 for the proposed changes to the English Department at Nairobi University.
16. Cook and Okenimpke 6.
17. Cook and Okenimpke 7,11.

18. Ngugi, Homecoming 13.
19. Ngugi, Decolonizing the Mind 77.
20. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Writers in Politics (London: Heinemann, 1981) 96-97.
21. Ngugi, Writers 96-97.
22. Jane Chesaina, "Who is on Trial in The Trial of Dedan Kimathi? A Critical Essay on Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Mujo's The Trial of Dedan Kimathi," Busara 8.2 (1976) :23.
23. Brian Crow, "Melodrama and the 'Political Unconscious' in Two African Plays," Ariel 14.3 (1983) :25.
24. Anita Shreve, "Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o," Viva July 1977 :35.
25. G.D. Killam, Introduction, Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984) 8.
26. Magina Magina, "People have a right to know," Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Africa February 1979 :30.
27. See the special issue on Kenya: The Agrarian Question ed., P. Anyang N'yong'o, Review of African Political Economy 20 (January-April 1981).
28. Ngugi, Detained xi,xiv.
29. See Anyang Nyong'o, "The Decline of Democracy and the Rise of Authoritarian and Factional Politics in Kenya," Horn of Africa 6.3 (1983-84) :25-34.

Michael Maren, "Hear No Evil", Africa Report November-December, 1986 :67-71.

"Arrest and Detention in Kenya," Index on Censorship 1(1987) :23-28.
30. Ngugi, Detained 56.
31. It was originally intended that Devil on the Cross was to be included in Chapter 5 or as a separate discussion in Chapter 6. Lack of critical material beyond book reviews, and space have unfortunately prevented a detailed discussion of this unique novel.

32. Ngugi, Detained 164.
33. Anne Walmsley, "No Licence for Musical," Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Index on Censorship 1(1983) :22-24.
- Ross Kidd, "Popular Theatre in Kenya Part I and II, Fuse, (Toronto) 8.1-2 (1984) :259-264 and 11-16.
- Ross Kidd, "Popular Theatre and Popular Struggle in Kenya: The Story of Kamiriithu," Race and Class 24.3 (1983) :287-304.
- For the first time Ngugi used songs from other Kenyan languages: Luo, Kamba, Lahya, Kisii and Kalenjin.
34. Niik Kojo and Bentil Enchill, "Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o," West Africa December 22-29 :2604-05.
35. Irene Assiba d'Almeida, "The Language of African Fiction: Reflections on Ngugi's Advocacy for an Afro-African Literature," Présence Africaine 120 (1981-1982) :82-92.
- Cuthbert K. Oman, "Writing in African Languages: Towards the Development of a Sociology of Literature," Présence Africaine 133-134 (1986) :19-27.
36. Chenweizu, Review of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Decolonizing the Mind, Times Literary Supplement, 8 May 1987 :499.
37. Ingrid Bjorkman, "Ngugi wa Thiong'o - Interview," Kunapipi 4.2 (1982) :126-133.
38. Bjorkman 133.
39. Ngugi, "Women in Cultural Work: The Fate of Kamiriithu People's Theatre in Kenya," Development Dialogue 1-2 (1982) :115-133.
40. Richard Hall, "Kenya protest at play," The Observer Oct. 21, 1984 :14.
- Julie Kitchener, "Keeping Kimathi Alive," New Africa October 1984 :14.
41. Cameron Duodu, "Secret party leads to arrests," Index on Censorship 6(1986) :18,35-36.
- "Ngugi plans to form a communist party," The Express (Nairobi) November 1984 :5-8.
- Africa Concord 12 March, 1987 :8-15.

42. Robert L. Tignor, The Colonial Transformation of Kenya (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976) 18-22.
- Cynthia Brantley, The Giriama and Colonial Resistance in Kenya 1800-1920 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981) 84-90.
- Myrtle S. Langley, The Nandi of Kenya (London: C. Hurst, 1979) 7.
- Carl G. Rosberg and John Nottingham. The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya (New York: Praeger Press, 1966) 1-34.
43. Bjorkman 126. For a brief discussion of the Kipande see Rosberg and Nottingham 45-46.
44. In Weep Not Child, Kenyatta is seen in a positive image. Boro calls him "Black Moses". Njoroge naively hopes that Jomo can lead them out of the "wildness" and he like many Kenyans at the beginning of the Emergency felt despair when he was arrested. In A Grain of Wheat a mere rumor of Kenyatta's arrival at a village would command a standing room only crowd.
45. Ngugi, Detained 90.
46. Detained 161-162.

KCA (Kikuyu Central Association) was an early pre-world war II nationalist movement that organized squatters. Its tribal basis was changed after it was banned in 1940. A new multi-national focus was given the anti-colonial movement through KAU (Kenyan African Union) which became a mass political organization in 1946. Jomo Kenyatta acquired its leadership in 1947 in a move to unite workers, peasants and the national bourgeoisie. KANU (Kenyan African National Union) was formed in 1959, although the colonial government would not allow Kenyatta to be registered as leader until independence. Kanu has been the dominant party in Kenya since 1959, absorbing or banning political competition from any other political party.

For information on the:

- 1) KCA See Rosberg and Nottingham 96-104, 177-78.

- 2) KAU See Rosberg and Nottingham 212-233
Leys 48-49.

Oginga Odinga, Not Yet Uhuru (London: Heinemann, 1969) 95-122.

Nicola Swainson, The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya 1918-1977 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980) 175,184.

- 3) KANU See Henry Bienen, Kenya: The Politics of Participation and Control (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974) 66-130.

Leys 56-62, 212-227.

Odinga 193-218, 253-315.

47. Jomo Kenyatta, Suffering Without Bitterness (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1968) 241.

48. John Barry, "How Jomo's royal family grabbed the nation's wealth," Sunday Times (London) 17 Aug. 1975 :5-6

49. Ngugi, Writers in Politics 51.

50. See Crow 30.

Chesaina 21-37.

Michael Etherton, Development of African Drama (London: Hutchinson, 1982) 165-178.

51. Donald L. Barnett and Karari Njama, Mau Mau from Within (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966) 51-54.

52. David Maughan-Brown, Land, Freedom, and Fiction: History and Ideology in Kenya (London: Zed Press, 1985) 20.

53. Maina wa Kinyatti ed., Thunder from the Mountains: Mau Mau Patriotic Songs (London: Zed Press, 1980).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, "Mau Mau is Coming Back: The Revolutionary Significance of 20th October 1952 in Kenya Today" from Barrel of a Pen: Resistance to Repression and Neocolonialism (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1983) 7-31.

54. Maughan-Brown 23-30.

Roger Van Zwanenberg, The Agricultural History of Kenya, Historical Association of Kenya Paper No.1 (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972) :31-52.

55. Maina wa Kinyatti, "'Mau Mau': The Peak of African Political Organization in Colonial Kenya," Kenya Historical Review 5.2(1977) 290-292.

Barnett and Njama 55.

The connection between "Mau Mau" and KAU has been discussed by Bildad Kaggia, Roots of Freedom 1921-1963 (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1975) 113-114.

56. Barnett and Njama 55-59.
Maughan-Brown 31-33.
Kinyatti 244-295.

57. Kinyatti 295.

58. Maughan-Brown 35.

Statistically the divisions in 1969 between the major tribes in 100,000's were:

<u>Kikuyu</u>	<u>Embu</u>	<u>Meru</u>	<u>Luo</u>	<u>Luhya</u>	<u>Kamba</u>	<u>Kisii</u>
220	10	60	150	150	120	70

<u>Mijikanda</u>	<u>Somali</u>	<u>Masai</u>	<u>Taita</u>	<u>Other</u>
50	30	20	10	50

Kenyan Statistical Abstract 1971 as quoted by Leys 276.

59. Kinyatti 298.

60. Maughan-Brown 38.

61. Kinyatti 297.

62. See Maughan-Brown 38-41 for a discussion of "popular" settler literature including the work of Davies, Kitson, Henderson, and Ruark.

63. Barnett and Njama 387.

64. Maughan-Brown 56-58.

Kinyatti 303-305.

- ⁶⁵. See Ngugi, Barrel of a Pen 7-31, 55-69.

Al-Amin Mazrui, "Cry for Justice," Index on Censorship 4(1983) 23-27.

Abdilatif Abdulla, "Mnazi: The Struggle for the Coconut Tree," Index on Censorship 4(1983) 32.

- ⁶⁶. See the following articles for a brief chronology of repression in Kenya:

Livingstone Njomo Waidura, "Clamp down on Drama," Is Shakespeare a suitable hero for Kenya?," Index on Censorship 1(1985) 23-24.

Michael Maren "Hear No Evil," Africa Report November-December 1986 67-71.

Duodu 18, 23-29.

"Kenya: Stormy Weather," New African June 1986, 6-13.

"Arrest and Detention in Kenya," Index on Censorship 1(1987) 23-29.

Moussa A Wounda, "Moi Fights off MwaKenya," African Concord 12 March 1987 :8.

Elizabeth Kanyogonya, "23 year struggle - but not yet Uhuru," African Concord 12 March 1987 :10.

- ⁶⁷. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, "The Writer in a Neo-colonialism State," The Black Scholar 17.4 (1986) :10.

- ⁶⁸. Cook and Okenimpke.

G.D. Killam, ed, Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984).

G.D. Killam, An Introduction to Ngugi wa Thiong'o (London: Heinemann, 1980).

C.B. Robson, Ngugi wa Thiong'o (London, MacMillan, 1979).

- ⁶⁹. Lindfors 59.

70. Govind Narain Sharma, "Ngugi's Apocalypse: Marxism, Christianity and African Utopianism in Petals of Blood," World Literature Written in English 8.2(1979) :302-314.
- Cyril Treister, "An Addition to the Genre of the Proletarian Novel" ed. G.D. Killam, Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984) :267-270.
71. Robson 101.
72. Govind Narain Sharma, Review of Clifford B. Robson's, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Research in African Literature 14.2(1983) :242.
73. Tobe Levin, "Women as Scapegoats of Culture and Cult: An Activist's View of Female Circumcision in Ngugi's The River Between," ed. Carole Boyce Davies and Anne Adams Graves, Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986) 205-221.
- Jennifer Evans, "Mother Africa and the Heroic Whore: Females Images in Petals of Blood," ed., Hal Wylie, Eileen Julien and Russell J. Linnerman, Contemporary African Literature (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984) 57-65.
74. David Maughan-Brown, Land Freedom and Fiction....
75. Jabbi Bu-Buakei, "Conrad's Influence on Betrayal in A Grain of Wheat," Research in African Literature 11.1(1980) :50-83.
76. Lisa Curtis, "The Divergence of Art and Ideology in the Later Novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o," Ufahamu 12.2(1984) :212.
77. Ime Ikiddeh, "Ngugi wa Thiong'o: The Novelist as Historian," ed. Bruce King and Kolawole Ogungbesan, Celebration of Black and African Writing, (Zaria: University of Ahmadu Bello and Oxford University Press, 1975) :204-216.
78. Bernth Lindfors, "Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Early Journalism," World Literature Written in English 20.1(1981) :23-41.
- Sharma, Ngugi's Apocalypse 302-314.

THE LAND AND COLONIALISM:
THE FOUNDATION OF BETRAYAL AND RESISTANCE
IN THE NOVELS OF NGUGI WA THIONG'O

Chapter Two

The River Between,¹ originally titled, The Black Messiah, was Ngugi's first novel despite its late publication in 1965. It recorded the clash of missionary and traditional Kenyan interests, represented both symbolically through two isolated Gikuyu ridges (Kameno and Makuyu) and literally by two absolutists, Kabonyi the traditionalist and Joshua, the evangelical priest. Waiyaki, Nyambura, and Muthoni are the causalities of these polarized views. The cultural clash brought on by the interaction of traditional and colonial interests is well illustrated here as is the fallacy of education for its own sake.

Colonial education and its inherent contradictions for the colonized Gikuyu is the link between Weep Not Child² and its predecessor, The River Between. Njoroge, the alienated protagonist, is socially isolated from his family and is unaware of it. As a passive observer, he is nauseated by the "Mau Mau" struggle of the 1950's. Numbed by his own self-importance, he is oblivious to both the sacrifices of his father, Ngotho and that of his brothers, Boro and Kamau. Only

after he is tortured by Howlands and confesses his own cowardice, does he begin to realize the destructiveness of the colonial experience.

Njoroge's betrayal of family is symptomatic of that we later meet on the eve of Kenyan independence, by four survivors of the colonial "Emergency," who in various ways have betrayed their community, Thaibai in Ngugi's third novel, A Grain of Wheat.³ While Njoroge's passive betrayal is left unresolved, that of the "survivors" (Mugo, Karanja, Gikonyo and Mumbi) is explored on a broader landscape. The residue of colonialism that remains is sufficient, however, to stimulate the growth of a parasitical national bourgeoisie personified by the "M.P." and later by the attitudes of Gikonyo to a certain extent. The growth of this class will lead to further betrayals and further resistance documented in more recent works such as Devil on the Cross, I Will Marry When I Want, and Barrel of a Pen.

In Petals of Blood⁴ the conflict between betrayal and resistance continues unabated in an isolated rural sanctuary of Ilmorog. Here four protagonists; Mumira, Karega, Abullah, and Wanja find temporary refuge from personal and political crisis brought about by the rise of the Post-Colonial State. Their initial solidarity, brought about by a "long march" to Nairobi, has two contradictory results. First, it politicized them and reminded them of the urban corruption they had previously

escaped. Second, the trek and a subsequent air crash generate so much publicity that it encourages Nderi to plan new exploitive development in Ilmorog. Ironically, it is Wanja's and Abdullah's marketing of a local beer, Theng'eta, that attracts Nderi and other members of the national bourgeoisie to Ilmorog. The novel ends with a guarded optimism. Wanja, Abdullah and Karega, even though he is in jail, are resolved to continue to fight for a free Kenya "tomorrow."

Devil on the Cross, through a satirical attack on the national bourgeoisie, combined with a series of folk tales and peasant fables and sayings, is a new popular novel form, one popularized for the Gikuyu masses first and then published later in Kiswahili and English for a larger audience. The fight against the capitalist establishment in Kenya reaches a higher level of intensity in this novel both because this is Ngugi's "prison novel" and because of the new approach used by Ngugi to satirize the inflated power of the national bourgeoisie, whose materialist fetishes for Western consumer goods, evident from thieves' speeches in the cave, are reminiscent of Swift's A Modest Proposal. Contrasting the thieves' absurd showmanship, is the struggle of the super-exploited proletariat and the progressive petit-bourgeoisie personified by Wariinga, Gatuira and Muturi. Wariinga, after killing the "Rich Old Man", who has exploited her, must like Karega in Petals of Blood find a sanctuary to continue an even

harder struggle against exploitation and injustice.

Like Wariinga, Ngugi, forced into political exile, must continue to contribute to the struggle against the parasitical national bourgeoisie, which has appropriated wealth and labour from the working people of Kenya.⁶

In order to understand the historical process that has produced such a socio-economic polarization of wealth and power, we return to his first work, The River Between. By exploring the physical landscape of colonial Kenya and its extended metaphors, we can better understand the themes of betrayal and resistance in Ngugi's novels.

The ridges of Limuru are a central part of the landscape of Ngugi's first four novels. They are not merely a backdrop to the plot, but represent symbolically the barrier that will have to be broken to unite peasant resistance against colonial, and later neo-colonial rule. With The River Between Ngugi begins a series of anti-colonial novels that would include Weep Not Child, and A Grain of Wheat. The River Between represents the beginning of resistance to colonial takeover. Even the main protagonist, Waiyaki is named after the 19th century warrior who fought against the efforts of Imperial British East African Company to take over the Kikuyu Highlands of Central Kenya.⁷

Waiyaki's isolated fight would create the beginning of a strong proto-nationalist movement, which was continued by Harry Thuku, the Free School Associations, the Kenya African Union, and the Land and Freedom Army (Mau Mau). The narrator of A Grain of Wheat establishes the importance of the sacrifice made by Waiyaki:

looking back we can see that Waiyaki's blood contained within it a seed, a grain, which gave birth to a political party whose main strength thereafter sprang from a bond with the soil(13).

The ridges or Central Highlands are an isolated landscape where the struggle between tradition and colonialism would be fought. Ngugi's use of this isolated landscape seems designed to show the gradual erosion of the traditional Gikuyu control of land from both inherent contradictions within the ridges themselves as well as from their interaction with colonialism. The River Between successfully integrates two historical periods in colonial Kenya: Firstly, the evangelical movement supported by Joshua and his followers which is historically representative of the period around 1900. Secondly, the independent school movement of the 1930's which is espoused by Waiyaki in the novel as a solution to the division of the ridges.⁸

In The River Between the Makuyu and Kaneno ridges are both

divided and united by the powerful flow of the Honia river.
Literally defined as the "cure:"

...[it] never dried: it seemed to possess a strong will to live, scorning droughts and weather changes.... Honia was the soul of Kamenō and Makuyu. It joined them. And men, cattle, wild beasts and trees, were all united by this life-stream(1).

"United" and "Joined" the two ridges see the source of life and tradition from the Honia River, but differ on its value.

As Rice points out:

... this is a land that brooks no compromises. The people are identified by the ridge on which they live. The warning is implicit that anyone who attempts compromises between the two ridges will be destroyed by both.⁹

The contradictory river is both the flow of life and a barrier to communal unity. Rain too is seen both as "curse" and "blessing":

[Waiyaki] was angry with the rain. The rain carried away the soil, not only here but everywhere. That was why land, in some parts, was becoming poor. For a time, he felt like fighting with the rain.... He now felt like laughing heartily. Even here in this natural happening, he could see a contradiction. The rain had to touch the

soil. That touch could be a blessing or a curse(65-66).

The Honia River is neutral ground. It accepts all offerings of rain over time. Even though Waiyaki is conscious of association of the rain's erosion of the soil with "the encroachment of the white man," he is unable to stop the process of colonial occupation:

Carrying away the soil.
Corroding, eating away the earth.
Stealing the land (65).

Nnolim's view of The River Between, is one where the ridges and Honia river are three parallel lines that "never meet or merge." The position of the ridges as implacable antagonists worked by the Honia River is reinforced not only by ancient tribal differences, but also by the coming of Christianity to one of the ridges.¹⁰ Makuyu, controlled by the Christian zealot, Joshua, has initiated the colonial erosion of the area, while Kamen's stronger sense of traditional resistance is polarized around the Kiama.¹¹

Ngugi refers to the ridges as "sleeping lions which never woke" as though history would gain control over them without their knowledge. Yet later in the same passage the illusion of passivity is broken by another perspective, where from the point of the view of the Valley the ridges stood as:

antagonists... two rivals ready to come to blows in a life and death struggle for the leadership of this isolated region(1).

The landscape of Kameno is clearly identified with strong creation myths. Creators of the tribe, Mumbi and Gikuyu had reportedly lived on Kameno ridge. Centered around a huge Mugumo tree,¹² a sacred grove celebrating their arrival, was well maintained by the Gikuyu. Leaders of the past, Mugo wa Kibiro, a seer, Kamiri, the witch and Wachiori, the warrior had all been born on Kameno ridge. Makuyu too:

...claimed that Gikuyu and Mumbi sojourned there with Murungu on their way the Mukuruwe wa Gathanga. As a result of that stay... leadership had been left to Makuyu(1).

As Ngugi indicates, the ridges were truly "isolated." Even other Gikuyu from Nyeri or Kiamba could not travel there without getting lost. Only those from the ridges knew the secrets of the land. Waiyaki attempts to prove this to his father by bringing home the cattle after dark. The first signs of division among the community ridges comes from the wrestling match between the converted son of Kabonyi, Kamau, and Kinuthia, a traditionalist boy from another ridge. Waiyaki acts as a mediator in much the same way as he later will naively attempt to arbitrate the polarized differences of the two ridges, Kameno and Makuyu.

Isolation of the ridges from Kenyan colonial conflict ended with the crises over circumcision and education brought about by the infiltration of Scottish Missionary Society churches and by zealous converts such as Joshua as well as by the rigid confines of Kiama council, manipulated by the opportunist, Kabonyi. An additional cause of the breakdown of the harmony of the ridges must also be attributed to Waiyaki himself, who is naively enchanted with his own messianic role as a predestined leader. He refuses to heed the warnings of Kinuthia and he fails to understand the source of jealousy in Kanau.

Waiyaki's betrayal of Kamemo begins and ends in passivity. When Kinuthia enquires about his attendance at Joshua's church and his return to the Siriana mission, he refuses to act. Instead he dismisses the talk of his betrayal as silly "rumors." Yet Waiyaki is very slow to react to his responsibility for furthering the divisions of the ridges, mainly his love and "rumoured" marriage to Nyambura. Again he ignores Kinuthia's warning:

Kabonyi hates, hates you. He would kill you if he could. And he is the one who is doing all this. Why? The Kiama has power. Power. And your name is in it, giving it even greater power. Your name will be your ruin.... There are young men there. I know them. They are loyal to Kabonyi. And they are sworn to keep the tribe pure and punish betrayal.... (Emphasis is mine). (112).

Waiyaki ignores the will of the community and is the last to realize that Kamemo wanted "Action Now" against the colonial intrusion of the white man. His relationship with Nyambura was perceived as a threat to the community. He momentarily sees the danger, but quickly dismisses it:

Would an association with Nyambura not be a betrayal? He would not stand by her. He would not take her part (122).

He ignores the warning of his mother not to marry Nyambura as well:

You must not do it. Fear the voice of the Kiama. It is the voice of the people. When the breath of the people turn against you, it is the greatest curse you can ever get (123).

The female circumcision crisis of the 1920's and 1930's was also a divisive issue on the ridges. As Nottingham and Rosberg indicate:

... it was a bitter and enduring division between the forces of Kikuyu nationalism and the Protestant missions. The roots of the conflict are located in the Kikuyu challenge to the total cultural transformation demanded of them by the missionary church. The missions excluded any possibility of selective change, by which the Kikuyu might absorb some elements of Western culture while rejecting others as unacceptable to their values or social

institutions.¹⁴

In The River Between, Joshua personifies that demand for "total cultural transformation." His daughters, Muthoni and Nyambura, despite their longing to be circumcised, are the victims of Joshua's totalitarianism and stubborn pride. Both women will die as a result of his failure to compromise.

The question of female circumcision is first raised in the novel as an integral part of the landscape as the feelings of Nyambura toward circumcision ceremonies are explored:

Nyambura was fascinated and felt attracted to the river. Her breast, glowing with pleasure, rose and fell with a sigh: she felt something strange stirring in her bowels. It was an exhilaration, a feeling of acute ecstasy, almost of pain, which always came to her as she watched the snaky movement and listened to the throb of the river (23).

Ironically, it is the importance of ceremonies that attracts both ridges. Joshua focuses on baptism, while his daughters secretly long to belong to the tribe as well as to Jesus. While Nyambura represses her feelings of support for the ceremony by dismissing them as a "wicked reverie," Muthoni openly demands to be circumcised:

... 'I want to be a woman. I want to be a

real girl, a real woman, knowing all the ways of the hills and ridges (26).

Muthoni finds the contradiction in her father's rejection of circumcision:

'Why! Are we fools?' She shook Nyambura. 'Father and mother are circumcised. Are they not Christians? Circumcision did not prevent them from being Christians. I too have embraced the white man's faith. However, I know it is beautiful, oh so beautiful to be initiated into womanhood. You learn the ways of the tribe. Yes, the white man's God does not quite satisfy me. I want, I need something more. My life and your life are here, in the hills, that you and I know' (26).

Yet when Muthoni goes to her aunt's on Kameno ridge, the fanatic, Joshua disowns her. He is beyond caring for his own daughter as his thoughts project his betrayal of Makuyu ridge. His journey to "Jerusalem" and salvation is an ego-centric one divorced from the needs of the tribe:

From that day Muthoni ceased to exist for him, in his heart. She had brought an everlasting disgrace to him and his house, which he had meant to be an example of what a Christian home should grow into.

All right. Let her go back to Egypt. Yes. Let her go back. He, Joshua, would travel, on, on to the new Jerusalem (36).

He considers Kameno a land of "heathens" even though they

are part of his family.

Historically, the issue of circumcision was a controversial issue which can be further illustrated from the book by Charity Waciama. In The Daughter Mumbi she records her intense isolation brought about by her parents' decision to prohibit her and her sister's circumcision:

About this time, we lost many of our good friends when they went through the circumcision ceremony. Because we Christian girls had not 'been to the river' we were unclean.... It was believed that a girl who was uncircumcised would cause the death of circumcised husband. Moreover, an un-circumcised woman would be barren.¹⁵

According to Jomo Kenyatta the Gikuyu custom of circumcision is merely the "rite of passage... the trimming the genital organs of both sexes."¹⁶ Yet evidence to contrary clearly states that parts of the female anatomy were surgically removed and crudely at that. Whatever its cultural role, the physical effects have removed female sexuality and have endangered her reproductive system and general health.

When clitoridectomy was practiced it led to a subordination of the female to male.¹⁷ Perhaps it might be suggested that intervention of missionary schools and colonial legal authorities entrenched a custom whose traditional authority was not absolute. The control and protection of

women among the Gikuyu was sacrosanct as the tribe was once controlled by women under Mumbi's family group (Mbani ya Mumbi), and proved to be overbearing at one stage. A plot was hatched by the men to impregnate the female leaders and their followers to render them useless against a takeover six months later. Polygamy was institutionalized; the lineage was now traced through the father's family line. Only ten groups were allowed to retain the names of the daughters of Gikuyu and Mumbi.¹⁸

By becoming circumcised, Muthoni betrayed her father, setting into motion a new division between the ridges. Yet her attempt to be both Christian and a woman of tribe fails. She is a victim of colonial struggle. As Tobe Levin indicates: "Doubly alienated, her attempt to achieve wholeness through mutilation, to reconcile the tribe and Christianity, cannot bear fruits."¹⁹ To Makuyu and Joshua, she died because she betrayed the Holy Church. To Kamenno and the Kiama she died because she was cursed by the betrayer, Joshua. Waiyaki's harmony with the land would not be sufficient to protect him either from the contradictions of colonialism. Just as Joshua was responsible for division on Makuyu, so Kabonyi, who saw himself as a messiah, would be the first to betray Kamenno. He would align himself with the traditionalists Kiama merely to undermine Waiyaki's popular leadership. Kabonyi is in fact Waiyaki's nemesis. He is motivated solely by jealousy and

hatred. His betrayal is a double one. Not only has he forsaken Kameno by seeking training from Livingstone, but he has used the Kiama to punish Waiyaki for personal hatred, not for the traditional conservative ideology he espouses. His lack of power motivates him to betray Waiyaki and destroy the possibility of unity between the ridges:

Kabonyi saw Waiyaki as an upstart, a good-for-nothing fellow, a boy with rather silly ideas. He was a mere boy in the face of someone like Kabonyi, whose age and experience entitled him to greater attention. As it was, the state of things was unnatural. Perhaps Kabonyi would not have been so hostile had the young man's place been taken by Kamau, his own son. Kamau was as good a teacher as anyone else and he was certainly older than Waiyaki. He would therefore have been in a better position to lead. Nobody could guess the extent to which Kabonyi resented the rise of Waiyaki. Alone among the people Kabonyi knew of the prophecy. He feared Waiyaki might be the sent one. And he hated this (92-93).

Waiyaki is also to blame for the divisions among both ridges as he puts his personal love for Nyambura beyond community interest, and more importantly, he unknowingly betrays his people by failing to fill their need for political leadership by mistakenly seeing colonial education as a panacea for disunity on the ridges. At the end of the novel darkness hides the guilt of betrayers as Waiyaki is led away to be killed. The traditionalists of the Kiama have won the first battle against colonialism. For the moment they perceive

themselves as being protected from the effects of colonialism:

The two ridges lay side by side, hidden in the darkness. And the Honia River went on flowing between them, down through the valley of life, its beat rising above the dark stillness.... (152).

Yet this allusion to protection, personified by the ridges and the Honia River is ironic. The ridges remain divided and therefore less protected against the full scale takeover by a British colonial administration. As Waiyaki warns the people of Kamenno:

We are all the children of Mumbi and we must fight together in one political movement, or else we perish and the white man will always be on our back. Can a house divided against itself stand?' (149).

The physical land and the people of the ridges are seemingly protected but the images "hidden in darkness" and "dark stillness" might also suggest vulnerability.

In Ngugi's next novel, Weep Not Child published before The River Between, but written after it, the images of "darkness" no longer protect the land. A full scale colonial penetration has reduced the Gikuyu of the ridges to squatters on their own land and has brought about the destruction of the traditional family unit. Ngugi's opening quotation from Walt Whitman bears

repeating:

Weep, not child
 Weep not, my darling
 With these kisses let me remove your tears,
 The ravening clouds shall not be long victorious,
 They shall not long possess the sky....

The images of "ravening clouds" reflect the darkness of colonialism, whose controlling forces are limited like weather. Despite this optimistic introduction, the land of ridges is to be dominated by a white colonial bourgeoisie and a black collaborating home guard. Ngugi's sub-sections in the novel, "Waning light" and "darkness falls" chronicle the destructiveness of colonial penetration in the Central Highlands.²⁰

While Weep Not Child does not present the dominant ridges of Kameno, Makuyu, or the Honia river that are prevalent in The River Between, there are key landscape images that characterize and develop our sense of colonial Kenya. Ngugi acknowledges the ridges both as a former home and as a source for Kipanga in Weep Not Child.

I have tried to describe the landscape in Weep Not Child where Kipanga town obviously stands for Limura, or Ruungai as the town popularly known, one of the valleys described in Weep Not Child originates from Kamiriithu. [later to become an important political and cultural centre for community

theatre].²¹

Dominating this novel's landscape is the division of land between the settler class, personified by Howlands and the collaborating indigenous or national bourgeoisie, represented by Jacobo.²² A second major image is that of "the road" which divided the people into economic zones. The African peasants were forced to live in the least productive areas. The Road image receives more elaborate treatment in Petals of Blood (See Chapter 5). The "road" introduces the conflict between Howlands and the peasant, Ngotho in a generalized way through the historical record. The road and its construction acts as a record of colonial exploitation. African labour was not available at first so Italian prisoners constructed the road. Their children from black women were abused and underfed in Kipanga. The road symbolizes the divisiveness of colonialism that segregate Kenyans into classes and races:

In a county of ridges, such as Kikuyu land, there are many valleys and small plains. Even the big road went through a valley on the opposite side. Where the two met they had as it were embraced and widened themselves into a plain. The plain, more of less rectangular in shape, had four valleys leading into or out of it at the corners. The first two valleys went into the country of the Black People: the other two valleys divided the land of the Black People from the land of the White People. This meant that there were four ridges that stood and watched one another. Two of the ridges on the opposite sides of

the long sides of the plain were broad and near one another. The other two were narrow and had pointed ends. You could tell the land of Black People because it was red, rough and sickly, while the land of the white settlers was green and was not lacerated into small strips (7).

The division of land was a perpetual source of conflict between the white settler class and the Gikuyu peasant as Ikiddeh suggests:

Historically, land as the source of man's life, the basis of any social community and the foundation of all human culture, remained the sensitive factor in the contention between Africans and Europeans in Kenya. From the attempt by Joseph Chamberlain in 1902 to found 'a national home for the Jewish race' on thousands of square miles of land in Kenya and the official appropriation for British ex-soldiers after the World War, to the open seizure and illegal speculation by white settler-farmers that went on all the time, the record of British usurpation of land in Kenya must be one of the most sordid scandals in colonial history.²³

The political struggle between Howlands and Ngotho is over the control of land. Ngotho is the legitimate owner. His aboriginal title is based on generations of use by his family.

[Ngotho's] mind was always directed towards the shamba. His life and soul were in the shamba. Everything else with him counted only in so far as it was related to shamba.

Even his wife mattered only in so far as she made it possible for him to work in it more efficiently without worry from home (29).

Ngotho's alienation from the land is recorded in a story to his son, Njoroge. It started with his conscription to the war effort during World War I. Upon his return, his family is forcibly removed from their ancestral land. Ironically, Ngotho is forced to work on Jacobo's land and work on his "own land" for Howlands.

By acting as an informer, Jacobo received permission to plant a cash crop of pyrethrum. Jacobo's wealth is not a conscious problem for Ngotho until the strike meeting when he finally realizes that Jacobo was in the pay of the white establishment. Ngotho discovers Jacobo has "... crystallized into a concrete betrayal of the people. He became the physical personification of the long years of waiting and suffering- Jacobo was a Traitor" (58). Like Kabonyi in The River Between and later Karanja in A Grain of Wheat, Jacobo personifies those who betrayed their communities for the power of colonial affluence and favour. They are victims too of a divisive foreign ideology, just as Judas was victimized for his predestined betrayal of Christ. Jacobo like Karanja is a lackey of his white overseer.²⁴

Howlands, a colonial usurper, is obsessed with owning the

land. He takes pride in seeing Ngotho work his land because Ngotho "tended the young tea plants as if they were his own" (30). For Ngotho alienation from ancestral land also means the death of his family:

...it was a spiritual loss. When a man was severed from the land of his ancestors where would he sacrifice to the Creator? How could he come in contact with the founders of the tribe, Gikuyu and Mumbi? (74).

Ngotho's decision to attack Jacobo in order to prove his worth to Boro, results in a near-collapse of his family. By refusing to take up Boro's demand for armed resistance against the settler class, Ngotho erodes his own status as family head. Ironically, it is the weight of Ngotho's guilt that creates his betrayal of his family. It is not an active betrayal or collaboration in the sense of Jacobo, but a passive one built from a series of inactions. In that way he is similar to Waiyaki; he was unable to respond against colonial oppression until it was too late. Above all it was Ngotho's guilt that undermined his protective status as father, particularly in the case of Boro:

He had not wanted to be accused by a son anymore because when a man was accused by the eyes of his son who had been to war and had witnessed the death of a brother he felt guilty (74).

For his part, Boro had no future on the land. He was unable to work in the city either. While his generation's fight against colonialism through "Mau Mau" was an active progressive cause, Boro as an individual, affected by the loss of a brother and a father, is almost nihilistic in his response to colonial oppression. His passion for revenge because of the death of his father and brother consumed him. Two distinct passages illustrate his alienation from his roots in the soil and his betrayal of his family. Firstly, a verbal exchange with a lieutenant in the "Mau Mau":

'Don't you believe in anything?'
 'No. Nothing. Except revenge.'
 'Return of the lands?'
 'The lost land will come back to us maybe. But I've lost too many of those whom I loved for land to mean much to me. It would be a cheap victory' (102).

Secondly, his confrontation with Howlands adds a climatic force to the drama between the white settler and peasant farmer on the ridges:

'I killed Jacobo.'
 'I know'
 'He betrayed black people. Together, you killed many sons of the land. You raped our women. And finally you killed my father. Have you anything to say in your defence?'
 Boro's voice was flat. No colour of hatred, anger or triumph. No sympathy.
 'Nothing.'
 'Nothing. Now you say nothing. But when you took our ancestral lands - '

'This is my land! Mr. Howlands said this as a man would say, This is my woman.
'Your land!, Then, you white dog, you'll die on your land! (128-29).

With the death of Howlands and probable execution of Boro, a generational colonial struggle has reached its climax. The weight of the family's survival now weighs heavily on Ngotho's two wives, Njeri²⁵ and Nyokabi as well as on the naive and suicidal Njoroge, the youngest son of Nyokabi, whom they must prepare for the future. Colonialism in the Emergency period of Kenyan history has produced the conditions of betrayal in Weep Not Child. Jacobo as a "loyalist collaborator" actively betrays his community even if it means that he is despised by the colonial settler class, namely Howlands. Ngotho's betrayal is a passive one; unable to protect any of his four sons from the destructive colonial machine, he jeopardizes the survival of his remaining family members by spontaneously attacking Jacobo. Boro's betrayal is a complex one and originates from his own sense of having been betrayed by the British colonial administration who refused to acknowledge the support of the Kenyan peasantry and working classes' defense of imperialist interests during World War II. But more importantly, he betrays the communal interests of "Mau Mau" by fighting for personal retribution. Instead of fighting for the freedom of the land and the protection of his family, Boro contemptuously murders Howlands and Jacobo. His motive for personal revenge undermines his revolutionary consciousness, making him

vulnerable to capture, torture, and inevitably death. By continually reprimanding his father's passivity in the face of colonial exploitation, Boro goads his father into a rash act of spontaneity which threatens the survival of the family.

A Grain of Wheat, the third of Ngugi's colonial novels, does not rely on the physical landscape to set up the conflicts and passions of his protagonists. The ridges, especially Thabai, form the central focus of the five days before independence and the nine days after. However, it is the characters who show change. Mumbi is related to her namesake, the founding mother of the Gikuyu. She acts as a mother confessor to the guilt-ridden Mugo. Like Njeri and Nyokabi in Weep Not Child, she is the strength of both the present and the future. Gikonyo, whose name closely resembles the father figure Gikuyu, is a carpenter and creative builder. Countering their growth are two isolated individuals: Karanja, who follows the collaborationist route developed through Jacobo in Weep Not Child, and Mugo, a flawed seer who follows his own misguided direction to avoid becoming part of the Thabain community's struggle to preserve its independence. Unlike his traditional name sake, Mugo wa Kibiro, Mugo's vision is paranoid; his isolation is destructive for the community and for himself. His role on the Kenyan landscape is a contradictory one as he is both a Judas because of his betrayal of Kihika, and a heroic figure at Riva detention camp.

Like Kihika, the forest freedom fighter, who is his nemesis, he is a man who relates strongly to the land, but in an isolated way. Both men play a symbolic role in terms of the political landscape of the novel as "grains of wheat."²⁶ Mugo's character takes on a degree of complexity through his added role in the novel's rain symbolism.

From Mugo's obsession with rain in Chapter one, it is possible to sense some of his mental instability. Mugo, the false champion of the detention camp, is clearly suffering psychologically for his betrayal of Kihika. Even the materials that make up his hut seem to be against him:

Sooty locks hung from the fern and grass thatch and all pointed at his heart. A clear drop of water was delicately suspended above him. The drop fattened and grew dirtier as it absorbed grains of soot (3).

"Sooty rain" and the "thought of cold drop" falling on his head are evidence that the elements are against him. Rain, usually a boon to the farmer, is seen by Mugo as one more element which accentuates a night of guilt. Jabbi clarifies the suffering that Mugo is undergoing as the result of the betrayal:

The opening paragraph of the novel is a subtle enactment of this guilt, or rather, of his inner conflict in grappling with its sustained concealment. It is the record of

a dream by Mugo on the Sunday morning preceding Uhuru now only four days away.²⁷

His guilt is reawakened further when he observes the "silent pool" in Mumbi's eyes while she narrates her own problems and those of the village of Thabai. Later, on Uhuru day, Mugo is able to walk in the rain before his visit to Gitogo's mother. Here and on the way back to his hut, Mugo suffers no more guilt-ridden nightmares. His confession to the village has finally lifted the burden of guilt from him. Killam sees this as "a cleansing rain, symbolizing his regeneration, a baptism for a new life."²⁸

This is an exaggeration as Mugo is about to be tried and later executed. Perhaps Mugo can be seen as finally joining the community by both confessing his guilt publicly and by saving Karanja's life.

Judging by General R's ironic comment: " 'Your deeds alone will condemn you... no-one will ever escape from his own actions,'" Mugo will not be totally judged on his betrayal of Kihika. After all he did incite a political defiance of Thompson's detention camp and he attempted to save a woman from a brutal beating in a counter-insurgency trench. Mugo's role as a Judas betrayer thus has its positive side effects. He has betrayed the messianic leader, Kihika, to the colonial authorities, but he ironically provides the spark for

opposition within the detention camps. By confessing his crime against the people, Mugo has cleared the air temporarily, giving the community the sense of a new start with the independence celebration. As the epigraph of the novel suggests: "grains of wheat" have the "potential for transformation," just as the leaders of the revolution or perceived leaders such as Mugo and Kihika had the potential to lead the revolution in Kenya. Their deaths as individual "grains of wheat" have not destroyed the whole crop, but have started the growth of other "grains" such as Gikonyo, General R. and Mumbi, who in their own ways have betrayed their community as well. Chapter Three will discuss in depth the theme of betrayal in A Grain of Wheat.

FOOTNOTES

1. All quotes from The River Between are from the 1975 re-set edition by Heinemann Educational Books.
2. All quotes from Weep Not Child are from the 1976 re-set edition by Heinemann Educational Books.
3. All quotes from A Grain of Wheat are from the 1975 re-set edition by Heinemann Educational Books.
4. All quotes from Petals of Blood are from the 1978 E.P. Dutton edition.
5. All quotes from Devil on the Cross are from the 1982 edition by Heinemann Educational Books.
6. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, "The Culture of Silence and Fear," South, May 1984 :38.
7. It is Waiyaki's martyrdom that is a major source of resistance to British colonial authority. See Carl G. Rosberg and John Nottingham, The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya, (London: Pall Mall, 1966) 13-14.

David Cook and Michael Okenimpke, Ngugi wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writings (London: Heinemann, 1983) 70.
8. Werner Glinda, "The River Between and its Forerunners: A Contribution to the Theory of the Kenyan Novel," World Literature Written in English 26.2(1986) :226.
9. Michael Rice, "The River Between - A Discussion," from G.D. Killam, (ed) Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o, (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984) 26.
10. Charles E. Nnolim, "Background Setting: Key to the Structure of Ngugi's The River Between," Obsidian 2.2(1976) :22-23.
11. The Kiama is a traditional ruling group of elders who arbitrate disputes and oversee customs. See Elizabeth Gunner, A Handbook for Teaching African Literature, (London: Heinemann, 1984) 38.

Kenyatta refers to several levels or grades of Kiama which are part of the steps to eldership. It is unlikely if Ngugi's "Waiyaki" would qualify for the privilege of a sitting on a Kiama council because of his youth and lack of experience. Ironically, an insincere Kabonyi uses this

argument against Waiyaki during his public trial. See Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mount Kenya (New York: Vintage Books, 1962, reprinted from London: Secker and Warburg, 1938) 193-197, 209-214.

12. The role of the Mugumo tree as a fertility symbol is explored in an early Ngugi short story, simply called "Mugumo."

See Secret Lives and other Stories, (New York: Lawrence Hill, 1975) 2-8.

13. Mugo wa Kibiro was a great seer who "prophesied the invasion of the Gikuyu country by the whiteman." Chege and his son, Waiyaki were supposedly related to him. Their job was to unite the ridges against the onslaught of colonialism, in particular to prepare for the danger of the Siriana Mission which had already converted Joshua and Kabonyi from Makuyu. It is difficult for Waiyaki to accept his blood tie to Mugo as well as Kameno's betrayal of him, particularly after Chege's death. Later he too must suffer the scorn of the ridges.

See Kenyatta 41-48 for a complete account of the prophecy.

14. Rosberg and Nottingham 105.

15. Charity Waciuma, Daughters of Mumbi, quoted from ed. Charlotte H. Bruner, Unwinding Threads: Writing by Women in Africa (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983) 84.

16. Kenyatta 129.

Kenyatta goes further in defending Clitoridectomy "No proper Gikuyu would dream of marrying a girl who had not been circumcised, and vice versa. It is taboo for a Gikuyu man or woman to have sexual relations with someone who has not undergone this operation" (127).

17. Alex Zanotelli has found the repression of female sexuality is absolute. Brutally maimed, she is forced to keep her sexual behaviour within a marital institution. See Maria Rosa Cutrofelli, Women in Africa: Roots of Oppression (London: Zed Press, 1983) 137.

In the Sudan one of three types of circumcision, pharaonic is pre-dominant, making up 83% of residential circumcision. It consists of "the removal of the clitoris, labia minora and labia majora with two sides being sewn together. Over 90% of the women are circumcised in Northern Sudan between age four to eight. Women are debilitated between 15 to 40

days while the wounds heal.

Asma El Dareen, Woman, Why do you Weep?: Circumcision and its Consequences (London: Zed Press, 1982) iii-v, 1-8, 92-106, 121.

In Kenya colonial authorities took action to limit the excision of the clitoris after 1926. Excisions and pharaonic circumcision are still practiced today in Kenya. It is estimated in 1982 that 4.7 million women in Kenya have had this operation, although the Luo, the second largest tribe in Kenya doesn't practice circumcision, which therefore leads to the problem of over exaggeration. Moves by President Moi to ban female circumcision have come to naught because any serious action would undermine a precarious political situation especially if the Gikuyu rural population believes that banning of female circumcision is immoral or creates infertility in women.

See Leonard J. Kouba and Judith Muasher, "Female Circumcision in Africa: An Overview," African Studies Review 28.1(1985) :95-110.

In a recent article in an African magazine, thieves in Wakulima market, Nairobi were found to be uncircumcised and were promptly taken to a clinic where the deed was performed. "Market workers [said] that they had to carry out circumcision to prevent theft. Most thefts were carried out by the uncircumcised. The knife was the only cure."

See New African Magazine July 1985 :35.

18. James Olney, Tell Me Africa: An Approach to African Literature (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973) 90-91.
19. Tobe Levin, "Women as Scapegoats of Culture and Cult: An Activist's View of Female Circumcision in Ngugi's The River Between, ed., Carole Boyce Davis and Anne Adams Graves, Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature (Trenton New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986) 205-221.
20. For a discussion of this concept, particularly the alienation of Gikuyu land by the rise of settler colonialism. See Lionel Cliffe, "Penetration and Rural Development in the East African Context" ed., Lionel Cliffe, J.S. Coleman, and M.R. Doornbos, Government and Rural Development in East Africa: Essays on Political Penetration (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977) 19-50.

Christopher Leo, Land and Class in Kenya (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1984) 27-43.

- ²¹. See Ngugi's Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary (London and Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981) 73.
- ²². Jacobo is not a Gikuyu name. It may be derived from Joseph Conrad's story, "A Smile of Fortune," from 'Twixt Land and Sea: Three Tales (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1978) 13-84.

An Alfred Jacobus is portrayed as an economic opportunist who preys on foreign ships who arrive at Maurituus Island in the Indian Ocean. Ngugi was studying Conrad at Makerere University at the time Weep Not Child was being written.

Conrad's rogue Jacobus, through subtle means is able to dominate the chandler trade in Mauritius, while enticing a "sea-captain" into economic dependence. Jacobus victimizes his illegitimate daughter, Alice to secure profit from cargo of rotting potatoes. The "sea captain" is initially conscious of Jacobus' purpose: "Was it the sign of some dark design against my commercial innocence?" Yet his resolve to resist Jacobus is broken through a perverse fascination, although no real affection for Alice. Both Jacobo and Jacobus betray family and community interests for the sake of money. There lies a small parallel between Conrad and Ngugi.

- ²³. Ime Ikiddeh, "Ngugi wa Thiong'o: The Novelist as Historian" ed., Bruce King and Kolawole Ogungbesan, Celebration of Black and African Writing (London: Oxford University Press, 1975) 210.
- ²⁴. Cook and Okenimpke 57.
- ²⁵. Njeri has the clearest perception of the deceit of colonialism than any of the characters in Weep Not Child.

... it seems all clear as daylight. The white man makes a law or a rule. Through the rule or law... he takes away the land and then imposes many laws on the people concerning that land and many other things, all without people agreeing first as is the old days of the tribe. Now a man rises and opposes that law which made right the taking away of land. Now that man is taken by the same people who made the laws against which that man was fighting. He is tried under those alien rules. Now tell me who is that man who can win even if the angels of God were his lawyers... (75).

26. David Cook, "A New Earth: A Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's A Grain of Wheat" ed., David Cook, African Literature: A Critical View (London: Longman, 1977) 104.
27. Bu-Buakei Jabbi, "The Structure of Symbolism in A Grain of Wheat," Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :225.
28. G.D. Killam, An Introduction to the Writings of Ngugi (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1980) 63.

THE SEEDS OF A NATIONAL BETRAYAL
IN A GRAIN OF WHEAT

Chapter Three

Ngugi was interested in both the historical and psychological struggle in his analysis of betrayal. The role of Frantz Fanon, who Ngugi was reading immediately prior to writing A Grain of Wheat, was another important inspiration for the writing of the novel. Ngugi frequently quoted Fanon in Homecoming, which he called "an integral part of the fictional world of The River Between, Weep Not Child, and A Grain of Wheat."¹

In a 1963 review of Fred Majdalany's A State of Emergency: The Full Story of Mau Mau, Ngugi discusses the necessity of a revolutionary violence as a means to change a corrupt and oppressive colonial government:

Violence in order to change an intolerable unjust social order is not savagery: it purifies man. Violence to protect and preserve an unjust, oppressive social order is criminal and diminishes men.²

This parallels the thinking of Fanon in Wretched of the Earth,³ yet Ngugi's review was published a year before Ngugi read Fanon at Leeds University.⁴

The theme of betrayal in modern literature often reveals the dishonest and corrosive foundations of personal and historical relationships.⁵ In Harold Pinter's Betrayal, Jerry and Robert, two close friends, betray their friendship as well as their marriages. Emma, Robert's wife, also betrays him by having an affair with Jerry. All three characters avoid discussing their betrayals and in doing so perpetuate the initial betrayal between Jerry and Emma. Social alienation observed in this play is a direct cause of betrayal.⁶

A direct comparison between the triangle of betrayal between Gikonyo, Mumbi, and Karanja in Ngugi's A Grain of Wheat and the three characters in Pinter's Betrayal is not possible. However, if we start with the conclusion of A Grain of Wheat we realize that the damage of betrayal is alienating, but not debilitating. After the renewal of seven days of rest in the hospital as a result of the footrace accident, Gikonyo is ready for change. His transformation is at first hesitant as he tries to forget that Mumbi cares for Karanja's child. Mumbi reminds him of the need to communicate and to avoid past errors:

'... People try to rub out things, but they cannot. Things are not so easy. What has passed between us is too much to be passed over in a sentence. We need to talk, to open our hearts to one another, examine them, and then together plan the future we want. But now, I must go, for the child is

ill' (213).

Metaphorically, the sick child represents the difficulty which lies ahead in the potential of the marriage between Gikonyo and Mumbi as well as the problems inherited from an incomplete revolutionary war, where Kenya was divided into "freedom fighters" and "loyalists." Every character in the novel is somehow tainted from the revolutionary struggle in Kenya. Each major character endures or participates in a betrayal. Mugo, Karanja, Gikonyo, Kihika, and Mumbi make choices. Each character in his own way betrays his community, his nation and his friends during the "Mau Mau" struggle. Ngugi's comments, written before the writing of A Grain of Wheat, illuminate the results of damage done to the social fabric of Kenya during the State of Emergency in Kenya between 1952 and 1963:

The terrible thing about the "Mau Mau" war was the destruction of family life, distrust of personal relationships; you found a friend betraying a friend, a father suspicious of his son, a brother doubling the sincerity of a brother.⁷

Clearly, the social alienation present in both the novel and in colonial Kenya as well, are the result of a divided society. Most of the main characters in A Grain of Wheat are marked by either a private or political betrayal. Aberrahmane Arab lists the main betrayals without analyzing them:

Private betrayal he [Ngugi] seems to argue is no less important than political betrayal. Linkage exists through a web of treachery and intrigue. Mugo betrays a friend and the movement. Karanja is also a traitor. He joins the troops of repression and seduces Mumbi. Gikonyo feels guilty as he confessed the oath, and thus betrayed the movement.⁸

Furthermore, Arab feels that the pursuit of other betrayals in the novel would be trivial.⁹ Are the betrayals of the "Mau Mau" leadership any less significant than these of villagers? The contradictions of General R., Lieutenant Koinandu, and Kihika, especially the latter, are just as significant as Mugo, Gikonyo, and Mumbi if one is to fully understand the destructive roots of colonialism in the novel.

I

The betrayal and execution of Kihika, the heroic guerilla fighter, is a result of colonial violence against the Gikuyu people. He is an heroic martyr whose flaws are brought through his relationship with Mugo.

Ngugi has developed the character Kihika beyond an original "Mau Mau" revolutionary. Through the use of disguise and daring, Kihika is built into an epic "Mau Mau" character reminiscent of Stanley Mathenge or Dedan Kimathi, two of the

more important leaders of the Land and Freedom Army of the 1950's. A play by Ngugi and Micere Githae Mugo on the latter would be written eight years after the publication of A Grain of Wheat. Several ironies humanize and expand Kihika's character. First, he is careless, perhaps even foolhardy, in first approaching Mugo immediately after the murder of District Commissioner Robson. Second, Kihika uses the bible, a primary means of establishing a colonial infrastructure, as a source of revolutionary inspiration.

Politically Mugo wishes to avoid organizational commitment, preferring instead to fantasize about his role as the liberator, Moses. Ironically, it is Kihika who chooses him to organize underground political support in the new reorganized hamlet of Thabai.

Mugo tills his land as an isolated orphan, without commitment to family or village:

Why should Kihika drag me into a struggle and problems I have not created? Why? He is not satisfied with butchering men and women and children. He must call on me to bathe in the blood. I am not his brother. I am not his sister. I have not done harm to anybody. I only looked after my little shamba and crops. And now I must spend my life in prison because of the folly of one man (168-69).

He is able to define his hatred of Kihika as one of

jealousy. Unlike Mugo, Kihika was part of the land. His family would continue:

Kihika who had a mother and a father, and a brother, and a sister, could play with death. He had people who would mourn his end, who would name their children after him, so that Kihika's name would never die from man's lips. Kihika had everything, Mugo had nothing (169).

Paradoxically, Mugo is a victim as well as a traitor. His poverty and ignorance lead him to his decision to betray Kihika. He lacks a national consciousness and he has no stake in the community. As Palmer suggests, Mugo's hatred:

...stems not from jealousy but from fear that Kihika and the kind of action he proposes threaten Mugo's hopes of success and liberation from a life of squalor.¹⁰

This view is limiting as we cannot ignore Mugo's own definition for the motivation for betrayal. To re-emphasize part of an earlier quote:

Kihika had everything; Mugo had nothing. This thought obsessed him; it filled him with a foamless fury, a tearless anger, that obliterated other things and made him unable to sleep (169-170).

Mugo's jealous fixation will weaken his will to act rationally and force him to act against the community. He is

unable to make a decision after waiting a week for Kihika's return. Ngugi's description of Mugo being "caught.... undecided" suggests to a certain extent that Mugo is rootless and therefore unable to control himself. Physically, he has just spent a week of sleepless nights and is totally exhausted. Symbolically, he chooses a path to his shamba that is "unused" in order to avoid meeting anyone. Ironically, he ignores the wastes of the former village of Old Thabai brought about by the relocation of the village by colonial authorities. Dew soaks his feet, causing him to tremble uncontrollably. Even while resting, wind blows "dust" and "rubbish" in his face. All of these events seem to foreshadow the results of his betrayal—the creation of a colonial wasteland and the destruction of a warrior of the land. The discovery of a wanted poster of Kihika gives him a twisted pleasure as he fantasizes about his role as Moses:

And in his dazed head was a tumult of thoughts that acquired the concrete logic of a dream. The argument was so clear, so exhilarating, it explained things he had been unable to solve in his life. I am important. I must not die. To keep myself alive, healthy, strong - to wait for my mission in life - is a duty to myself, to men and women of tomorrow. If Moses had died in the reeds, who would ever have known that he was destined to be a great man? (171).

The thoughts of reward and renewed life with children, a wife, and a big house replaced the anguish of his previous

jealousies, but first he must withstand the taunts of the "loyalist" guards, who question his manhood as well as endure the slap and spit of the District Officer, John Thompson. His physical collapse at this point is a moral and political one as well. After being abused by Thompson and his loyalist guards, Mugo loses his purpose; he now becomes the lackey of Thompson, his "Effendi" (boss) recognizing his subordination to Thompson as well as the bitterness of betrayal:

He did not want the money. He did not want to know what he had done (174).

From the depth of this despair, Mugo will be able to prevent further betrayal and even atone for his treachery by attempting to save a pregnant Wambuka at the security trench and by initiating a hunger strike at Riva concentration camp.

Ironically, it is Mugo who hears the confession of Mumbi who was advised to seek his help by Kihika. Mugo's first reaction is to negate her discussion of Wambuka, Njeri, and Kihika. "He did not want to look at those things.... Leave me alone, he wanted to tell her" (121). Yet Mumbi's own confession seems to relieve Mugo momentarily of the weight of his guilt:

... before Mumbi told her story, the huts had run by him, and never rang a thing of

the past. Now they were different: the huts, the dust, the trench, Wambuka, Kihika, Karanja, detention camps, the white face, barbed-wire, death. He was conscious of the graves beside the trench. He shuddered cold, and the fear of galloping hooves changed into the terror of an undesired discovery. Two years before, in the camps, he would not have cared how Wambuka lay and felt in the grave. How was it that Mumbi's story had cracked open his dulled inside and released imprisoned thoughts and feelings? (149).

A confrontation the following day with Mugo, nearly results in Mumbi's death as Mugo madly attempts to strangle her. When he confesses to her she is not able to seek revenge: "... she did not want anybody to die or come to harm because of her brother" (181). Mumbi even attempts to persuade Mugo to run away. Reconstruction is now her main motive; she does not seek the blood revenge of Lt. Koinandu and General R. The need for renewal is reflected in a conversation during Independence day with Warui and Wambui:

'I must go now. I'm sure the fire is ready at home. Perhaps we should not worry too much about the meeting... or... about Mugo. We have got to live.'

'Yes, we have the village to build,' Warui agreed.

'And the market tomorrow, and the fields to dig and cultivate ready for the next season,' observed Wambui...

'And children to look after,' finished Mumbi.... (210).

Mugo intervenes to avoid the persecution or blame of another

accused. Ironically, in Mugo's case, it is to save the life of another traitor, Karanja. His confession is brutally frank:

'You asked for Judas,'... 'You asked for the man who led Kihika to this tree, here. That man stands before you, now. Kihika came to me by night. He put his life into my hands, and I sold it to the whiteman. And this thing has eaten into my life all these years' (193).

Ngugi explains in Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary the importance of Mugo's suffering and fate:

In the novel A Grain of Wheat, I tried, through Mugo who carried the burden of mistaken revolutionary heroism, to hint at the possibilities of the new Kenyatta. But that was in 1965-66 and nothing was clear then about the extent to which Kenyatta had negated his past, nor the sheer magnitude of the suffering it would cause to our society today.¹¹ (Emphasis is mine).

II

Kihika is a true patriot of the Kenyan people. He, unlike Mugo, represents the interests of the peasant who seeks to reclaim land lost from the Highlands of Central Kenya. Kihika attempts to stand above the other participants in the Land and Freedom Army. He continually finds support for the independence of his people within the contradictions inherent

within the Bible. Ironically, his inspiration to direct the revolution comes not from animist or class traditions, but from the hard lessons of the Old Testament. As one critic notes:

... he is the young hero who sees the vision of an independent Kenya, [he] is moved by the story of Moses and the children of Israel, and like the great prophet he hopes to lead his people to the promised land. His eloquence makes people aware of their servitude, and inspires them to plunge into the struggle for freedom; it is his martyrdom which 'waters the tree of freedom' and keeps the struggle alive by infusing new life into the party, which finally leads to freedom.¹²

The image of Kihika's Christ-like martyrdom seemed to stay with Ngugi three years after the publication of A Grain of Wheat:

... Christ himself had always championed the cause of the Jewish masses against both the Pharisees (equivalent to our privileged bourgeoisie) and the Roman colonialists: he was in any case crucified on the orders of the Roman conquerors. One could say that if Christ had lived in Kenya in 1952, or in South Africa or Rhodesia today, he would have been crucified as a Mau Mau terrorist, or a Communist.¹³

By tracing the early life of Kihika, Ngugi gives him historical depth as a nationalist figure. Kihika epitomizes the history of many Kenyan nationalists who suffered and learned under the tutelage of missionary school.¹⁴ To him the

revolutionary experience of fighting in the Second World War shattered the invincibility of the British Empire. Once he combined this experience, with an understanding of the historical roots of the struggle against colonialism, Kihika was prepared to take on the responsibility of leadership.¹⁵ Ironically, he is able to extract Biblical references to support the necessity of violence in the revolutionary struggle.

Kihika is not, however, a saint. He is a man with definite problems which will endanger his ability to lead the struggle. One source of instability comes with his reaction to his assassination of Tom Robson. Nazareth has compared Kihika's mental anguish after killing of Robson with the mental disorder recorded by Fanon during the Algerian Revolution.¹⁶ The most important flaw in his character is his naive trust in the traitor, Mugo. It is his over-confidence and carelessness in trying to recruit Mugo that costs him his life. Fortunately, for the movement his death is seen as martyrdom. His hanging symbolically parallels the crucifixion of Christ and provides the impetus for General R. and Lt. Koinmandu to continue the fight for independence.

By trusting Mugo, Kihika indirectly betrays the revolution. By making himself vulnerable he causes a breakdown in the leadership of the "Mau Mau movement." Mugo is not a

traitor by nature, but he is confused and irritated by the responsibility Kihika burdens him with. A politically disciplined recruiter would not announce himself as a murderer of a district officer, yet Kihika does. Kihika does not take sufficient care in screening Mugo. While he is forced to seek shelter from the police, it is not made explicit enough why Kihika thinks Mugo would become an ideal recruit. Mugo's reaction is one of fear and irritation. Yet Kihika is unaware of Mugo's resistance, and he seeks to use him as a sounding board for a rationale for the necessity of violent resistance to colonial rule. Kihika's failure to use the "Mau Mau" loyalty oath brings about his downfall.

The rejection of the oath by Kihika might be seen as a betrayal of the movement, Firstly, he is cynical of its value because of the large number of recruits who give up its secrets. Secondly, his colonial Christian upbringing leads him to accept the value of an "individual's" honesty more than the collective power of the oath and tribe. Despite Kihika's rejection of the ideological support for mobilizing Kenyan peasants, the oath was an important vehicle for recruitment. While there would always be those who would betray a revolution for the right price, the absence of educated political leaders necessitated the use of ceremonies and loyalties that the ordinary peasant understood.¹⁷

Nevertheless, Kihika was prepared to die for the cause of liberation. Unlike Karanja and Gikonyo, he refused to divulge the oath. Kihika is the regenerative symbol of the "grain of wheat," that reference cited by Ngugi as the necessary foundation for the growth of the liberation struggle.¹⁸

Yet this symbol is not without its contradictions as Kihika's leadership lacks a firm ideology. The goal of reacquiring the land is missing from his speech to Mugo. Freedom is couched in terms of revenge:

We must kill. Put to sleep the enemies of black man's freedom. They say we are weak. They say we cannot win against the bomb. If we are weak, we cannot win. I despise the weak. Let them be trampled to death. I spit on the weakness of our fathers. Their memory gives me no pride. And even today, tomorrow, the weak and those with feeble hearts shall be wiped from the earth (166).

Kihika's selection of Mugo as village organizer is not based on any knowledge of his commitment to the liberation of the land, but merely on the basis that Mugo is a "self-made man." Yet by the end of the novel Ngugi is suggesting that "self-made" men such as the one depicted by the opportunistic MP are inhibiting the socio-economic development of the popular will of the masses.¹⁹

In a recent study, Maughan-Brown has observed another

contradiction in Kihika's character:

[Kihika] is depicted as an abstract dogmatist, a man insensitive to, and uncomprehending of, his girlfriend Wambuku."²⁰

He returns to Kihika's earlier years where as a child he "loved drawing attention on himself by saying and doing things that he knew other boys and girls dared not say or do" (100).

If Kihika is guilty of betraying "the movement" through his arrogance and by his undisciplined recruitment of Mugo, these weakness are understandable in the historical context. Leadership was not a strong point of the "Mau Mau" movement. As Fanon points out:

The political leaders go underground in the towns, give the impression to the colonialists that they have no connection with the rebels, or seek refuge abroad. It very seldom happens that they join the people in the hills. In Kenya, for example, during the Mau Mau rebellion, not a single well-known nationalist declared his affiliation with the movement, or even tried to defend the men involved in it.²¹

Even those in the novel who are in a position to help, such as Karanja and Gikonyo, are unable or unwilling to fight for the community.

III

Those who sought to collaborate openly with the colonial administration, such as Karanja, were ostracized and eventually exiled from their communities.²² As a colonially appointed chief, he selfishly searches for an "individual" freedom at the expense of the collective freedom of his community. The public betrayal of that community leads him to openly collaborate with Thompson and the colonial administration. To Karanja, Mumbi's refusal to marry him was a bitter pill to swallow. Her rejection leads to both obsessive behaviour and punitive actions against the community:

He sold the Party and Oath secrets, the price of remaining near Mumbi. Thereafter the wheel of things drove him into greater and greater reliance on the whiteman. That reliance gave him power - power to save, to imprison, to kill. Men cowered before him; he despised and also feared them. Women offered their naked bodies to him; even some of the most respectable come to him by night (182).

One critic suggests that Karanja's motive for betrayal is based on more than just his attempt to win Mumbi:

It is not only Karanja's disillusionment with love, but also this vision of universal selfishness, callousness, and preoccupation with self-preservation that shapes his determination to brace himself for the struggle for life, and compels him

to look after his own interests.²³

In the world of his own village Karanja is both hated and held in contempt for his role as an intermediary for District Officer, Thompson. Despite Karanja's betrayal of community, Ngugi still makes him to some extent a sympathetic character. He is portrayed as both victim and victimizer. His treatment by and response to Thompson and his wife clearly make him a victim of their colonial patronage and racism. In his struggle to secure what he views as freedom, Karanja is forced to feel inferior while drinking tea with Mrs. Thompson. Witness the contrast that Ngugi develops in Margery Thompson versus Karanja:

Margery sat opposite Karanja and crossed her legs. She put her cup on the arm of the chair. Karanja held his in both hands afraid of spilling a drop on the carpet. He winced everytime he brought the cup near his lips and nostrils (35).

He is afraid to ask the Thompson's about their plans to leave after the Uhuru celebrations.

Karanja resents being used as an errand boy by both Thompsons, but he is willing to endure the humiliation of it if it will enhance his position among the white settlers, administration, or villagers. He has a tendency to fantasize about a potential power in uncomfortable situations such as

when he revealed Mumbi's rejection of him to Margery Thompson:

Then gradually he becomes exhilarated, he wished Mwaura had seen him at the house. He also wished that the houseboy had been present, for then news of his visit would have spread. As it was, he himself would have to do the telling: this would carry less weight and power (36).

Karanja's alienation and later his betrayal of the community is a result of his fixation on colonial values and customs. His rejection of his community means that he had accepted the racial stereotypes of the colonizers.²⁴ Karanja feels so dependent on the established power of the Thompsons he cannot conceive of a life separate from them. In this way, Karanja is a victim of colonialism which both occupied his community and his individual psyche.²⁵ Karanja's oppression is complete once he has divorced himself from his community. His self-betrayal is that of a victim. As Fanon pointed out, peasants cannot relinquish control of land without giving up individual freedom.

There is no occupation of territory, on the one hand, and independence of persons on the other. It is the country as a whole, its daily pulsation that are contested, disfigured, in the hope of a final destruction. Under this condition, the individual's breathing is an observed, an occupied breathing. It is a combat breathing.²⁶

Karanja chooses the route of betrayal consciously as he naively believes his loyalty to the colonial administration will be rewarded. He is crestfallen when Thompson announces his departure to England. He is totally unprepared for the emergence of the domination of "the Party". It is not as though he has not been warned. Both his mother, Wairimu and Mumbi have prepared him for the truth yet he chooses to ignore them:

During the Emergency, Wairimu disapproved of her son becoming a homeguard and a Chief and said so. 'Don't go against the people. A man who ignores the voice of his own people comes to no good end' (195-196).

Ironically, his survival is ensured by the confession of another traitor, Mugo. During Independence Day, the arrival of two captioned buses, "Narrow Escape" and "Lucky One" chart his course to exile. During his brief stop at Githima, he mentally recounts his life as a traitor. The process of understanding his betrayal is at first limited and incoherent as he is unable to eat his supper at the bus station. He only "vaguely remembered the nightmare he had undergone at the meeting when General R. called for the traitor to go to the platform" (198).

His first definite feeling is one of fear, fear of being killed and fear of being ruled by "black power." He visualizes his death as though he was as a helpless rabbit torn to pieces

by a pack of dogs. Saved by Mugo's confession, he is finally able to ask himself why he is afraid to die. His answer was only "somehow he had not felt guilty." After all he was responsible for the death of many freedom fighters. He had killed for pleasure. This "consciousness of power, this ability to dispose of human life by merely pulling a trigger, so obsessed him that it became a need." Unable to comprehend the meaning of Mugo's confession, he merely thinks it was wasted on him. In a fit of self-hatred, after suddenly remembering Mumbi's rejection, Karanja wanders outside and nearly gets hit by a car.

Remembering his attempt to feel pity and sorrow for Kihika after he was hanged, only brings on more doubts and more ironic rationalizations:

What is freedom? ... Was death like that freedom? Was going to detention freedom? Was any separation from Mumbi freedom? (199).

These questions led to the choice of betrayal: "soon after this, he confessed the oath and joined the home guards to save his own life" (Emphasis is mine). The clarity of his betrayal now became evident as his role as the "hooded man" came back to him. As Robson pointed out:

The "hooded self" makes us aware of one of the key issues in the book: self-identification. As well as finding their roles in the changing order of society, characters have also to discover and come to terms with the tragedy of betrayal and self-betrayal that events have forced upon them.²⁷

Unlike Mugo, who betrayed one man, Karanja had betrayed the whole community. As the "hooded self" he had anonymously betrayed "those involved in 'Mau Mau' " as they were forced to queue in front of him. Even while recalling this, he could still feel the presence of the hood and he could sense the way he "saw the world."

The illusion of anonymous power presented by the colonial administration dissipates once he is confronted with a poster of Mugo at the train crossing: "The picture of Mugo at the platform, like a ghost rose before him, merging with that of the hooded man." The "merging" is the moment of truth for Karanja. Finally, an acknowledgement of betrayal has occurred. Mugo and Karanja are now one. The eyes of the crowd that watched Mugo as he confessed the betrayal of Kihika now seem to angrily judging Karanja at the train station.

This experience parallels the screeching arrival of a train²⁸ which painfully reminds Karanja of another failure, his race with Gikonyo to Rung'ei station. The "independence" train appears to reject him: "swish(ing) past him, the lights,

the engine and the coaches so close that the wind threw him back." Karanja is left in "silence" and in "a night-grown darker", a victim of self betrayal and a traitor to the community. He is now merely a "worthless... and harmful weed" that has been discarded by the people of Thaibai and Rung'ei."²⁹

IV

More victimized, yet less involved in the national betrayal are Mumbi and Gikonyo. It is the problems of their relationship that show the breakdown in the communal spirit of the Gikuyu peasantry.

As extensions of the creation of the Gikuyu people, the plight of Mumbi and Gikonyo is the fate of the tribe. Gikonyo represents the plight of an ordinary peasant. At first he is supportive and loyal to the liberation struggle, but his betrayal of the oath weakens his role in both family and community. His choices or options will be guided by the fate of others. Firstly, Mumbi chooses him as a lover over the faster runner, Karanja. Secondly, his regeneration at the end of the novel, is made possible by the confession of Mugo. Thirdly, his second race against Karanja results in a broken leg, but it gives him time to reassess his earlier mistreatment

of Mumbi.

While in the hospital, Gikonyo decides to carve a stool for Mumbi. This is a symbolic return to the basic skills that originally won her to him earlier in the novel.³⁰ Gikonyo has finally learned to love again.

For Mumbi, however, the wounds of Gikonyo's personal betrayal are slower to heal. As she indicates:

People try to rub out things, but they cannot. Things are not so easy. What has passed between us is too much to be passed over in a sentence. We need to talk, to open our hearts to one another, examine them, and then together plan the future we want (213).

Perhaps Gikonyo has finally learned the value of a united struggle, both at home and in the nation, but change in Gikonyo is tentative - the stool isn't carved and Mumbi isn't as yet, pregnant.³¹

Previously, Gikonyo suffered when he lived in the isolation of detention. He is one of the first to confess the oath, fatalistically condemning his spirit to die alone. Without learning the circumstances, he condemns Mumbi for being unfaithful to him. He persecutes her without trying to discover the nature of her hardships during the "Emergency".

Only after the catharsis of the independence celebration and the confession of the Judas, Mugo will be awakened from his naive reticence. Earlier, he attempts to find happiness by emulating the petit-bourgeoisie practices of the Indian traders, by hoarding corn and beans, and by overcharging to increase his profit margins. In some respects then, he too is a traitor to the people. Ngugi points this out through Gikonyo's rejection of the traditional collectivist spirits:

God helps those who help themselves, it is said with figures pointing at a self-made man who has attained wealth and position, forgetting the thousands of others who labour and starve, day in, day out, without even improving their material lot. This moral so readily administered seemed true of Gikonyo. People in Thabai said: detention camps have taught him to rule himself (51).

Like Mugo and Karanja, Gikonyo became a victim of colonial alienation and for the most part he can only rely on his rituals of the past. While held in detention he clung to the memory of sexual union with Mumbi as he recalls in a confession to Mugo:

'It was being born again' 'I felt whole, renewed... I had made love to many woman, but I never had felt like that before' (86).

While this discussion provides an important insight into

the unity of the Mumbi-Gikonyo relationship, there is a certain weakness portrayed in this discussion. Micere Githae Mugo feels that:

Gikonyo idealizes Mumbi to cover up his own weakness and explain his surrender in detention... that he creates a goddess of Mumbi to cover that weakness.³²

The morning of his release from Yala detention camp reveals how dependant Gikonyo is on an idealized Mumbi who could hide his fears of betrayal, especially after the hanging of Gutu, his oath administrator:

His desire to see Mumbi was there. His mind was clear and he knew without guilt, what he was going to do. Word went round. All the detainees of Yala crowded to the walls of their compounds and watched him with chilled hostility. Gikonyo fixed his mind on Mumbi fearing that strength would leave his knees under the silent stare of all the other detainees. He walked on and the sound of his feet on the pavement leading to the office where screening, interrogations and confessions were made, seemed, in the absence of other noise, unnecessarily loud. The door closed behind him. The other detainees walked back to their rooms to wait for another journey to the quarry.... (98).

Both his idealization of Mumbi and his betrayal of the oath follow him like footsteps. Neither one of these weaknesses allows him an early release from detention. Because he refused to name the administrators of the oath, he remained

in detention for four more years. His love of the land, particularly "the green leaves" is lost. His release from detention is an ironic betrayal as a new prison, a wasteland of "dust" awaits him in the streets of Thaibai. "Some of the dust enters Gikonyo's eyes and throat." Thus even the lands seems to have betrayed him. The nightmare of Mumbi's "betrayal" is about to begin. The idyllic fantasies that he was so dependent upon in detention pained him like the dust that made his eyes water. "The years of waiting, the pious hopes, the steps on the pavement all come rushing into his heart to mock him" (99).

Like Karanja, Gikonyo feels alienated and isolated from the community. He has not only betrayed the movement, but he has betrayed himself as well. Rejecting communion with Mumbi, he wallows in self-pity instead. While Mumbi was salvation during internment so now she is his "betrayal":

She had betrayed the bond, the secret, between them: or perhaps there had never been any communion between them, nothing could grow between any two people. One lived alone, and like Gatu, went into the grave alone. Gikonyo greedily sucked sour pleasure from this reflection which he saw as a terrible revelation. To live and die alone was the ultimate truth (102).

He had chosen the same isolated path as Mugo and Karanja. Unlike them he had an opportunity for reconciliation with family and community. However, he must rediscover the

community and meet his nemesis, Karanja, before this was possible. His second encounter with the changed environment of his community was a frightening one. Sewage stank and the closed African shops were collapsing. One particular passage stands out as a grim reminder of Gikonyo's lost skills:

At the door of one building, Gikonyo picked up a broken plank; the fading letters on it, capitals, had lost their legs and hands; but after careful scrutiny he made out the word HOTEL. Inside was a mound of soil; bits of broken china, saucers and glasses were scattered on top. He tapped, pecked and poked the wall with the sharp end of the broken plank; suddenly cement and soil tumbled down, hollow, in increasing quantity, it seemed the wall would break and fall. Gikonyo rushed out, afraid of the building.... (102).

The possible reunion of Mumbi and Gikonyo can only take place after their elaborate confessions to Mugo and Gikonyo's subsequent confession to Mumbi and then to the community. If the nation or community is to survive, betrayal must be forgiven, first by opening communication as Mumbi suggests: "We need to talk, to open our hearts to one another, examine them, and then together plan for the future we want" (213). Gikonyo's plan to build a stool for Mumbi is a first step, but unfortunately the rhetoric of Harambee (pulling together) is not the "communal regeneration" that JanMohamed suggests.³³

Revolution is not romantic. It essentially means

suffering, death, and often betrayal. Yet despite the prominence of those themes, Ngugi's final chapter, "Harambee," is an attempt to bring unity to a new independent Kenya. Symbolically, the renewal for the Kenyan people was represented by the attempted reproachment between Gikonyo and Mumbi. "Harambee" was also the main political slogan by Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya's first Prime Minister. Yet it appears that there are more members of Gikuyu national bourgeoisie who are involved in accumulating "individual" wealth, opting for corrupt business practices, and engaging in black market activities³⁴ than rebuilding the communal spirit of the Gikuyu community. "Harambee" as presented by Ngugi is obviously a problematical pulling together. The actions of the "M.P." and the hoarding of Gikonyo are two small signs of the difficulty of this task. Since then Ngugi has repudiated "Harambee" as a hollow slogan designed to disguise the rush for spoils:

... the men Kenyatta, like Harry Thuku before him, could now only cite personal accumulation as the sole criterion of one's moral and political worth. The evidence is there for all the world to see. It is contained in that now famous attack on Bildad Kaggia, at Kandara, on 11 April 1965, only a year and five months after independence:

'We were together with Paul Ngei in jail. If you go to Ngei's home, he has planted a lot of coffee and other crops. What have you done for yourself? If you go to Kubai's home, he has a big house and has a nice shamba. Kaggia, what have you done for yourself? We were together with Kung'u

Karumba in jail, now he is running his own buses. What have you done for yourself?'³⁵

Another problem will be whether or not Gikonyo will complete the stool he imagines as a gift for Mumbi. There is a peculiar hesitation in how and when he will have time to complete the stool:

He could carve the stool now, after the hospital, before he resumed business, or in between business hours (212).

Like the transition to independence in Kenya; the wounds of Gikonyo's betrayal of Mumbi as well as his acceptance of Karanja's child, are slow to heal. Gikonyo's final acceptance of the child, which comes almost too late, is another step toward reconciliation; that is if Gikonyo is sincere. Karanja's child is the future as Lisa Curtis indicates:

Lives cannot be fashioned as Gikonyo fashions his stool, since they are products of uncontrollable forces. Like the liberated nation, the child's beginning was surrounded by guilt and moral failure. The bastard conceived in fear and hate that needs to be reared and nurtured at the expense of great personal sacrifice is the crowning symbol of the new Kenya.³⁶

Gikonyo's recognition of Mumbi's needs in their last meeting in the hospital goes beyond the child. For the first

time we see fragments of Gikonyo's concern for Mumbi as a person, not as a sexual goddess or whore betrayer. The process of concern begins with a simple mental observation about her fatigue:

He was surprised to find that tiredness in her eyes. How long had she been like this? What had happened to her over the last few days? (213).

An attempt to reclaim the past fails: "Will you go back to the house, light the fire, and see that things don't decay?"

He then returns to earlier concern. He realizes "that in future he would reckon with her feelings, her thoughts, her desires - a new Mumbi." She had inspired him again and helped him face his responsibility to the community in the future, but at tremendous costs to herself.

One of the final images of the novel project a difficult, but independent future for Kenyan women. The image of walking "away with determined steps, sad but almost sure" reflects an uncertainty about the future, but also a confidence about facing it. As a "guardian of the tribe" Mumbi acts as a culture bearer for her people not only by sustaining traditional standards, but also by leading the struggle for social change.³⁷ Other female characters will continue that struggle in Petals of Blood and Devil on the Cross.³⁸

Both Mumbi and Kihika, brother and sister of the revolution, are victimized by the social contradictions of a parasitical colonialism. Mumbi's sexual betrayal of her husband is not culpable, but it is a personal breakdown originating from the pressures of the counter-insurgency movement. Kihika's betrayal is not based on malice or on the need for revenge, but it is a result of his carelessness and overconfidence. He lacks the ideological perception needed to sustain a fragile independence movement. Mugo chooses to betray partially because of the dream of wealth and status, and partially out of the frustration of having been orphaned. Mumbi's sexual betrayal of Gikonyo was one brought about by the trickery of Karanja. Gikonyo's betrayal of the unity oath as well as his marital betrayal of Mumbi also resulted from intense colonial repression of the Emergency Period in colonial Kenya. Finally, there is Karanja, whose betrayal is the most complete as a colonial collaborator corrupted by the illusion of equality in the colonial system. Karanja's unquestioning support for the colonial administration is shattered by the exit of his colonial mentor, Howlands.

Mugo's betrayal is not permanent. Mugo accepts the need for a revolutionary justice that will placate his guilt. The real betrayer of the community of Thabai is Karanja. His abusive personal power is used to extract favours and use the colonial administration as a shield. Ostracized from the

Thabai during independence, Karanja would likely find a political home with other "loyalists" in the neo-colonial Kenyatta government.

The symptoms of the sickness of a larger national betrayal (neo-colonialism)* are observed by Gikonyo in an ironic verbal exchange with Mugo:

You have a great heart. It is people like you who ought to have been the first to taste the fruits of independence. But now, whom do we see riding in long cars and changing them daily as if motor cars were clothes? It is those who did not take part in the movement, the same who ran to the shelter of schools and universities and administration. At political meetings you hear them shout: Uhuru, Uhuru, we fought for. Fought where? They were mere uncircumcised boys. They knew suffering as a word (60-61). [Emphasis is mine].

* This perspective on betrayal will be the focus of Chapter 4.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Homecoming: Essays on African Caribbean Literature, Culture and Politics (London: Heinemann, 1972) XV.

See pages 3,53,56,59 for direct references to Fanon.

2. See Ngugi, "Mau Mau, Violence and Culture" from Homecoming 28. The emphasis is mine.

The idea of the necessity of violence has remained a critical force in Ngugi's writing. See "Mau Mau in Coming Back: The Revolutionary Significance of the 20th October 1952 in Kenya" from Journal of African Marxists 4(1983) :18-44.

It has been reprinted in Ngugi's Barrel of a Pen: Resistance to Repression in Neo-Colonial Kenya (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1983).

3. Frantz Fanon, Wretched of the Earth (New York: Grove Press, 1968) 94.
4. David Maughan-Brown, Land, Freedom, and Fiction: History and Ideology in Kenya (London: Zed Books, Ltd., 1985) 230,262.
5. In Morley Callaghan's new novel, A Time for Judas (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1983) 125. Judas' confession to Philo, a Crete scribe of Pontius Pilate, shows the necessity of the "betrayal" of Christ:

"For him there was only one law-love. Then maybe only one source of all evil-betrayal. The whole inner world swinging between love and betrayal - always first in a man's own heart. If it was time now for him to be betrayed, he would cause 'betrayal' to be remembered with horror forever as the death of love."

6. Harold Pinter, Betrayal (London: Eyre Methuen, 1978).
7. Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o, January 1964, Dennis Duerden and Cosmo Pieterse, eds, African Writers Speaking (London: Heinemann, 1972) 121.
8. Abberrahmane Arab, Politics and the Novel in Africa (Hydra, Alger: Office des Publications Universitaires, 1982) 297.
9. Arab 297.

10. Eustace Palmer, An Introduction to the African Novel (London: Heinemann, 1972) 31.
11. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981) 90.
12. Govind Narain Sharma, "Ngugi's Christian Vision: Theme and Pattern in A Grain of Wheat," ed., Eldred Durosimi Jones, African Literature Today :10 (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1979) 168.
13. Ngugi, Homecoming 34.
14. See for example, Bildad Kaggia, Roots of Freedom 1921-1963 (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1975) 1-15.
15. Kihika is able to integrate the diverse forces and traditions of African resistance to colonial rule in order to lead the independence movement. He is aware of the initial resistance by Waiyaki in 1900, the labour movement organized by Harry Thuku, as well as the anguish caused by the barring of female circumcision. Together with the accumulation of the experiences from black soldiers, who fought in the World War and awareness of the successes of the Indian independence movement, he is well prepared to lead the revolutionary struggle. See Peter Nazareth, An African View of Literature (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1974) 143-146.
16. Nazareth 131.
17. For the value of oaths in recruitment and preparation for battle see:

Donald Barnett and Karari Njama, Mau Mau from Within (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966) 114-121.

Carl G. Rosberg and John Nottingham, The Myth of "Mau Mau": Nationalism in Kenya (New York: Praeger, 1966) 243-48.

Maughan-Brown 169-70.
18. Sharma 169-70.
19. Cook and Okenimkpe, Ngugi wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writings 233, 238.
20. Maughan-Brown 240.
21. Fanon 117.

22. The controversy and division of opinion that surround the recognition of "Mau Mau" in the Kenyan nationalist struggle continues unabated even today. A recent meeting of "Mau Mau" fighters in Njeri in February 1986 branded a competitive government rally in nearby Naro Moro as "loyalist" and "anti Mau Mau". See "Kenya: Stormy Weather," New African June 1986 :6.
23. Palmer An Introduction to the Novel 29.
24. In an important study on Frantz Fanon, Renate Zahar calls this interiorization of racial stereotyping through mechanisms of compensation, overadaptation and self-hatred. See Renate Zahar, Frantz Fanon: Colonialism and Alienation (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974) 35-36.
25. See Hussein Abdilahi Bulhan, "Frantz Fanon: the revolutionary psychiatrist," Race and Class 21(1980) :263.
26. Frantz Fanon, A Dying Colonialism, quoted from Bulhan :263.
27. C.B. Robson, Ngugi wa Thiong'o (London: MacMillan, 1979) 56.
28. The train image is important as a linkage to historical events in the novel. Karanja won the race to Rung'ei station, but he lost Mumbi, who chooses the fallen Gikonyo instead. Because of his betrayal, Karanja misses the historical train to independence. For a short comment of the significance of the train image see Lisa Curtis, "The Divergence of Art and Ideology in the later novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o: A Critique", Ufahamu 13.2-3(1984) :190-191.
29. P. Ochola-Ojero, "Of Tares and Broken Handles, Ngugi Preaches Thematic Threatment of Betrayal and Despair in A Grain of Wheat," Busara 2.3(1970) :42.
30. As a carpenter and village repairman, Gikonyo had an important role to play in the harmony of the community, one which would be lost after his betrayal of the oath. For a brief discussion of the earlier harmony of Gikonyo see:
- Joyce Johnson, "Character and Circumstance in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's A Grain of Wheat," Commonwealth Novel in English 3.1(1984) :25.
31. See Malcolm Page, "The Conclusions of Ngugi's A Grain of Wheat: Gloom or Affirmation," ed., Uma Pamareswaran, The Commonwealth in Canada, Calcultta: Writer's Workshop, 1983 :216-225.

32. Micere Githae-Mugo, "Vision of Africa in the Fiction of Chinua Achebe, Margaret Laurence, Elizabeth Huxley, and Ngugi wa Thiong'o," Diss., (University of New Brunswick, 1973) 320.
33. JanMohamed 219-220. In 1965-1966, when A Grain of Wheat was written, Ngugi was uncertain about the political and economic betrayal of the Harambee program. See Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary (London, Heinemann, 1981) 90.
34. See Christopher Leo, Land and Class in Kenya (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) 157,185.
- Nicola Swainson, The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977 (Berkley: University of California, 1980) 288.
- John Barry, The Sunday Times (London) Aug. 10,17,24, 1975 :11-12,5-6,38-39.
35. Ngugi, Detained 89.
36. Curtis 197.
37. Judith Cochrane, "Women as Guardians of the Tribe in Ngugi's Novels," Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies Bulletin 4.5(1977) :10.
- Jennifer Evans, "Mother Africa and the Heroic Whore: Female Images in Petals of Blood," Contemporary African Literature, ed., Hal Wylie, Eileen Julien, Russell J. Linnerman (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1983) 57-65.
38. Evans and Charles A. Nama, "Daughters of Moombi; Ngugi's Heroines and Traditional Gikuyu Aesthetics," ed., Carole Boyce Davies and Anne Adams Graves, Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature (New York: Africa World Press, 1986) 139-149.

A COUNTRY DEFILED:
THE NEO-COLONIALISM OF BETRAYAL
IN PETALS OF BLOOD

Chapter Four

At the formal launching of Petals of Blood in July 1977, Ngugi emphasized the theme of proletarianization of peasants in Kenya:

The turning of peasants into proletarians by alienating them from the land, is one of the most crucial social upheavals of the twentieth century....¹

The "social upheaval" brought to Ilmorog, a mythical village which is an archetypal representative of the exploited neo-colonial community,² produces a number of social and political betrayals by characters in Petals of Blood. By juxtaposing the experiences and contradictions of the capital, Nairobi, with both the nascent growth of a "New Ilmorog" as well as the political stagnation of "Old Ilmorog," Ngugi is able to explore some problems of capitalist expansion in Kenya.³

Cook and Okenimpke have called Petals of Blood:

... an expose of the nature of capitalism, of the insensitivity, callousness, and insatiable ambition of those who control vested interests in order to gain power and wealth, impoverishing the underprivileged, imposing misery and suffering on the majority.⁴

The exploration of a neo-colonial landscape as well as the contradictions of the betrayal of the Ilmorog community will form the basis for discussion in this chapter. Both landscape setting and change are not part of a passive framework, but are part of the dynamics of the destructive change fostered by an emergent capitalism. Interaction with a neo-colonial environment for the four main protagonists (Munira, Karega, Wanja, and Abdullah) means that a number of personal betrayals are exposed. The theme of betrayal will be explored through the four parts of the novel:

- I The social-economic betrayal of "Old Ilmorog" by the Kenyan government in general and by the MP, Nderi wa Riera, in particular.
- II The generalized betrayal of the countryside and the city as witnessed by Abdullah and the Ilmorog delegation on "The Journey" to Nairobi.
- III The distortion of traditional and communal renewal as well as the corruption of the community by capitalist investment result in the betrayal of the Ilmorog community from within.
- IV The completion of the destruction of "Old Ilmorog" and the origins of a new resistance movement.

I

Social-economic betrayal of Old Ilmorog in Petals of Blood is evident from Munira's first visit to the community to re-open the school. He immediately encounters an environment of decay and neglect. Here we encounter the first evidence of socio-economic betrayal by Nderi wa Riera. As a member of the national bourgeoisie he is only concerned with the votes of Ilmorog at elections and he ignores the social and economic needs of remote areas such as Ilmorog. Cook and Okenimpke call him: "Ngugi's prototype of the new politician, conforming to the egocentric assumptions of the power group without questioning its ethics or seeking to reform the system."⁵ Ojung Ayuk has isolated this theme of neglect and called it "environmental decadence." He defines it

... as the author's preoccupation with decline in the physical environment from a state of normality or excellence. This decadence entails the destruction of the splendid landscape that characterizes much of the African physical environment and the well structured and peaceful way in which most Africans have traditionally lived their lives as well as the installation of the devastation and the degenerative atmosphere that are manifest features of most colonial towns and urban centres inherited by new nations upon decolonization.⁶

As an exile, Munira is at first the brunt of several Ilmorog village jokes. His efforts to reconstruct the

dilapidated school are seen as absurd:

He would go away with the wind, said the elderly folk: had there not been others before him? Who would settle in this wasteland except those without limbs....
(5).

This picture of alienation is an obvious reference to the wounded freedom fighter, Abdullah, but paradoxically in Ilmorog it referred to Munira as his name means "stump." Munira has "betrayed" the class and religious interests of his family by joining the strike at Siriana School and by seeking a pagan wife, Wanjiru. Although passive, isolated, and alienated by parasitical family environment, Munira has clear, sometimes ironic insight into the environment of neo-colonial betrayal. Munira's first actions are not out of place. Even the crushing of a ripened Kei apple makes him nauseous. He is mistakenly blamed for "shitting a mountain" near the school and he sneezes in an old women's face. Yet despite his early difficulty in Ilmorog, Munira is able to discover the source of the betrayal of the community, that is its impoverishment. Urban migration seems to be a chief source of the betrayal of the village. The attraction of a monied economy in Nairobi has forced the young to abandon their families. As an old woman complains to Munira:

Our young men and women have left us. The

glittering metal has called them. They go, and the young women only return now and then to deposit newborn with their grandmothers already aged with scratching this earth for a morsel of life. They say: there in the city there is room for only one... our employers, they don't want babies about the tiny rooms in tiny yards (7).

Later Munira is a witness to his students' discovery of two Theng'eta bean flowers, the so-called "Petals of Blood," one of which he calls a "worm eaten flower." Ngara ironically identifies Munira as:

... the worm-eaten petal of blood: poisonous and incapable of bearing fruit. [He is]... a man whose later religious... conversion is a kind of confused mysticism.⁷

This fixation on Munira however negates the role of other protagonists: Wanja, Karega, Abdullah, and Nyakinyua. While references to "petals of blood", including the title are associated with Munira, they are not exclusively concerned with his fate. Peter Nazareth sees a connection between the petals: "various characters are linked at the core."⁸ Each of the main protagonists tries to keep the infected flower from growing. Munira through his stilted teaching and later religious fanaticism; Abdullah through his leadership during the journey to Nairobi and his support for Wanja; Nyakinyua and Wanja through their co-operative; and Karega through his teaching and

union work. Yet each character has been stunted by the neo-colonial system. Their Gikuyu names reflect indications of further incapacities to respond to ravages of the neo-colonial environment:

Munira means 'stump' and this describes his devitalized state in the novel, his inability to connect with those around him. Wanja... comes from 'Wanjiku', the mother of the mother of the nine clans of the Gikuyu people. Wanja also means 'stranger or outsider'. Similarly Karega means 'he-who refuses', and for the way of saying an outsider and he is cast as 'archetypal non-conformist, who travels from idealistic youthful searching for a cause to the status of anti-establishment revolutionary leader.'⁹

As a metaphorical "stump" Munira is incapable of growth as a human and political figure. Evidence of this is seen from his jealous punishment of Karega for having a relationship with Wanja, from his false pride after becoming headmaster of Ilmorog School, and from his demonstration of false consciousness by burning Wanja's whorehouse to "save" Karega. Munira also faces the guilt of Mukami's suicide and his family's historical association with the betrayal on "Mau Mau" leader, Dedan Kimathi.

At this point it would be useful to return to the source of the title, Petals of Blood, which comes from an extract from Derek Walcott's poem, "The Swamp," as well as from Blake's

epigraphs to Parts 2 and 3 of Petals of Blood. Eustace Palmer sees the "Petals of Blood" as victims of evil:

Its innocence, like that of Blake's sick rose, has been destroyed by the agents of corruption. The flower thus becomes a symbol of the entire society Ngugi is concerned with potentially healthy, beautiful, and productive, but its potential unrealized and itself destroyed by the agents of corruption and death.¹⁰

The symbolic significance of the Swamp according to Ngugi:

is that it ...prevents little flowers from reaching out into the light." [It] symbolized the way... in which the social system of capitalism acts to stifle life.¹¹

Ngugi's view of "The Swamp" is supported by Wayne Brown, an editor of a recent collection of Walcott's poetry. He outlines three views of "The Swamp," including historical, philosophical and psychological interpretations. In the case of the former, which most closely fits Ngugi's own interpretation, he suggests the consciousness behind the poem is that of a white American from the Plantation Slavery of the South who feels threatened by the highway he has built to his slaves. This parallels the fear and greed that motivates the national bourgeoisie who are neo-colonial agents such as: Chui, Kimeria, Nderi, and Mzigo. According to Brown, the poem represents: "... the colonizer's fear and loathing, born of guilt, of those whom he has

colonized."¹² In Petals of Blood therefore, the neo-colonializer fears the consequences of his betrayal of the peasants of Kenya. While this interpretation is more appropriately discussed in terms of other meanings of title "Petals of Blood," mainly the mythical liquor, Theng'eta and the fire that consumes Wanja's whore house, it is important to see "The Swamp" and Ilmorog as representative "wastelands," backwaters of betrayal that result from colonialism and neo-colonialism respectively.

Despite Munira's distorted consciousness, he has a keen sense of observation of the state of underdevelopment in "Old Ilmorog." He senses the absurdity of the surveying for an International Highway when smaller service roads have not yet been built for the rural area. He even sees the contradiction of underdevelopment between country and city:

In my mind I now put this wretched corner beside our cities: skyscrapers versus mud walls and grass thatch; tarmac highways, international airports and gambling casinos versus cattle-path and gossip before sunset. Our erst while masters had left us a very unevenly cultivated land; the centre was swollen fruit and water sucked from the rest, while the outer parts were progressively weaker and scragglier as one moved away from the centre (49). (Emphasis is mine).

While Munira is a keen observer, he is also a selfish egotist. If something doesn't benefit him, he isn't interested

in it. His selfish attitude is reflected in his teaching as well:

... What did the children really think of him? ... what did it matter one way or the other? He had taught for so many years now - teaching ready-made stuff must be in his blood - and one did all right as one was careful not to be dragged into... an area of darkness... Yes... darkness unknown, unknowable... like flowers with petals of blood and questions about God, law... things that (23-24).

Munira is easily persuaded by authority figures, especially if they lavish praise on him. Social acceptance of Mzigo, the School Inspector, is initially pleasing to him, especially once he has been accepted as headmaster of Ilmorog school:

Munira's heart was glowing with pride. And so he was making something of himself after all. A headmaster. And now an invitation to tea. To tea at Gatundu! (87).

Isolated and without social interaction with others, Munira would remain a victim of his father's betrayal of the Kenyan people:

" 'My son',... 'Go back and teach. And stop drinking. If you are tired of teaching, come back here. I have work for you. My estates are many. And I am ageing. Or join KCO. Get a bank loan.

Start business' (95).

Munira's father is not beyond using his power in the church to accumulate profits. Yet Munira chose "not to choose" to remain in the background even though he was conscious of his father's expanding role in the neo-colonial environment:

What was this new alliance of the Church and KCO. No, it was better not to wade more than knee deep into affairs that did not concern him. And he felt some kind of relief. It was as if he had been pulled back from the brink. He had postponed a decision (96).

Like Mugo in A Grain of Wheat, he enjoyed the protection of a dark ignorance where he would not have to make a commitment. In essence his own private betrayal was to only observe the contradictions of neo-colonialism, not to "choose" ways to change them.

Later, he regretted the arrival of Karega, a teacher he desperately needed to cope with the expanding school at Ilmorog. Passively instead, he looked with nostalgia at the power of Chui a former student radical who betrays his heritage by accelerating English public school traditions at Siriani School while headmaster.¹³

Because of his earlier twisted association with the

prostitute, Amina, Munira is both repelled and attracted to Wanja. Unlike most critics Jennifer Evans sees Wanja as a representative of the "petals of blood." Using Munira's early association of "petals of blood" with "the stranger girl," she associates the condition of the damaged flower with Wanja's wasted life. Her return to Ilmorog is an attempt to regenerate her lost powers. It is Wanja who revives the spiritual use of the Theng'eta brew.¹⁴ Jacqueline Bardolph takes the image of a worm-infested flower further by connecting Munira's fear of "the devouring woman" to Walcott's "speckled vulva of the tiger orchid":

The sterility of his union with Wanja is that of the flower eaten by the worm, which has not come to light... It is the sterility of the earth itself: Munira and Wanja are gnawed by a worm, they are dried up, cut off from their pasts, rootless: independent prostitutes....¹⁵

While Munira is an exile who doesn't work the land and he lacks insight into his own barren isolation, Wanja reflects the bitter insight of peasants who suffer from drought and economic neglect. Munira misinterprets her ironic sketch of an old woman raising dust and then being pursued by a "lustful young man sun." Munira's pathetic response merely suggests that they are "one with the soil" and "there is dignity in their labour", both betrayed platitudes for the Harambee projects of the Kenyatta government. With regard to the bareness of the land,

Wanja feels and sees a different reality that that of Munira. "One with the dust you mean? ... Haven't you seen the flies on mucus-filled noses? A cowhide or grass for a bed? Huts with falling in thatches?" (75).

Instead of "choosing" to acknowledge his ignorance and the betrayal of neo-colonialism, Munira internalizes his resentment, converting it to a fantasy of rape:

... she had the same alluring power as the beckoning coquetry of a virgin: he could touch her only by deflowering her by force and so himself flowering in blood (76).

Yet Abdullah, a maimed former "Mau Mau" soldier and proprietor of the village shop, acknowledges her pain and need for support:

I know what it is to carry a live wound. And I am not talking of this leg stump. Stay in Ilmorog. Let us face what you call this hole together (77).

The spiritual and economic drought compel Wanja to leave Ilmorog.

A discussion between two villagers, Muturi and Njuguna, about the origin of the drought is instructive. Muturi's keen sense of ecology traces the origins of deforestation to the

construction of the railway to Uganda. White colonialists are referred to those who "... only know how to eat, how to take away everything" Muturi's misconception, that "... African Governors and African big chiefs will return some of the fat back to these parts," is corrected by Njuguna whose retort is: "You mean bring back our sons" (82-83).

Instead of sending aid, the government continues to betray the isolated village of Ilmorog by sending the tax collector, followed shortly by two parasitical charlatans, aptly named "Fat Stomach" and "Insect," both agents of Ilmorog's M.P., Nderi wa Riera. The villagers, angry with the demands of a cultural tax that would line Nderi's pockets, demand food and piped water, which had been promised earlier by Nderi. In order to distract the villagers from exposing Nderi's betrayal of Ilmorog, "Fat Stomach" blames the "lake people" (Luo) and an Indian communist (likely Pio Gama Pinto)¹⁶ for the drought. Anger and frustration force women of Ilmorog to chase these two opportunists out of the village.

In stark contrast to the plight of Ilmorog is the village of Kamiritho which was integrated into the capitalist economy as an enclave of "development" which included an elaborate shopping centre and beer halls. Lorries were marked "KANU PRIVATE." In one of the beer halls, Munira discovers Wanja who has reverted back to her job as a barmaid.¹⁷ Together with

Karega, they struggle back to Ilmorog: "They returned to Ilmorog, this time driven neither by idealism nor the search for a personal cure, but by the overriding necessity to escape." (106). Like Blue Hills, Kamiritho with its commercial capitalism is a privileged centre for KANU; its betrayal of African communal value is even more frightening than the drought of Ilmorog.

On returning, Karega and Wanja are struck by the acceleration of the drought, which Munira cynically suggests: "is the way of the world." All three exiles are part of the impoverished landscape, unable to escape its effect: "... coughing and sneezing and watching specks of dry maize stalk whirled to the sky" (107-108). Instead of accepting the "gigantic deception" of classroom teaching while the drought outside got worse, Karega proposes "the journey" to Nairobi to confront the M.P. with the problems of a drought stricken Ilmorog. Karega's appeal to save Abdullah's donkey and have it lead the delegation combines the logic of cost-efficiency with the importance of informing the M.P. of the severity of the drought in Ilmorog. Nyakinyua's supporting defense of the journey summarized the historical sacrifices of the village:

Ours is only to bear in order for the city
to take. In the war against Wazungu we
gave our share of blood. A sacrifice.
Why? Because we wanted to be able to sing
our song, and dance our words in fullness

of head and stomach. But what happened? They have continued to entice our youth away.... Then they send us messengers who demand twelve shillings and fifty cents for what?.... (155-166).

II

The "Journey" aroused Abdullah's leadership. Unhappy with his passive role in Ilmorog and his self-consciousness because of Kenyatta government's betrayal of the "Mau Mau" revolution, Abdullah inspires the village to fight the betrayal of Nderi and the Kenyan neo-colonial government. The whole community collectively began its preparation to confront the man and the system that had betrayed and abandoned them. It was the children, through Abdullah, who would pass on the oral traditions of stories such as "the Ant and the Louse" and the race between "Chamelon and Hare." Divisiveness temporarily ended as Ilmorog worked to preserve its land and traditions. As Ngugi notes:

Without the soil, without land, without nature there is no human community. ... Unlike the beast that merely adapts itself to its habitation, man through the labour process, acts on the natural environment.¹⁹

Even the alienated Munira acknowledged the effect of "The Journey:"

... it was the exodus across the plains to the Big Big City that started me on that slow, almost ten-year, inward journey to a position where I can now see that man's estate is rotten at heart (117-118).

"Part II Towards Bethlehem.... "is in many senses more than one journey.²⁰ In particular it represents a reliving and rediscovery of the process of "the living past." The Ilmorog delegation undergoes a reassessment of its strengths and weaknesses. It meets the enemy on its home turf rather than through intermediaries such as "Fat Stomach" and "Insect." Structurally, "The Journey" consists of three stages for the Ilmorog community. Firstly, the hopeful physical contest of travelling through hostile landscape while honing survival skills. Secondly, the disillusion and betrayal of their arrival in Blue Hills to the treachery of the distorted promises of Nderi. Thirdly, the surprise material support from Nairobi's working class to aid Ilmorog, which is eventually undermined by Nderi's tourist "development" project and the Ilmorog (KCO) Investment and Holding Company. For Munira it's the "beginning" of a painful ten year process of self-discovery which is distorted by religious fantasies. For Abdullah it's a chance to teach survivalist skills learned as a "Mau Mau" freedom fighter. For Wanja it provides an opportunity to confront exploitation from the past. For Karega it is a learning environment in which to assess an enemy he knows little about. For the community as a whole, it is a last

desperate attempt to save Ilmorog from the devastation of drought. Through Nyakinyua, Ngugi has Ilmorog reassess its past - to build its confidence against the neglect and betrayal of the neo-colonial government:

[In pre-colonial times], in those days, there were no vultures in the sky waiting for the carcasses of dead workers, and no insect-flies feeding on the fat and blood of unsuspecting toilers (120).

The evolution of colonial domination was explored. The metal expertise of the community was praised. The massacre of the village's women and children by Foreigners was explained. The wanton craving of foreign articles and the labour recruitment from the village were also discussed. Nyakinyua was the village's link to the past victories and defeats. Her knowledge and stories cemented the community spirit as they preceded to assess the betrayal of colonial occupation:

Nyakinyua, mother of men: there was sad gaiety in her voice, she was celebrating rainbow memories of gain and loss, triumph and failure, but above all of suffering and knowledge in struggle (123).

However, Abdullah would provide the spiritual unity for the actual journey to Nairobi. As a heroic figure of the recent struggle against colonialism, he was the most capable of leading the delegation to Nderi: "His stoic endurance infused

strength and purpose into the enterprise. The sun persistently hit at them and short stems of the elephant grass pricked their bare souls" (134). As a symbol of the seasoned anti-colonial resistance, Abdullah is able to lead the delegation from his experience of adversity. Children eagerly learn from him, observing the parched landscape, learning the use of catapults, and listening to new stories of past struggles. As Cook and Okenimpke indicate:

His game leg is testimony to a betrayed generation of honorable men who forsook the comforts of home and braved the hardships of the forest in order to rescue their homeland from shameful oppression.²¹
(Emphasis is mine).

A hymn mocking the religious significance of the famine inspires Abdullah further, allowing him to integrate voices of the "Mau Mau" struggle from the past such as the leadership of Ole Masai hymns and oaths of the movement:

'When Jomo of the black people was arrested in the night
He left us a message and a mission.
I will hold the donkey's head, he told us:
Will you, my children, endure the kicks?
Yes, Yes, I said, and reached for my sword,
And I linked hands with all the children of the land.
And I vowed, tongue on a burning spear,
I will never turn my back on the cries of black people,
I will never let this soil go to the red stranger.
I will never betray this piece of earth to foreigners.' (136).

Abdullah links the past struggle with the current one in Ilmorog. He recognizes Karega as "a messenger of God," one who has split the sacred bean flower. Abdullah is politically and spiritually reborn as he relives another "journey," fighting the physical discomforts he faced as a member of the Land and Freedom Army. He begins to dream of a new life without the betrayal of neo-colonialism:

How he had trembled as the vision opened out, embracing new thoughts, new desires, new possibilities! To redeem the land: to fight so that the industries like the shoe factory which had swallowed his sweat could belong to the people: so that his children could one day have enough to eat and to wear under adequate shelter from rain: so that they would say in pride, my father died that I ought to live: this had transformed him from a slave before a boss into a man (136).

Abdullah relives his arduous "journey" against colonialism and those loyalist lackies who supported it by telling stories to the Ilmorog delegation:

And what a journey, my friends! Our ammunition was scarce. We had tried to make more bullets by splitting open one and sharing the powder into smaller shells, but it did not work. For meat, we often relied on traps, but it did not work. For meat, we often relied on traps, but what use was this on a journey? Ole Masai would enliven us with stories of old Nairobi [At] A great gathering I found there: not a tree, not a bush for a mile was without a man or woman leaning against it. They sang

in defiant tones and their one voice was like a roll of thunder:

'And you, traitors to your people,
Where will you run to
When the brave of the lands gather?
For Kenya is black people's country'
(142).

Wanja also felt supportive of the journey, particularly after Abdullah related his stories of Ole Masai's involvement with "Mau Mau". To her Abdullah was no longer a cripple with a "stump for a leg," but a man marked by "a badge of courage indelibly imprinted on his body." Wanja and others listen intently to the story of the betrayal of Dedan Kimathi as Abdullah warns of the dangers of betrayal:

Dedan had been caught, delivered to our enemies by our own brothers, lovers of their own stomachs, Wakamatimo. May their names, like that of Judas, ever be cursed, an example to our children of what never to be (142).

Because of the hardships of the journey and the historical insight of Abdullah, the "community" became more aware of their own relationship to the land and to the past struggle. Even the landscape came alive for them:

Abdullah's story had made them aware of a new relationship to the ground on which they tread: the ground, the murram grass, the agapanthas, the cactus, everything in the plains, had been hallowed by the feet

of those who had fought and died that Kenya might be free: wasn't there something, a spirit of those people in them to? (143).

The second part of the journey is an eye opener for the Ilmorog delegation as they meet one betrayer after another in the decadent environment of Blue Hills. Here, Munira's inaction receives a dramatic focus. He fluctuates from a happy identification with the comfort of Reverend Browns's parlour to cowardice in face of a lavish party at Raymond Chui's house. They first seek help from the Reverend Jerrod Brown. His estate, like many of the national bourgeoisie, is well guarded by security guards and guard dogs. Instead of helping an ailing Joseph he leads the delegation in prayer and then sends them away unattended. The sheltered and protected wealth of the national bourgeoisie is confusing to the Ilmorog delegation, who are used to resolving problems collectively. The fortresses of private capital only confirm suspicions of neglect of rural Ilmorog.

Raymond Chui, former student leader and headmaster of Siriana school is the next person from which the Ilmorog delegation sought help, but Munira feels too self-conscious to request aid from him. In fact Munira runs away when "a red-lipsticked lady with a huge Afro-wig" faints in front of him in Chui's doorway. Before they can enter the third estate, they are arrested and interrogated by Hawkins Kimeria, who exposes

the exploitative nature of his own class and its capacity for betrayal and collusion when he discusses his relationship with the Ilmorog M.P., Nderi wa Riera:

We used to have our little differences.... Now, we are friends. Why? Because we all realise that whether we were on that side of the fence or this side of the fence or merely sitting astride the fence, we were all fighting for the same ends.... We have one or two businesses together.... We are all members of KCO. Some of us have even been able to borrow a little - shall I say thousands - from the money collected from this tea ceremony (153).

Kimeria is the most exploitive of the national bourgeoisie. He is not above using the vulnerable situation of the Ilmorog delegation to further exploit Wanja:

Now that fate has brought you to my house, I shall not let you go until you have lain, legs spread, on that bed. Remember you are no longer a virgin. Think about it. The choice is yours to make, and freedom is mine to withhold or to give (155).

Wanja is forced to degrade herself in order to save Joseph and the others from the harm promised by Kimeria. He is the same man who betrayed Nding'uri, Karega's brother, Ole Masai, and Abdullah. His confession 'to the Ilmorog delegation' is an indication of his overconfidence that reflects the bragging later of the capitalists at the "Devil's Feast" in Devil on the

Cross.

Wanja rescues the community once again by introducing the group to a progressive lawyer she has dealt with in the past. It is clear from the large number of people waiting to see the lawyer that the Ilmorog delegation were not alone in their victimization by corrupt officials who prey on the poor and disaffected:

As you can see, I have these people waiting outside. Most of them came from the villages: they need advice on everything, from their lands threatened by banks to how they can acquire this or that Kiosk... or about money taken from them by a big fellow after promising to buy them a farm in the Highlands.... (159).

A meeting at the lawyer's house exposes the naivety of Munira who is willing to accept any "charity" that Harambee might include. The lawyer then carefully defines the dimensions of the neo-colonial betrayal which stretched from Africa to the Southern States:

We forget that it has always been deaf and blind to human woes. So we go on building the monster and it grows and waits for more, and know we are slaves to it. At its shrine we kneel and pray and hope. Now see the outcome... dwellers in Blue Hills, those who have taken on themselves the priesthood of the ministry to the blind god... a thousand acres of land... a million acres in the two hands of a priest,

while the congregation moans for an acre!... the god grows big and fat and shines even brighter and whets the appetites of his priests, for the monster has, through the priesthood, decreed only one ethical code: Greed and accumulation (163).

Each member of the Ilmorog delegation grappled with the significance of "the monster", unable yet to grasp the full dimension of its terror as he or she had not completed their "journey" of self-discovery or faced yet the power of national bourgeoisie personally. Abdullah was confused still about black ownership of the means of production. Wanja questioned the existence of white prostitutes in the U.S.A. Munira was merely puzzled that the lawyer had been to school at Siriana, while Karega was "aroused" by a new radical consciousness evolving from his experience.

Later their collective experience with their M.P.'s betrayal of the community would open their eyes to the corruption of the neo-colonial system. Formerly a "champion of causes such as putting a ceiling on land ownership, nationalization of major industries, abolition of illiteracy and unemployment," Nderi had now sold his principles for investments in land, connections in the tourist industry and membership in "special clubs." Disguised as a "man of the people," he spoke in platitudes; unlike Kimeria he was afraid to expose his true nature. Nderi attempts to disguise his

betrayal. Even his African name is an attempt to legitimize his exploitative nature. He openly lies to the delegation about a planned trip to Ilmorog to investigate "farming problems". Everyone he talks to is loosely praised. He prepares answers before questions: "As a politician, Nderi had learnt that no enemy was too small, and no incident was too insignificant to be careless about and ignored, unless with calculated deliberation" (178).

Nderi goes to Jeevanjee Gardens to meet the delegation, but his speech attracts other hungry and jobless members of the proletariat. Nderi's proposed solution, "Harambee" that was so jokingly presented earlier by both Kimeria and "the lawyer," is presented seriously. Nderi gets so wrapped up in his own facade of aid that he is only capable of hearing his own voice, which betrays his own fear of public exposure:

I want you to go back to Ilmorog. Get yourselves together. Subscribe money. You can even sell some of the cows and goats instead of letting them die. Dive deep into your pockets. Your businessmen, your shopkeepers, instead of telling stories, should contribute generously.... Our culture, our African culture and spiritual values, should form the true foundation for this nation.... We must show that we are playing our part in self-help schemes in Harambee spirit to put an end once and for all a future droughts in the land (182-183).

At the end of his speech in a vain attempt to divide and

get the Ilmorog delegation to betray its purpose of community renewal, he blames the "foreigners", exiles Munira, Abdullah and Karega, for the difficulties in Ilmorog, promising instead to head a delegation by himself. Munira, Abdullah, Karega are accused of starting the riot, but they are acquitted due to the skilled efforts of the lawyer who is able to use the courtroom as a forum to expose the abuse of Ilmorog:

an island of underdevelopment which after being sucked thin and dry was itself left standing, a grotesque image of peasant life.... (184).

Ilmorog's difficult journey suddenly seemed to have been worthwhile. Publicity from newspapers produced more than enough food to fill the donkey cart. Publicity also attracted opportunists as well, who through their greed and avarice wish to continue to betray the impoverished for their own benefit. Reverend Brown, so pious and neglectful earlier, proposed the alliance of churches to research the difficulties of Ilmorog. Nderi, under the guise of his own company, KCO, proposed to rescue Ilmorog for himself by selling shares in his holding company, by securing loans from the people of Ilmorog and by developing tourism. Not willing to merely use Ilmorog as a new base of economic exploitation for an ever flexible neo-colonial economy, Nderi, like the vulture he is named after, plans "elimination" of "the lawyer" to ensure there will be no further resistance to his expansionism.²²

III

Ironically, the journey had been successful, but its potential would be ruined by the manipulations of the national bourgeoisie. The communal innocence so pronounced in the enthusiasm of the beginning of the journey from Ilmorog to Nairobi, now lapsed into the betrayal of neo-colonialism. Changes to Ilmorog are initially seen through flashbacks of Munira, which he calls: "... a mixture of an autobiographical confessional and some kind of prison notes" (190). Munira's "prison confessional" in the forsaken and foreign environment of a cell confirms the failure of the journey. His perception of an "interviewing devil," caused by his own uncertainty and alienation, suggests initially weakness and confusion. Yet through Munira's social alienation, a greater understanding of the destructive capacity of neo-colonialism can be learned.

M.P. Nderi's transformation of Ilmorog is a sham development, a further betrayal of an already weakened region, where poverty and misery are abundant. Munira is able to identify the symptoms of exploitation in the "New Ilmorog," but he is unable to determine causes and effects:

The New Ilmorog of one or two flickering neon-lights; of bars, lodgings, groceries, permanent sales, and bottled Theng'eta; of robberies, strike, lockouts, murders and attempted murders; of prowling prostitutes

in cheap night clubs; of police stations, police raids, police cells.... (190).

By the ninth day of imprisonment Munira demands to see his interrogator, Inspector Godfrey. Remarks by his jailor reflect the level of political betrayal that has penetrated even the lowest level of bureaucracy in jails. The jailor is concerned about the loss of the three members of the national bourgeoisie who died in the fire at Wanja's brothel. They were:

... important people. VIP's. It will take us years before we can get their likes. So wealthy. Millionaires. Imagine. African Delameres (192).

Munira's reply, although despairing and cynical, identifies the dominant mood of these who suddenly realize they have been victimized:

You are only a jailor. Both you and I are in prison. Well, everybody is in prison (192).

The Ilmorog community response to the effects of the journey were slow to develop. The aura of a successful "journey" like Kenyan independence, was largely illusionary. Despite Nyakinyua and other traditional's viewpoints that "the rain had been God's response to the sacrifice... signal(ling) the end of a year of drought", it was a false omen. Munira's

view despite its tinge of fanaticism had the benefit of hindsight:

We went on a journey to the city to save Ilmorog from drought. We brought back spiritual drought from the city (195).

To others in Ilmorog the despair brought by Nderi's intervention was not initially a threat to the survival of the community. The initial period after the drought offered a period of communal euphoria personified by "an earth the swallowed thirstily," by children playing in the rain and mud, and by the co-operative spirit of planting set up by Wanja and Ngakinyua. Keeping in mind Munira's comments on the eventual arrival of "spiritual drought" to Ilmorog, we can observe an interlude of co-operation and community integration, perhaps even a cycle of rebirth.²³ For Wanja it was new opportunity to both forget the pain of a personal betrayal and to re-associate herself with the land:

This waiting earth: its readiness powered Wanja's wings of expectation and numerous desires. Feverishly, she looked out for tomorrow, waiting, like the other women, for earth to crack, earth to be thrust open by the naked shoots of life (196).

Later Wanja and her grandmother formed the Nderi-Nyakinyua Group to work the land communally. Ilmorog's second harvest was a record one. The people and the landscape and

changed drastically in one year as a new spirit seemed to lift co-operation in Ilmorog:

There was something about harvesting, whether it was maize or beans or peas, which always released a youthful spirit in everyone.... Even old men looked like little children, in their eyes turned to the fields: only they tried to hide their trembling excitement as they carried token sheaves of beans to the threshing-ground (203).

Yet this idealized landscape is offset by nagging self-doubts of Karega and Abdullah. "Karega once again threw his weight into teaching, to avoid answering anything to himself" (197). He is also haunted by the death of his lover, Mukani, by the betrayal of the student hero, Chui, and by the emptiness of the history books sent to him by the lawyer.

Alienated by past betrayals yet strengthened by momentary victories, Abdullah is drawn to the renewed spirit of Wanja:

He looked at Wanja's utter transformation, a kindred spirit, and he felt that maybe with the rains and the crop and the harvest to be, something new was happening (201).

He recounts his earlier mistreatment of Joseph, hoping his education will strengthen him. Abdullah is also conscious of other changes brought by the new rains such as: the early arrival of herdsman, the new pattern of cultivation, and the

arrival of a new church and police post, which ironically are built at the same time. Karega also acknowledges the threat of new administration to Ilmorog, but his mind is on the immediate need of a Village Festival.

It is the introduction of the ceremonial Theng'eta brew, a distillation of "Petals of Blood", brewed by Wanja that intensifies the commercialization of Ilmorog. Unwittingly, Wanja's attempt to bridge the gap between the old traditions and a new community lead in part to a betrayal of the village to the capitalist's interests of Kimeria, Mzigo, and Nderi. By selling Theng'eta to surveyors of the Trans Africa Road, both Wanja and Abdullah initiate the commercialization of the traditional sacred liquor. Forced to sell their business to the newly created Theng'eta Breweries, both Wanja and Abdullah become unemployed.

Nyakinyua defines the effect of "the celestial liquor," followed by a suitable warning:

This can only poison your heads and intestines. Squeeze Theng'eta into it and you get your spirit. Theng'eta. It is a dream. It is a wish. It gives you sight, and for those favoured by God it can make them cross the river of time and talk with their ancestors.... Only you must take it with faith and purity in your hearts (210).

"... that night of Theng'eta drinking" as Munira called it, provided important insights to Munira, Abdullah, and Karega. In the case of Munira it was the continual need to attack his own isolation and lack of community involvement. For Abdullah, Theng'eta produced forgotten memories of the past, in particular his oath to punish the betrayer of Nding'uri after his colonial detention:

'And what did I do when I came out? I, Abdullah, forgot my vow to the Lord.... I was busy looking for money... and even came to hide in Ilmorog' (224).

It also produced a need for Abdullah to seek revenge against those who betrayed the revolution:

I remembered all those who daily thwarted our struggle. I remembered the traitors: those who worked with Henderson. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord: but I did not care: I would not have minded helping him a bit in the vengeance: at least weed out the parasites... collaborators (253).

For Karega, Theng'eta meant the discovery that Abdullah was the best of the community, [a] "symbol of Kenya's truest courage" (228). It also intensified his sexual union with Wanja. However, a day later he was fired by a jealous Munira. Karega suddenly realized the contradictory effects of Theng'eta:

Now it has turned out to be a drink of strife.... But we do not have to heap insults on others. We are all prostitutes, for in a world of grab and take, in a world built on a structure of inequality and injustice, in a world where some can eat while others can only toil... we are all prostitutes. For as long as there's a man in prison, I am also in prison: for as long as there is a man who goes hungry and without clothes, I am also hungry and without clothes. Why then need a victim hurl insults at another victim? (Emphasis is mine). (240).

He also learns of the potential destruction of personal betrayal from Abdullah who identifies the betrayer, Kimeria as both the seducer of Wanja and the murderer of Karega's brother. Instead of dealing with these issues he temporarily leaves Ilmorog. In a sense he becomes temporarily immobilized by the vastness of betrayal in his life.

Both the airplane crash that killed Abdullah's donkey as well as the successful commercialization of Theng'eta by Wanja and Abdullah act as a magnet to the parasitical Nderi who uses the Trans-Africa road project as a link to these two potential markets for his exploitation of Ilmorog.

Ilmorog's rebirth has ended. The co-operative spirit initiated by Wanja and the Nderi-Nyakinyua Group has failed. The struggle for a New Kenya will enter a more complex and contradictory stage.

IV

Part IV completes the cycle of struggle of the village of Ilmorog. The intervention of the national bourgeoisie through the figures of Kimeria, Chui, Mzigo and Nderi has accelerated the level of political struggle by integrating Ilmorog into the infrastructure of a neo-colonial state. "New Ilmorog" is an extended metaphor for the regional disparity caused by the development of capitalist enclaves in the midst of poverty and underdevelopment.

The title of Part IV, "Again... A Luta Continua," represents the important inspiration of the Anti-colonial Portuguese struggles in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau in the 1960's and 1970's.²⁴ Literally translated as "The Struggle Continues," Part IV represents adverse conditions on the political landscape of a neo-colonial state. Each of the main characters must not only find a means of survival, but they must also try to find a way to oppose the tyrants of the national bourgeoisie.

The opening image of the Trans-Africa Road is a contradictory one. On the one hand, it is meant as a means of integrating balkanized national economies in attempt to escape the perpetual trap of underdevelopment. Yet on the other hand, it is a means to witness the social and economic crimes of the

national bourgeoisie with the co-operation and encouragement of multi-national companies. This contradiction is reflected in the new political landscape of "New Ilmorog:"

... Roads first, family planning, such practical needs, achievable goals, trade-the rest are dream-wishes of a Theng'eta addict.... And so, obstructed from the vision of oneness, of a collective struggle of the African peoples, the road brought only the unity of earth's surface: every corner of the continent was now within easy reach of international capitalists robbery and exploitation (262).

The road has symbolic value as well. It is a historical monument to those who witnessed the crimes of colonialism and the heroic resistance of nationalists and proto-nationalist movements.

The contradictions brought by the road affect the way the villagers see "New Ilmorog." Munira's confession, "We are all of the road now," confirms a partial resignation to the presence of a neo-colonial landscape; yet he also confirms the "hollowness" of the roads' purpose as well as its status as a "monument" of "failed promises." The absurdity of the new landscape is illustrated by the villagers watching the East African Safari car race, or the ever-present stream of tankers and automobiles "squelching tar on a long trail across the plains to feed a thousand arteries of thirsty machines and motors...." (263).

Even more frightening is the distorted dream of the children who "... prance about the banks, trying to spell out Lonrho, Shell, Esso, Total, Agip, singing the praise of the road that will carry them to all the cities of Africa, their Africa, to link hands with children of other lands" (263).

As Cook and Okenimpke point out:

The new trans-Africa road splits old Ilmorog apart as, by implication, it splits Africa, letting the alien predators who transform the land according to their preconceived image. The road is seen to evoke fear and consternation.²⁵

Other economic divisions are apparent in the New Ilmorog:

There were several Ilmorogs. One was the residential area of the farm managers, County council officials, public servant officers, the managers of Barclays, Standard and African Economic Banks, and other servants of state and money power. This was called Cape Town. The other-called - New Jerusalem - was a shanty town of migrant and floating workers, the unemployed, the prostitutes and small traders in tin and scrap metal (280-81).

While Wanja and Abdullah provide the initiative to construct a New Ilmorog, it is Nderi wa Riera and his henchman "Fat Stomach" and "Insect" who organize the transformation by using New Ilmorog as a ploy to get re-elected. Land taken from the people would be "compensated"; "loans" would be given;

"title deeds" acquired. "The road was only a beginning."

Transformation of the landscape was matched by changes in character. While Abdullah remained the same committed although reticent individual, both Wanja and Munira were further corrupted by the betrayal of the new capitalist Ilmorog. [Wanja] "... was seized by the devil spirit of brewing and selling, and counting and hatching out more plans for the progress of her trade/business partnership with Abdullah" (269).

Wanja's obsession with the profits of Theng'eta is a new betrayal and contradictory to her communal spirit. It is caused by three factors: Firstly, the personal loss of Karega. Secondly, the lapse into self-hatred caused by the guilt of having destroyed her only child. Thirdly, the influence of broken family background compounded by her father's own betrayal of the "Mau Mau" Revolution.

Wanja is not merely a victim. Her role as capitalist betrayer is later expanded to include the Sunshine Lodge. Karega critiques her choice to join the national bourgeoisie:

Whatever you are, you have chosen sides. I don't hate you, I don't judge you.... but I know that we cannot fight Kimerias by being them... by joining them... we can't beat them at that game.... (327).

Although Wanja and Abdullah were secure with the business of selling Theng'eta, after 5 years nearly everyone else in the village had been duped into taking loans on their land. Foreclosures became more frequent; Nyakinyua tried to fight back when her land was taken, but no one supported her, not even Wanja. Only when the old woman died, did Wanja in a fit of self-destruction buy the land back, but at tremendous cost to herself and Abdullah because they didn't have the cash flow to buy the land and then maintain the business as well. They were forced to sell to Mzigo. In despair, but also in a conscious drive to survive, Wanja reverts to her role as a prostitute. Evans see this as a realistic portrayal of an African woman; one that differs from the Mumbis, Muthonis or Nyamburas of other Ngugi novels:

... It would be a mistake to see Wanja simply as an innocent victim. Her potential is wasted and she is exploited, but she also exploits others, most obviously in running her own whorehouse. Her "eat or be eaten" philosophy is an expression of the destructive rivalry of capitalism, and is no more moral than the self-serving greed of the Kimerias.²⁶

Lisa Curtis finds Wanja's transformation from prostitute to mother of Abdullah's child "unconvincing:"

... the pregnancy which is the code to Wanja's story is unconvincing. There remains a sense in which this is just one

more "false start" in the pattern of her life: a sequence in which she will be brought full circle again, by fire and drought, to another new beginning.²⁷

Wanja has been transformed once again. Her survival skills honed earlier, when she was abused by Kimiria, have taken over. Her treatment of Munira only reflects her acceptance of the cash nexus in a neo-colonial state:

No Mwalimu. No free things in Kenya. A hundred shillings on the table if you want high class treatment.... This is New Kenya. You want it, you pay for it.... (279).

Seeking revenge for her victimization, Wanja attempts to become as successful as any of the national bourgeoisie, equivalent to any Kimeria, Chui, or Mzigo. As Munira's description of Wanja to Karega indicates:

She is the most powerful woman in all Ilmorog. She owns houses between here and Nairobi. She owns a fleet of matatus. She owns a fleet of big transport lorries. She is that bird periodically born out of the ashes and dust (281).

While corrupted by Theng'eta and later by the fanaticism of the evangelist Lillian, Munira has ironic insight into the precarious nature of the neo-colonial state:

In our Kenya you can make a living out of anything. Even fear. Look at the British company that owns and runs security guards in this country. Every house, every factory has a Security guard. They should set up a Ministry of Fear (286).

Karega is not as Lisa Curtis suggests: "a militant mouthpiece whose speeches have the air of having been transcribed from agitator's pamphlets."²⁸ Karega may be sanctimonious and self-righteous, but that is because of his youth and inexperience. He is capable of personal change too as is demonstrated by his understanding in jail that political struggle continues with or without him. His character has evolved progressively from his involvement in "the journey", to the political lessons he learns from "the lawyer" to his involvement in the trade union movement. After returning to Ilmorog after a 10 year absence, he notices evidence of economic betrayal of Ilmorog: economic displacement, proletarianization of the peasants, enclosure of game parks. "And behind it all, as a monument to the changes, was Trans-African Road and two story building of the African Economic Bank Ltd" (302). He questions individualism and the end to "peoples common shamba". Neither could he cynically accept Wanja's "eat or be eaten" viewpoint. Finding inspiration from Abdullah, he chooses to help organize the Brewery Worker's Union at Theng'eta Breweries despite the intervention of Munira and Lillian's revivalist movement. Karega later gains political experience from his interrogation by Inspector

Godfrey. Yet Karega's militant political tactics differs from those of Abdullah.

In a meeting with Wanja, where she warns him of plans to break the brewery union strike, Karega is able to help her face the death of her grandparents, who both acted alone to defend the land.

Karega's meeting with Wanja seems to sow a new seed of resistance in her, not that she wasn't capable of organizing in a co-operative sense. Her commitment on "the journey" and her organizational abilities in forming the Nderi-Nyakinyua Group were ample proof of her previous commitment to the Community above individual interests. Some action had to be taken, particularly because of her union with Abdullah and her need to protect Joseph's continued success at Siriana. She objectively analyzes her new consciousness and exercises her betrayal of the community.

She had carried dreams in a broken vessel. Looking back now she could not even see a trail of the vanished dream and expectations. It was Kimeria who bored a hole into the vessel. That was true. But she had let him. She had chosen. This she could not now hide from herself. Karega was right. She had chosen.... The choice put one on this or that side of the line-up in the battlefield.... She, Wanja, had chosen to murder her own child. In doing so she had murdered her own life and now she took her final burial in property and

degradation as a glorious achievement. She tried to look at this coolly, without this time shifting the blame onto others."

She could not now return to a previous state of innocence. But she could do something about her present circumstances (328).

She would take revenge on the three men who exploited her most: Chui, Kimeria, and Mzigo. The emotional will to kill Kimeria comes earlier in the novel when Wanja is raped by him: "He must die, a voice thudded within, he must die" (157).

The political will comes only when Wanja is politically committed to vengeance. Albrecht sees her killing of Kimeria as:

... an instinctive act of liberation. [While Munira's torching of the whorehouse] ...is premeditated, ordained by what he called the Law... he feels he has been entrusted with a mission: to root out the evil in the world, the evil incarnate in Wanja, who has become in his eyes both Jezebel and Babylon.²⁹

Munira's distorted view is the result of a self-hatred similar to Wanja's, but he also hated Wanja because she made him pay for his sex with her. Because of his class background, he sub-consciously avoids attacking his own socio-economic roots as is the case of his treatment of Chui, Nderi, Kimeria. His choice to continue to betray Ilmorog is a complex one. As a religious fanatic of Lillian's sect, he is a victim of a

false consciousness. Even though his torching of Sunshine Lodge is an attempt to "save" Karega's soul and punish the "Satanic" Wanja, Munira has "chosen" as victim to punish another victim (Wanja) instead of the true betrayers of the nation: Chui, Kimeria, Mzigo, and Nderi.

Both "murders" of the betrayers are pre-meditated. Abdullah would have killed the three men as well if Munira and Wanja had not intervened. Wanja planned the murder of Kimeria and the others in advance. Ironically, Munira's intervention prevented her from killing others.

The trauma of the fire released other memories of guilt about Wanja's father and his drunken fixation on money:

She rested on her bed in the old hut, turning over these things in her head... these silhouettes from the past... these images that refused to be burned right out of her life and memory. She wanted a new life... clean... she felt this was the meaning of her recent escape! Already she felt the stirrings of a new person... she had after all been baptized by fire (337). (Emphasis is mine).

Wanja's unborn child is a new inspiration for continuing the struggle. When asked who the father is Wanja draws a portrait that combines the best features of "the lawyer" and the "Mau Mau" leader, Dedan Kimathi without one limb. It is in fact, Abdullah. Her child will be not just the result of her

union with Abdullah, but also a revolutionary inspiration for a future Kenya, one that is liberated from the tyranny of a neo-colonial state.

Wanja's portrait is an important symbolic reference to her renewal "... she felt a tremendous calm, a kind of inner assurance of the possibilities of a new power" (338).

Abdullah's renewal will come from a recognition of the revolutionary ideas of Joseph. However, his awakening is slower and more contradictory. A dialogue between Abdullah and Joseph at the end of the novel reveals the new revolutionary consciousness of Joseph and Abdullah's recognition of the independence of "his brother." Joseph reveals the inconvenience of Chui's death in the fire, seeing it as a setback to a planned strike at Siriana. Munira's voluntarist action in fact thwarted the revolutionary process.

Abdullah's brief introspection during their discussion allows him time to assess his own isolated personal betrayal, particularly his refusal to share his past with Joseph. He feels guilty for having abused Joseph in the past and confesses this guilt to Joseph. Joseph's reply is really the first and only incident when we are given an opportunity to understand his character:

'There's nothing to forgive.... I am very grateful for what you have done for me and also Munira and Wanja and Karega. When I grow up and finish school and university I want to be like you. I would like to feel proud that I had done something for our people. You fought for the political independence of this country: I would like to contribute to the liberation of its people of this country. I have been reading a lot about Mau Mau: I hope that one day we shall make Karuna-ini, when Kimathi was born, and Othaya, where JM was born, national shrines. And build a theatre in memory of Kimathi, because as a teacher he organized the Gichamu Theatre Movement in Tetu....' (339-340).

Perhaps Joseph's wish, small as it is, for shrines for Kimathi and J.M. Karuiki as well as a theatre like that organized by the Gichamu Theatre Movement, are small seeds of Ngugi's own commitment for a new recognition of the "Mau Mau" movement as well as inspiration for the Kamiriithu Community Theatre.³⁰

In Joseph's speech, Abdullah recognizes the rhetoric and political views of Karega and, although initially hesitant, he realizes the importance of a new struggle that will end the betrayal of Kenyans by Kenyans. ".... history was a dance in a huge arena of God. You played your part, whatever your chosen part, and then you left the arena, swept aside by the waves of a new step, a new movement in the dance" (340).

Karega, who hears of his mother's death while in prison,

is slow too in recognizing his own short sightedness in the political struggle beyond his own lost commitment until a young worker, Akinyi tells him of worker's strike in Ilmorog as well as the role of a new urban guerrilla organization, WAKOMBOZI. Akinyi convinces Karega that he will be able to rejoin the political struggle. Inspired by the possibility of a continued fight against neo-colonialism outside the prison, an invigorated Karega reviews the situation:

The system and its gods and its angels had to be fought consciously, consistently and resolutely by all the working people! From Koitalel through Kang'ethe to Kimathi it had been the peasants, aided by the workers, small traders and small landowners, who had mapped out the path (344).

For an imprisoned Karega the repression of today can always be fought "tomorrow". Confident that "he was no longer alone", Karega can survive his prison term. Ngugi survived a year in prison, from 1977 to 1978. He remarks on the irony of his detention compared to that of Karega:

Many critics have pointed out the parallels between my own arrest and detention and similar but fictional events in the opening and closing chapters of my novel Petals of Blood. It opens with the arrest of a progressive worker - he is deceived into believing that he is wanted at the police station for a few questions -and it closes with his eventual detention on suspicion of being a communist at heart.³¹

Through the eyes of four diverse protagonists, Ngugi is able to chronicle the changes in the political and economic landscape of Ilmorog, a mythical neo-colonial town in Kenya. From an underdeveloped enclave, neglected by the national bourgeoisie, Ilmorog is slowly transformed by the circumstances of both betrayal of its people by their elected officials, by their business community, and by their leaders. In their own way Abdullah, Munira, Karega, and Wanja betray their community not only because of the divisions of neo-colonialism, but also because of personal weaknesses as well. With the exception of the journey to Nairobi, Abdullah withdraws to his shop and later his Theng'eta bar. He does not fight the economic invasion of his community, but temporarily profits from it. Yet Abdullah is emersed in the tradition of resistance; he is capable of overcoming adversity whether it be his impoverished role as street food vendor, his reassessment of his abuse of Joseph or his committment to Wanja despite her degradation as a prostitute. As an exile from his own community, Abdullah is not alone in his betrayal of his adopted community. As exiles Munira and Karega seek refuge in Ilmorog to escape their tragic personal experiences at home. Munira's betrayal, like Abdullah's, is one of apathy in response to the crises in the community. Yet his alienation from the community is greater, leading to his spontaneous acceptance of religious fanaticism, which in turn results in the attempted murder of Wanja. Karega too is guilty of betraying the community by seeing the struggle

against capitalist penetration of Ilmorog as an individual above the action of the community. His abandonment of Wanja during her most vulnerable crisis is another level of his personal betrayal. Karega's betrayal is the slightest of the four protagonists. He is also the least contradictory character, progressively changing without a major setback. Individually, he may be more of an ideal in proletarian fiction than a realistic character. Wanja's betrayal of community is a contradictory one. It comes from several sources including resentment having been abandoned by Karega, commercialization of Theng'eta, and the adoption of the philosophy of "eat or be eaten" as the rationale for her prostitution business. Yet weakened by family background and strengthened by her grandmother's traditional communal resistance, Wanja as a woman is the most victimized and the most resilient character in the novel.

However, all of these characters have insight into their betrayals and they allow their spirits to be renewed by new levels of political struggle in Ilmorog. Even Munira is capable of judging his own family's exploitation of the Kenyan working class during his trial at the end of the novel.

What Ngugi is saying in this novel is that betrayal of the community can be a temporary state of personal alienation for some caused by the hostility and divisiveness in a neo-colonial

environment. Abdullah, Karega, and Wanja betray their community. They divorce themselves from the community's need for collective action. Karega's retreat is the result of his alienation from Wanja. He leaves Ilmorog when the community needs his leadership for a defense against the exploitive actions Nderi and the national bourgeoisie. Abdullah retreats to his shop and bar, lapsing into a world of self-preservation and alienation. Wanja's marketing of sex, like the liquor Theng'eta, is a means of forgetting the anguish of the exploitation of Kimeria, the loss of her family, and the guilt of killing her baby. Despite obstacles forced on these characters, they are capable of regeneration. Karega learns that he cannot act alone. He must work as part of a movement for national liberation. Abdullah and Wanja, two wounded progressive fighters, work towards a collective future, hopefully continuing the work of their ancestors Gikuyu and Mumbi. For others, such as Reverend Jerrod Brown, Mzigo, Chui, Kimeria, and Nderi, it continues to be in their class interests to exploit and betray their community.

These five antagonists collectively act as an antithesis to political renewal in Kenya. With the exception of Nderi, whose speech making and taste for political revenge approximate realistically a number of KANU leaders, these betrayals lack character development. Collectively they stand for a national betrayal that has resulted from the inception and growth of

neo-colonialism. Mzigo and Chui are part of an educational betrayal that began with the infusion of colonial education that was so pronounced during the central conflict in The River Between. Chui's leadership, so pronounced as a student rebel, was co-opted by the seduction of material wealth and political power. Mzigo uses his position as "school-inspector" to enhance his own fortunes, callously forgetting the educational needs of Ilmorog. He sees women as willing victims by suggesting to Munira that their "use" can compensate for the lack of educational materials. Reverend Brown, like Munira's father, uses the sham of religious conviction to accumulate wealth and power under the guise of aid to poverty-stricken areas like Ilmorog. Kimeria and Nderi are the most dangerous betrayers because they are willing to go to any lengths to preserve their right to exploit the less fortunate. Kimeria is so confident of his role within a capitalist system he is willing to explain or confess his destructive capacity within a neo-colonial betrayal. As a character he is further developed as "Boss Kihara" in Devil on the Cross.

After Petals of Blood, Ngugi too would face new levels of political struggle. He would help start a popular theatre in his own community at Kamiriithu despite the repression and resistance of the Kenyan government. As a detainee he would write a brilliant satiric novel, Devil on the Cross on the only available source of writing material, toilet paper. After

1982 he would also start a new career as a political exile in London, continuing the fight to help other political prisoners in Kenya as well as exploring new levels of mass communication by writing for a peasant and worker audience in Gikuyu and Kiswahili.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Writers in Politics (London: Heinemann, 1981) 94.
2. A succinct definition of neo-colonialism is given as follows: [When] "... formal political independence of almost all the former colonies has not significantly modified the previous domination and exploitation of the great majority of humanity in Asia, Africa and Latin America by the advanced capitalist countries."

Bill Warren, Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism (London, New Left Books, 1980) 184.

Other sources that explain the characteristics of neo-colonialism are:

Daniel A. Offiong, Imperialism and Dependency: Obstacles to African Development (Washington, D.C., Howland University Press, 1982) 61-63.

Colin Leys, Underdevelopment of Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

Kwame Nkrumah, Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Capitalism (New York: International Publishers, 1966).
3. See Christopher Leo, Land and Class in Kenya (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984) Chapters 3 and 8.

Nicola Swainson, The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

Gavin Kitching, Class and Economic Change in Kenya: The Making of an African - Petite - Bourgeoisie (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).

Richard Sandbrook, Proletarians and African Capitalism: The Kenyan Case 1960-1972 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975).
4. Cook and Okenimpke, Ngugi wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writings (London: Heinemann, 1983) 90.
5. Cook and Okenimpke 93.

6. Ojung Ayuk, "Environmental Decadence: A Theme in Post Independence African Fiction," Africana Journal 13.1-4(1982) :142.
7. Emmanuel Ngara, Art and Ideology in the African Novel (London: Heinemann, 1985) 80.
8. Peter Nazareth, "The Second Homecoming: Multiple Ngugi's in Petals of "Blood"", ed., George M. Gugelberger Marxism and African Literature (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986) 126.
9. Cyril Treister, Nairobi Times, November 6, 1978 from G.D. Killam, Introduction to Ngugi wa Thiong'o (London: Heinemann Books, 1980) 106.
10. Eustace Palmer, "Ngugi's Petals of Blood," African Literature Today, 10, (1979) :153-165.
11. As quoted by Anita Shreve, Viva July, 1977 :35 in G.D. Killam, "A Note on the Title of Petals of Blood," Journal of Commonwealth Literature 15.1(1980) :126.
12. ed. Wayne Brown, Derek Walcott: Selected Poems (London: Heinemann Books, 1981) 103-104.
13. "Chui represents the older generation of educated elite (who) became corrupt bureaucrat(s) and bourgeois in turn....":

Ian Glenn, "Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the Dilemmas of the Intellectual Elite in Africa: A Social Perspective," English in Africa 8.2(1981) 59.
14. Jennifer Evans, "Mother Africa and Heroic Whore: Female Images in Petals of Blood," ed., Hal Wylie, Eileen Julien and Russell J. Linnemann, Contemporary African Literature (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1983) 62.
15. Jacqueline Bardolph, "Fertility in Petals of Blood," Echos du Commonwealth 6(1980-1981) :64-65.
16. This is likely a slander against former Vice-President, Oginga Odinga, who broke away from Kenyan African National Union (K.A.N.U.), to form his own short-lived party, Kenyan Peoples Union (K.P.U.)

See Henry Bienen, Kenya: The Politics of Participation and Control (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974) 69-72, 106-107,

Colin Leys 234-238.

The role and later assassination of Pio Gama Pinto in 1965 is discussed in Odinga's book, Not Yet Uhuru (London: Heinemann, 1969) 250-2, 269-270, 278-88.

Leys 235.

17. Ngugi has modelled Wanja on the exploited barmaids of Kenya. "She is not a prostitute, strictly speaking, nor is she a straight girl. Her salary is not regulated; it is paid according to the whim of the employer. She has little chance of marrying. I believe that barmaids are the most ruthlessly exploited category of women. Barmaids came into being after Independence, and were a result of the many bars that sprang up after 1963. Drinking, alcohol and sexism are part of our national pastime." Shreve 35.
18. Part I ends with the Ilmorog delegation leaving their community to escape the fate of dead animals who feed the "hawks" and "vultures." Ironically, they become victims of another vulture, Nderi wa Riera, whose name literally means, "vulture of air." "Plainly he lives a "vulture" existence, living high above the people, fattening off their misery and feeding as his name sake on the dead and near-dead people and cattle of his constituency." Triester 106.
19. Ngugi, Writers in Politics 7.
20. Ngara presents the idea of the journey as both a physical and socio-economic concept in which the two contrasting characters Munira and Karega are revealed. Ngara, 75-79.

Christine Pagnouille sees "The Journey" as a separate entity both structurally and as an independent focus within the confines of a second title. Pagnouille also focuses on the similarities and differences of the journey motif in comparison to T.S. Eliot's "Journey of the Magi."

See Christine Pagnouille, "Ngugi wa Thiong'o "Journey of the Magi": Part II of Petals of Blood, Research in African Literature 6.2(1985).

21. Cook and Okenimpke 95.
22. Cook and Okenimpke 9. They suggest that the lawyer is J.M. Kariuki, a social reformer within KANU and former "Mau Mau" leader. Coincidentally "J.M." was murdered in 1975 during the writing of Petals of Blood. Kariuki, like Odinga was one of a few critics within the KANU government of

Kenyatta. Ngugi wrote two essays on him in Writers in Politics. The theme of betrayal dominates his discussion on this Kenyan patriot as well:

"Who betrayed J.M. Kariuki? Who killed him? I felt the truth pain, the truth hurt. For it was we, we who have kept silent and propped up on an unjust oppressive system, because we were eating a bit of the fruits. So we kept quiet when Gama Pinto was killed: when Mboya was murdered; when Keeng'u Karumba disappeared. We kept quiet saying it was not really our shauri" (85).

The movement against those who opposed the Kenyatta government, which included Ngugi, intensified after the Kariuki assassination in March 1975.

See Swainson 184.

David Maughan-Brown, Land, Freedom, and Fiction: History and Ideology in Kenya (London: Zed Press, 1985) 192.

²³. Florence Stratton, "Cyclical Patterns in Petals of Blood," Journal of Commonwealth Literature 15.1(1980) :121-122.

²⁴. "A Luta Continua" is the political refrain of the revolutionary party in Mozambique, FRELIMO. It was frequently used by former leader, Samora Machel to end his speeches in both pre and post colonial Mozambique.

See Samara Machel, Mozambique: Sowing the Seeds of Revolution (London, Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guine, 1972)

Samara Machel, The Enemy Within (Maputs: Departments of Information and Propaganda, 1982).

²⁵. Cook and Okenimpke 104.

²⁶. Evans 59.

²⁷. Lisa Curtis, "The Divergence of Art and Ideology in the Later Novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o: A Critique," Ufahamu 13.2(1984) :204.

²⁸. Curtis 206.

²⁹. Francoise Albrecht, "Blood and Fire in Petals of Blood," Echos du Commonwealth 6(1980-1981) :45.

- ³⁰. See Ngugi wa Thiong'o, "Mau Mau is Coming Back: The Revolutionary Significance of 20th October 1952 in Kenya Today," from Barrel of a Pen: Resistance to Repression in Neo-Colonial Kenya (Trenton: New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1983) 7-31.

Ross Kidd, "Popular Theatre and Popular Struggle in Kenya: The Story of Kamirithu," Race and Class Vol.XXIV 24.3(1983) :287-304.

- ³¹. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary (London: Heinemann, 1981) 128.

CONCLUSION

A recent critic of Ngugi attacks him for being consumed with "hatred":

[He has] "... lost this way in the search for social justice. With a keen sense of injustice, he naturally felt the injustices that remained in the post-colonial world."¹

This perspective is inaccurate. Ngugi, historically documents through character and circumstance the abuse of "justice" as well as the destructive capacity of the national bourgeoisie. He has attacked the abuse of privilege and power through his fiction, drama, and political essays. His increasing satirical bite, evident through Devil on the Cross and I Will Marry When I Want, has added a new imaginative level of criticism to the attack on a materialistic and capricious national bourgeoisie. His criticism of a neo-colonial state and its ruling class is not based on hatred, but rather on a reasoned critique of a nation betrayed by a parasitical elite.

Each of the novels explores the theme of betrayal in a different historical milieu: The River Between within the confines of the crisis of colonial education and the circumcision debates, Weep Not Child at the apex of the "Mau Mau" Revolution, A Grain of Wheat during the turbulent questioning of the week before and after independence, and

Petals of Blood after more than a decade of political posturing and regional disparity. All of the novels focus on the contradictions of either colonialism or neo-colonialism. It is within these contradictions that the theme of betrayal is evident. Betrayal is always presented as a choice such as when Wanjia chooses to establish the Sunshine Lodge or sell Theng'eta as a commodity. Waiyaki decides to leave the Kiama and break his oath of "purity." Mugo betrays Kihika to pursue his distorted vision of revolutionary heroism. The theme of betrayal is an important component of Ngugi's concern about the breakdown in Kenya's socio-political system. Community divisions exist structurally in The River Between and in class terms in the other three novels.

In The River Between, divisions between Kameno and Makuyu ridges existed before colonial penetration, but the Honia River always acted as a buffer or a "cure" for their competition. The decision to betray the ridges was made by both Joshua and Kabonyi who were the first major converts to a colonial Christianity. Kabonyi's recanted conversion to traditionalism is not a sincere one and thus it is an additional betrayal because of his jealousy of the messianic role played by Waiyaki. Waiyaki's betrayal is somewhat less tainted, but perhaps more divisive because his motive, to successfully unite the two ridges, is carried out individually without consulting or listening to the needs of the community. Waiyaki's

education at Siriana, taken to form the means of unification, in fact ironically accelerated the divisions that already existed before colonialism. Muthoni and Nyambura, who as "guardians of the tribe," are ironically blamed for the division of the ridges even though they attempt to become part of the unification process. An entrenched and rigid Kiama feels that it has won the battle to unite the ridges, but at a social cost that will make a colonial takeover that much easier.

Weep Not Child presented a view of accelerated colonial occupation. The presence of a white settler class, personified through Howlands, has increased the divisions within the Gikuyu community even further. Jacobo, the most divisive source of betrayal in the community, is a dangerous successor to Kabonyi in The River Between as he is not only an informer for Howlands but also uses his "loyalist" status to exploit his fellow villagers, especially Ngotho. Njoroge, like his father, Ngotho, feels that education will lift his family out of its role as tenant farmers. However, they find, as does Waiyaki before them, that until the divisive land issue is settled, the betrayal of community from within and from outside will continue unabated. Ngotho's betrayal is a result of inaction by choosing not to fight. Instead he attempts to provide a living for his family. His son, Boro chooses to break out of this passive acceptance of victimization. However, he too

becomes caught up in a betrayal caused by the contradictions of colonialism. Boro gives Howlands the opportunity to punish Boro's family and he dishonours his father by attempting to force him to join the revolution. After Ngotho's death Boro betrays ideologically the collective action of the Land and Freedom Army by endangering the Movement through the reckless assassinations of his class enemies, Jacobo and Howlands. As a result his family is nearly decimated by arrests and deaths. Even Njoroge, the hope for the future survival of the family, is incapable of breaking the deadlock of betrayal. The weight of recovery and progressive change remains in the hands of two women, Njeri and Nyokabi, who have neither betrayed the community nor divided the family.

Mumbi, the founding mother of the Gikuyu and the heroic figure of A Grain of Wheat, continues the bonding roles established by women in the two earlier novels. The weight of personal and political betrayals of Thabai rest on her shoulders. As Kihika's sister she must bear the loss of family as well as the revolutionary leadership of her brother. Unlike Boro she does not exact revenge even when she learns the source of the betrayal of her brother.

Mugo's public confession is voluntary and as such it is meant to heal the wounds of betrayal. It does that in part, but it also makes others learn of the destructive force of

political betrayal. Gikonyo, Mumbi's husband, comes to terms with his political betrayal of the "Mau Mau" unity oath as well as the victimization of his wife by Karanja. After hearing Mugo's public confession and reassessing his own shortcomings, he is capable of both reconciliation and understanding the source of a new betrayal, the economic exploits of the M.P. for Thabai. Karanja, the "loyalist" informer who is an extension of Jacobo's collaborationist viewpoint is seen as more of a victim of his own betrayal which is fueled by an obsessive love for Mumbi. Yet his roles as "the hooded self" and as a rapist are destructive ones. If Mugo had not been sacrificed, Karanja would have had to pay a much higher price for the betrayal of Thabai than exile. A Grain of Wheat offers a more optimistic ending than Weep Not Child despite the divisiveness of a community betrayed. The possibility of reconciliation between Mumbi and Gikonyo offers hope for a future Kenya in the 1960's.

Reconciliation is also a possibility for some of the characters at the end of Petals of Blood, but only after numerous personal and political betrayals have been exorcised. The complexity of the theme of betrayal in this novel is compounded by a rewriting of the nationalist struggle in Kenya, the number of betrayals involved beyond the four main protagonists, and the social divisions created by a parasitical neo-colonialism.

The record of Ilmorog's past is used by Ngugi to record the struggle against colonialism and to provide incentive and inspiration to reacquire a former state of self-reliant independence. Betrayal is always an historical possibility, even an eventuality for those who wish to benefit from the misfortune of others. Three Limuru exiles find escape in Ilmorog, but as that community faces the devastation of drought and later full integration into a capitalist system, they are unable to escape their pasts. Munira's passive isolated betrayal is the result of his guilt for not having not stood up to his father and his exploitive investments. Abdullah's betrayal is passive as well, but not as severe as Munira's. Neglect of Joseph and an enforced isolation in his store and bar are sources of the betrayal even though he is willing to defend Wanja and lead the Ilmorog delegation on the "journey" to Nairobi. Karega's betrayal is rather slight as well, but significant none the less. It is the result of naivety and a fixation of his own personal role in the liberation of his adopted community. His ability to support the victims of neo-colonialism is sometimes called into question, particularly his insensitive treatment of Wanja.

Wanja, like her predecessor, Mumbi is the most resilient and the most victimized character in Petals of Blood. Her betrayal is the most complex of all the characters. Like Munira she faces the memory of past recriminations concerning

her father and Kimeria. Like Karega she leaves Ilmorog during crisis situations. She abandons co-operative endeavors for the personal profit of Theng'eta and the Sunshine Lodge. Like Abdullah she is capable of neglect as in the case of Nyakinyua. Yet in spite of these betrayals she is capable of regeneration. This is evident throughout the novel from personal sacrifices on the "Journey" to the co-operative farmers' organization in Ilmorog to the elimination of Kimeria before the fire in Sunshine Lodge. Wanja's character is later proletarianized further through Wariinga in Devil on the Cross, although in her case the possibility of a regenerated political environment is less likely.

Finally, the socio-political division of neo-colonial betrayal has been the focus of Chapter Four. The national bourgeoisie have betrayed their opportunities to lead Kenya out of the wasteland of colonial exploitation. Mzigo, Chui, and Kimeria, Nderi and Brown have not only failed to develop the country fairly and equitably, but they have systematically used their privileged positions in education, commerce, religion and politics to take advantage of those they have sworn to protect. The death of three of them in the fire at Sunshine Lodge is justice, but ironically exacted by a fanatical Munira. Karega and others will have to pay politically for this voluntarist act until the opposition movement is better organized.

Through The River Between, Weep Not Child, A Grain of Wheat, and Petals of Blood as well as Devil on the Cross and the various plays and short stories, Ngugi has tried to recreate a "living past." The struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism has been his major focus. Betrayal can be temporary and reconciliation possible if the interests of the community are accepted before the power and privilege of the individual. Ngugi's fictional world is a living lesson for the people of Kenya "... nobody 'can escape fate or the past,' everyone must face the past since it is merged into the present, take his responsibility and try to change the present situation for a better future."²

FOOTNOTES

- ¹. M.E.K. Neuhaus, "How Ngugi wa Thiong'o Lost His Way," Quadrant January-February 1987 :96.
- ². René Richard, "History and Literature: Narration and Time in Petals of Blood," Echos du Commonwealth 6(1980-81) :26.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I PRIMARY RESOURCES OF NGUGI WA THIONG'O

BOOKS

- Ngugi wa Thiong'o. A Grain of Wheat. London: Heinemann, 1978.
- . Barrel of a Pen: Resistance to Repression and Neo-Colonialism. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1983.
- . Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature. London: James Currey, 1986.
- . Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary. London: Heinemann, 1981.
- . Devil on the Cross. London: Heinemann, 1982.
- . Homecoming. London: Heinemann, 1978.
- . Petals of Blood. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978.
- . Secret Lives and Other Stories. New York: Lawrence Hill and Company, 1975.
- . The River Between. London: Heinemann, 1975.
- . The Black Hermit. London: Heinemann, 1979.
- . Weep Not Child. London: Heinemann. 1981.
- . Writers in Politics. London: Heinemann, 1981.
- Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo. The Trial of Dedan Kimathi. London: Heinemann, 1981.
- Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ngugi wa Mirii. I Will Marry When I Want. London: Heinemann, 1982.

ARTICLES

Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

- . "A Statement." Kunapipi 4.2(1982) :135-139.
- . "On Writing in Gikuyu." Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :151-155.

- . "The Culture of Silence and Fear." South Magazine May 1984 :38.
- . "The Role of the Scholar in the Development of African Literatures." ed., Bernth Lindfors. Research Priorities in African Literatures Munich: Hans Zell, 1984 :7-12.
- . "The Tension Between National and Imperialist Culture." World Literature Written in English 24.1(1984) :3-9.
- . "The Writer in a Neo-Colonial State." The Black Scholar 17.4(1986) :2-10.
- . "Women in Cultural Work: The Fate of Kamiriithu People's Theatre in Kenya." Development Dialogue 1-2 (1982) :115-133.

II CRITICAL TEXTS ON NGUGI WA THIONG'O

Cook, David and Okenimpke, Michael. Ngugi wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writings. London: Heinemann, 1983.

Killam, G.D. An Introduction to the Writing's of Ngugi. London: Heinemann, 1980.

Killam, G.D. ed. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Washington, D.C. Three Continents Press, 1984.

Robson, C.B. Ngugi wa Thiong'o. London: MacMillan, 1979.

Mugo, Githae Micere. "Vision of Africa in the Fiction of Chinua Achebe, Margaret Laurence, Elizabeth Huxley and Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Diss. University of New Brunswick, 1973.

III INTERVIEWS WITH NGUGI

Bjorkman, Ingrid. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o - Interview." Kunapipi 4.2(1982) :126-133.

Bini,Obi. "The Commitment of the Intellectual. "Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o." London, May 3, 1983. Review of African Political Economy 32(April 1985) :18-24.

Eyoh, Hansel Nolumbe. "Interview: Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Journal of Commonwealth Literature., 21.1(1986) :162-166.

Granqvist, Raoul. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o - Interview." Kunapipi 5.1(1983) :44-48.

Magina, Magina. "People have a right to know - Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Africa 90 (February 1979) :30-31.

Parker, Bettye J. "Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o" G.D. Killam. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984 :58-66.

Parker, Kenneth. "Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Marxism Today September 1982 :34-35.

Shreve, Anita. "Petals of Blood." Viva (July 1977) :35-36.

Walmsley, Anne. "No licence for Musical." Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Index on Censorship 1(1983) :22-24.

IV SPECIFIC ARTICLES ON NGUGI

Albrecht, Françoise. "Blood and Fire in Petals of Blood." Echos du Commonwealth 6(1980-1981) :85-97.

Amooti wa Irumba. "The Making of a rebel." Index on Censorship 3(1980) :20-24.

Amuta, Chidi. "Ngugi's Prison Diary." Journal of African Marxists 6(October 1984) :106-114.

Ayuk, Ojung. "Environmental Decadence: A Theme in Post-Independence African Fiction." Africana Journal 13.1-4(1982) :142-151.

Bardolph, Jacqueline. "Fertility in Petals of Blood." Echos du Commonwealth 6(1980-1981) :53-83.

Bardolph, Jacqueline. "The Literature of Kenya." G.D. Killam, ed., The Writing of East and Central Africa. London: Heinemann, 1984 :36-51.

Bentsi-Enchill, Kojo and Nii K. "For an Afro-African Literature." West Africa 22/29 December 1980 :2604-2605.

Bini, Obi. Rev. of Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary by Ngugi wa Thiong'o. London: Heinemann, 1981 from Guardian (New York) October 31, 1981 :21.

Brittain, Victoria. "Kenya's Dissident." London Review of Books 3-16 (June 1982) :19-20.

Brittain, Victoria. "How the Kikuyu play brought the house down." Guardian (London) April 14, 1982 :13.

- Bryce, Jane. "Profile - Ngugi wa Thiong'o: My novel of blood, sweat and tears." New African August 1982 :36.
- Cancel, Robert. "Literary Criticism as Social Philippic and Personal Exorcism: Ngugi wa Thiong'o Critical Writings." World Literature Today 59.1(1985) :26-29.
- Caute, David. "Conferring in Absentia." Times Literary Supplement Nov. 16, 1984 :1310.
- Chesaina, Jane. "Who is on Trial in The Trial of Dedan Kimathi?: A Critical Essay on Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Mugo's The Trial of Dedan Kimathi." Busara 8.2(1976) :21-37.
- Chinweizu. Rev. of Decolonizing the Mind by Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Times Literary Supplement May 8, 1987 :499.
- Chileshe, John. "Petals of Blood: Ideology and Imaginative Expression." Journal of Commonwealth Literature 15.1(1980) :133-37.
- Cochrane, Judith. "Some Images of Women in East African Fiction." Association For Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies 5.1(1978) :27-41.
- Cochrane, Judith. "Women as Guardians of the Tribe in Ngugi's Novels." Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies 4.5(1977) :1-11.
- Cock, Sybil. "Kenyan Voice of Struggle." Socialist Review December 1982 :20.
- Crehan, Stewart. "The Politics of the Signifier: Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Petals of Blood." World Literature Written in English 26.1(1986) :1-24.
- Crow, Brian. "Melodrama and the "Political Unconscious" in Two African Plays." Ariel 14.3(1983) :15-31.
- Currey, James and Murray Nancy. "The last rehearsal." Index on Censorship 1(1983) :24-26.
- Curtis, Lisa. "The Divergence of Art and Ideology in the Later Novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o: A Critique." Ufahamu 13.2(1984) :186-214.
- D'Almeida, Irene Assiba. "The Language of African Fiction: Reflections on Ngugi's Advocacy For An Afro-African Literature." Presence Africaine 120(1981-1982) :82-92.

- Dasenbrock, Reed Way. Review of Devil on the Cross by Ngugi wa Thiong'o. World Literature Today (58) :153.
- Dorsey, David. "Didactic Form of the Novel: With Evidence from Meja Mwangi and others." ed. Kofi Anyidoho, Abioseh M. Porter Daniel Racine, and Janice Spleth. Interdisciplinary Dimensions of African Literature (Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1982 :12-25.
- Drame, Kandioura. "Social Function of Myth and Epic: Mongo Beti and Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Ufahamu 12.2(1983) :44-67.
- Durix, Jean Pierre. "Politics in Petals of Blood." Echos du Commonwealth 6(1980-1981) :98-115.
- Ekwe-Ekwe, Herbert. "Africa and Devil on the Cross: Revolutionary Themes in the Ngugi Novel." Monthly Review (June 1983) :25-33.
- Elders, Derek. Review of "James Ngugi's A Grain of Wheat." African Literature Today 1-4(1968) :51-53.
- Ellah, E. "Zaria Mud Theatre Thrives." Africa Now October 1985 :92.
- Evans, Jennifer. "Mother Africa and Heroic Whore: Female Images in Petals of Blood." ed. Hal Wylie, Eileen Julien, and Russell J. Linnemann, Contemporary African Literature Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1983 :57-65.
- Gachukia, Eddah. "The Role of Women in Ngugi's Novels." Busara 3.4(1971) :30-34.
- Gakwindi, Shatto Arthur. "Ngugi's A Grain of Wheat." ed. G.D. Killam. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984 :231-242.
- Gikandi, Simon. "The Growth of the East African Novel." ed. G.D. Killam. The Writing of East and Central Africa London: Heinemann, 1984 :231-245.
- Gikandi, Simon. "Writing and Fighting:" Review of Writers in Politics, Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary, I Will Marry When I Choose, and Devil on the Cross, Index on Censorship 4(1982) :41-42.
- Gitau, B.K. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o - The African Paulo Freire." African Journal of Sociology. 2.1(1982) :42-55.
- Glendinning, Victoria. "A Black J'Accuse." Sunday Times (London) June 13, 1982 :42.

Glenn, Ian. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o and The Dilemmas of the Intellectual Elite in Africa: A Sociological Perspective." English in Africa 8.2(1981) :54-66.

Glinga, Werner. "The River Between and its Forerunners: A Contribution to The Theory of the Kenyan Novel." World Literature Written in English 26.2(1986) :211-228.

Gurr, Andrew. "The Fourth Novel: Ngugi's Petals of Blood." ed. Douglas Jefferson and Graham Martin. Use of Fiction: Essays on the Modern Novel Milton Keynes: Open University, 1982 :162-168.

Hall, Richard. "Kenya protest at play." The Observer Oct. 21, 1984 :14.

Haring, Lee. "Ngugi's Use of Gikuyu Folklore." ed. G.D. Killam. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o Washington, D.C., Three Continents Press, 1984 :80-89.

Harrow, Kenneth. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o A Grain of Wheat: Season of Irony." Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :243-263.

Howard, W.J. "Themes and Development in the Novels of Ngugi." ed. Edgar Wright. The Critical Evaluation of African Literature. London: Heinemann, 1973 :95-119.

Ikiddeh, Ime. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o: The Novelist as Historian." ed. Bruce King and Kolawole Ogungbesan. Celebration of Black and African Writing. Zaria: University of Ahmadu Bello and Oxford University Press, 1975 :204-216.

Ikiddeh, Ime. "James Ngugi as Novelist." African Literature Today 1-4(1968) :3-10.

Jabbi, Bu-Buakei. "The Structure of Symbolism in A Grain of Wheat." Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :210-241.

Jabbi, Bu-Buakei. "Conrad's Influence on Betrayal in A Grain of Wheat." Research in African Literature 11.1(1980) :50-83.

Johnson, Joyce "Character and Circumstance in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's A Grain of Wheat." Commonwealth Novel in English 3.1(1984) :21-38.

Jones, Eldred. "African Literature 1966-1967." African Forum 3.1(1967) :15-16.

Julien, Eileen. "Heroism in Grain of Wheat." ed. Eldred Jones. African Literature Today :13 New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1983 :136-143.

- Kagan, Alfred. "Review of Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary." Ufahamu 12.2(1983) :163-170.
- Kamau, Ngethe. "Petals of Blood as a Mirror of the African Revolution." African Communist 80(1980) :73-79.
- Kamenju, Grant. "Petals of Blood as a Mirror of the African Revolution." ed. Georg M. Gugelberger Marxism and African Literature Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986 :130-135.
- Kemoli, Arthur. "The Novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Joliso 2.2(1974) :69-107.
- Kidd, Ross. "Popular Theatre in Kenya Part I-II." Fuse 8.1-2(1984) :259-264, 11-16.
- Kidd, Ross. "Popular Theatre and Popular Struggle in Kenya: The Story of Kamiriithu." Race and Class (1983) :287-304.
- Killam, G.D. Introduction. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o. ed. G.D. Killam. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984 :5-13.
- Killam, G.D. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o." ed. G.D. Killam. The Writing of East and Central Africa London: Heinemann, 1984 :123-143.
- Killam, G.D. ed. "A Note on the Title of Petals of Blood." Journal of Commonwealth Literature 15.1(1980) :125-132.
- Killam, G.D. "Kenya." ed. Bruce King. Literatures of the World in English London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1974 :120-124.
- Kitchner, Julie. "Keeping Kimathi Alive." New Africa October 1984 :49.
- Knipp, Thomas. "Two Novels from Kenya: J. Ngugi." ed. G.D. Killam. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984 :161-169.
- Larson, Charles. "African Dissenters." New York Times Book Review 19 February 1978 :3,22.
- Levin, Tobe. "Women as Scapegoats of Culture and Cult: An Activist View of Female Circumcision in Ngugi's The River Between." ed. Carole Boyce Davies and Anne Adams Graves. Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986 :205-221.
- Lindfors, Bernth. "Petals of Blood as a Popular Novel." ed. Hal Wylie, Eileen Julien, Russell J. Linnermann. Contemporary

African Literature. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1983 :49-55.

Lindfors, Bernth. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o's Early Journalism." World Literature in Written in English 20.1(1981) :23-41.

Martini, Jurgen. et al. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Kunapipi 3.1(1981) :110-116, 135-140.

Martini, Jurgen. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o: East African Novelist." ed. G.D. Killam. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Washington, Three Continents Press, 1984 :285-291.

Masilela, Ntongela. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o Petals of Blood." Ufahamu 9.2(1979) :9-28.

Maughan-Brown, David. "Four Sons of one Father: A Comparison of Ngugi's Earliest Novels with works by Mwangi, Mangua, and Wachira." Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :179-209.

Maughan-Brown, David. review of Ngugi'o: An Exploration of His Writing by David Cook and Michael Okenimpke. Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :283-293.

Maughan-Brown, David. "'Mau Mau'" and Violence in Ngugi's Novels." English in Africa, 8 8.2(1981) :1-21.

Mnthali, Felix. "Continuity and Change in Conrad and Ngugi." Kunapipi 3.1(1981) :91-109.

Monkman, Leslie. "Kenya and the New Jerusalem in A Grain of Wheat." African Literature Today 7(1975) :111-116.

Nana, Charles. "Daughters of Moombi: Ngugi Heroines and Traditional Gikuyu Aesthetics." ed. Carole Boyce Davies and Anne Adams Graves. Ngambika: Studies on Women in African Literature. Trenton, New Jersey: African World Press, 1986 :139-149.

Nazareth, Peter. "The Second Homecoming: Multiple Ngugi's in Petals of Blood." ed. Georg M. Gugelberger. Marxism and African Literature. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986 :118-129.

Nazareth, Peter. Review of Barrel of a Pen: Resistance to Repression n Neo-Colonial Kenya by Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :276-283.

Nazareth, Peter. "Out of Darkness: Conrad and other Third World Writers." Conradiana 14-16(1982-1984) :173-185.

- Nenhams, M.E.K. "How Ngugi wa Thiong'o Lost His Way." Quadrant Jan-Feb. 1987 :93-97.
- Ngubiah, S.N. "Ngugi's Early Writings." ed. Chris Wanjala. Standpoints in African Literature: A Critical Anthology. Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973 :62-71.
- Nnolim, Charles. "Background Setting: Key to the Structure of Ngugi's The River Between." Obsidian 2.3(1976) :20-29.
- Nwankwo, Chimalum. Review of Devil on the Cross. Obsidian 3.2-3(1982) :190-192.
- Obumselu, Ben. "Marx, Politics and the African Novel." Twentieth Century Studies 10 (1973) :120-127.
- Obumselu, Ebele. "A Grain of Wheat: Ngugi's Debt to Conrad." Benin Review (June 1974) :80-91.
- Ochola-Ojero, P. "Of Tares and Broken Handles, Ngugi Preaches Thematic Treatment of Betrayal and Despair in A Grain of Wheat." Busara 2.3(1970) :38-46.
- Omari, Cuthbert K. "Writing in African Languages: Towards the Development of A Sociology of Literature." Présence Africaine 133-134(1986) :19-27.
- Onoge, Omafume. "The Crisis of Consciousness in Modern African Literature - A Survey." ed. Oniga Otite. Themes in African Social and Political Thought. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishing, 1978 :106-231.
- Page, Malcolm. "The Conclusions of Ngugi's A Grain of Wheat: Gloom or Affirmation?" ed. Uma Pamareswaran. The Commonwealth in Canada. Calcutta: Writer's Workshop, 1983 :216-225.
- Pagnouille, Christine. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o's "Journey of the Magi: Part II of Petals of Blood." Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :264-275.
- Palmer, Eustace. "Ngugi's Petals of Blood." African Literature Today 10 (1979) :153-165.
- Palsmaekers, K. "A Hybrid Poetics in Ngugi's Petals of Blood." Commonwealth Novel in English 2.1 (1983) :7-26.
- Rajab, Ahmed. "Detained in Kenya." Index on Censorship 7(1978) :7-10.
- Rauch, Erika. "The Central Male - Female Relationships in 'The River Between, and Mission to Kala." Busara 7.1(1975) :42-54.

Ravenscroft, Arthur. "African Novels of Affirmation." ed. Douglas Jefferson and Graham Martin. Use of Fiction: Essays on the Modern Novel. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1982 :171-180.

Rice, Michael. "The River Between - A Discussion." ed. G.D. Killam. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984 :125-135.

Richard, René. "History and Literature: Narration and Time in Petals of Blood." Echos du Commonwealth 6(1980-81) :1-36.

Riemenschneider, Dieter. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o and the Question of Language and Literature in Kenya." World Literature Written in English 24.1(1984) :78-87.

Sarvan, Ponnuthurai. "Under African Eyes." Conradiana 8.3(1976) :133-139.

Schieder, Rupert. "Black Man's Burden - review of Ngugi's Devil on the Cross." Books in Canada October 1982 :15-16.

Sekyi-Otu, Ato. "The Refusal of Agency: The Founding Narrative and Waiyaki's Tragedy in The River Between." Research in African Literature 16.2(1985) :157-178.

Sharma, Govind Narain. Review of Ngugi wa Thiong'o by Clifford B Robson. An Introduction to the Writings of Ngugi by G.D. Killam. Research in African Literature 14.2(1983) :238-242.

Sharma, Govind Narain. "Ngugi's Apocalypse: Marxism, Christianity and African Utopianism in Petals of Blood." World Literature Written in English 8.2(1979) :302-314.

Sharma, Govind Narain. "Ngugi's Christian Vision: Theme and Pattern in A Grain of Wheat." African Literature Today 10(1979) :167-176.

Soile, Sola. "Myth and History in Ngugi's Weep Not Child." ed. G.D. Killam. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984 :170-181.

Stratton, Florence. "Narrative Method in the Novels of Ngugi." ed. Eldred Jones. African Literature Today :13. New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1983 :124-133.

Stratton, Florence. "Cyclical Patterns in Petals of Blood." Journal of Commonwealth Literature 15.1(1980) :115-124.

Sweetman, David. "Adding to the howl on anguish." Review of Devil on the Cross. Times Literacy Supplement June 18, 1982 :676.

Treister, Cyril. "An Addition to the Genre of the Proletariat Novel." ed. G.D. Killam. Critical Perspectives on Ngugi wa Thiong'o. Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press, 1984 :267-270.

Vaughan, Michael. "African Fiction and Popular Struggle: The Case of A Grain of Wheat." English in Africa 8.2(1981) :23-51.

Waidhura, Livingston Njomo. "Clampdown on drama: Is Shakespeare a suitable hero for Kenya?" Index on Censorship 1(1985) :23-24.

Walmsley, Anne. "Ngugi wa Thiong'o Free thought on toilet paper." Index on Censorship 3(1981) :41-42.

Wamalwa, D. Salituma. "The Engaged Artist: The Social Vision of Ngugi wa Thiong'o." Africa Today 33.1(1986) :9-18.

Williams, Lloyd. "Religion and Life in James Ngugi's The River Between." African Literature Today 5(1971) :54-65.

Wilson, Amrit. "Playwright in Exile." New Statesman Nov. 23, 1984 :22.

V GENERAL TEXTS ON AFRICAN LITERATURE

Arab, Aberrahmane. Politics and the Novel in Africa. Hydra, Algeria: Office des Publications Universitaires, 1982.

Awoonor, Kofi. The Breast of the Earth. Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday/Anchor, 1976.

Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa, Jamie, Madubuike, Ihechukwu. Toward the Decolonization of African Literature Volume I. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1983.

Cook, David. African Literature: A Critical View. London: Longman, 1977.

Dathorne, O.R. African Literature in the Twentieth Century. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1975.

Davies, Carole Boyce. and Graves, Anne Adams. ed. Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986.

Duerden, Dennis and Pieterse, Cosmo. eds., African Writers Talking. London: Heinemann, 1972 :121-130.

Egejuru, Dhaneul Akubueze. Towards African Literary Independence. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980.

- Egejuru, Dhaneul Akubueze. Black Writers: White Audience: A Critical Approach to African Literature. New York: Exposition Press, 1978.
- Etherton, Michael. Development of African Drama. London: Hutchinson, 1982.
- Gakwandi, Shatto Arthur. The Novel and Contemporary Experience in Africa. London: Heinemann, 1977.
- Griffiths, Gereth. A Double Exile: African and West Indian Writing Between Two Cultures. London: Marion Boyars, 1978.
- Gugelberger, George M. ed. Marxism and African Literature. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986.
- Gunner, Elizabeth. A Handbook for Teaching African Literature. London: Heinemann, 1984.
- Gurr, Andrew. Writers in Exile: Identity of Home in Modern Literature. Sussex: Harvester Press, 1981.
- Janmohamed, Abdul R. Manichean Aesthetics: Politics of Literature in Colonial Africa. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1983.
- Killam, G.D. The Writing of East and Central Africa. London: Heinemann, 1984.
- Killam, G.D. ed. African Writers on African Writing. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
- King, Bruce and Ogungbesan, Kolawole. Celebration of Black and African Writing. Zaria: University of Ahmadu Bello Press and Oxford University Press, 1975.
- King, Bruce. Literatures of the World in English. London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1974.
- Liyong, Lo Taban. The Last Word: Cultural Synthesisism. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969 :180-182.
- McEwan, Neil. Africa and the Novel. London: MacMillan, 1983.
- Maughan-Brown, David. Land, Freedom, and Fiction: History and Ideology in Kenya. London: Zed Press, 1985.
- Moore, Gerald. Twelve African Writers. London: Hutchinson, 1980.

- Mutiso, G-C.M. Socio-Political Thought in African Literature. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1974.
- Nazareth, Peter. An African View of Literature. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974.
- Ngara, Emmanuel. Art and Ideology in the African Novel. London: Heinemann, 1985.
- Ngara, Emmanuel. Stylistic Criticism and the African Novel. London: Heinemann, 1982.
- Nkosi, Lewis. Tasks and Masks. London: Longman, 1983.
- Olney, James. Tell Me Africa: An Approach to African Literature. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973.
- Otite, Onigu. Themes in African Social and Political Thought. Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishing, 1978.
- Owomoyela, Oyekan. African Literature Today: An Introduction. Waltham, Massachusetts: Crossroads Press, 1979.
- Palmer, Eustace. The Growth of the African Novel. London: Heinemann, 1979.
- Palmer, Eustace. An Introduction to the African Novel. London: Heinemann, 1972.
- Pieterse, Cosmo and Munro, Donald. Protest and Conflict in African Literature. New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1969.
- Roscoe, Adrian. Uhuru's Fire. London: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
- Tucker, Martin. Africa in Modern Literature. New York: Unger Publishing Company, 1967.
- Wanjala, Chris. Standpoints on African Literature: A Critical Anthology. Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973.
- Wastberg, Per. The Writer in Modern Africa. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1968.
- Wren, Robert. Achebe's World. Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1980.
- Wright, Edgar. Critical Evaluation of African Literature. Washington, D.C.: Inscape Publishers, 1973.

Zell, Hans M. and Silver, Helm. A Reader's Guide to African Literature. New York: Africana Publishing Corporation, 1971.

VI HISTORY AND GENERAL LITERARY TEXTS

Barnett, Donald L. and Njama Karari. Mau Mau from Within. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966.

Brantley, Cynthia. The Giriama and Colonial Resistance in Kenya 1800-1920. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981.

Brett, E.A. Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa. London: Heinemann, 1973.

Brown, Wayne. Derek Walcott: Selected Poetry. London: Heinemann, 1981.

Bruner, Charlotte, H. Unwinding Threads: Writing by Women in Africa. London: Heinemann, 1983.

Buijtenuijs, Robert. Mau Mau: Twenty Years After - The Myth and the Survivors. The Hague: Mouton, 1973.

Césaire, Aimé. Discourse on Colonialism. Translated by Joan Pinkham. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972.

Cliffe, Lionel. Coleman, J.S. and Doornbos, M.R. Government and Rural Development in East Africa: Essays on Political Penetration. The Hague: Martin Nijhoff, 1977.

Conrad, Joseph. Twixt Land and Sea: Three Tales. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1978.

Conrad, Joseph. Under Western Eyes. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1973.

Cutrufelli, Maria Rosa. Women of Africa: Roots of Oppression. London: Zed Press, 1983.

El Darur, Asma. Women, Why Do You Weep?: Circumcision and Its Consequences. London: Zed Press, 1982.

Fanon, Frantz. Black Skin, White Masks. New York: Grove Press, 1967.

Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Grove Press, 1968.

Gurko, Leo. Joseph Conrad: Giant in Exile. New York: Collier, 1979.

- Karl, Frederic R. Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1979.
- Kaggia, Bildad. Roots of Freedom 1921-1963. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1975.
- Kariuki, J.M. 'Mau Mau' Detainee. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1964.
- Kenya: The Agarian Question, special issue of Review of African Political Economy 20(1981).
- Kenyatta, Jomo. Facing Mount Kenya. New York: Vintage, 1962. Reprinted from London: Secker and Warburg, 1938.
- Kinyatti, Mainia wa. ed. Thunder from the Mountains: Mau Mau Patriotic Songs. London: Zed Press, 1980.
- Kitching, Gavin. Class and Economic Change in Kenya: The Making of an African Petite-Bourgeoisie. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- Langley, Myrtle S. The Nandi of Kenya. London: C. Hurst, 1979.
- Leo, Christopher. Land and Class in Kenya. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984.
- Leys, Colin. Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism. Berkeley: University of California, 1974.
- Machel, Samora. Mozambique: Sowing the Seeds of Revolution. London: Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola, and Guine, 1972.
- Machel, Samora. The Enemy Within. Maputo: Department of Information and Propaganda, 1982.
- Memmi, Albert. The Colonizer and the Colonized. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.
- Minority Rights Group. Female Circumcision, Excision and Infibulation Report No.27, London: 2nd revised edition July 1985.
- Nkrumah, Kwame. Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Capitalism. New York: International Publishers, 1966.
- Odinga, Oginga. Not Yet Uhuru: an autobiography. London: Heinemann, 1969.

Offiong, Daniel A. Imperialism and Dependency: Obstacles to African Development. Washington, D.C., Howard University Press, 1982.

Rieselbach, Helen Fink. Conrad's Rebels: The Psychology of Revolution in the Novels from Nostromo to Victory. Anne Arbor, Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1985.

Rosberg, Carl G. and Nottingham, John. The Myth of Mau Mau: Nationalism in Kenya. New York: Praeger, 1966.

Sandbrook, Richard and Cohen, Robin. ed. The Development of An African Working Class: Studies in Class Formation and Action. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1975.

Sandbrook, Richard. Proletarians and African Capitalism: The Kenyan Case, 1960-1972. London: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Swainson, Nicola. The Development of Corporate Capitalism 1918-1977. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

Tignor, Robert L. The Colonial Transformation of Kenya. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976.

van Zwanenberg, Roger. The Agricultural History of Kenya: Historical Association of Kenya Paper No.1. Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972.

Warren, Bill. Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism. London: New Left Books, 1980.

Wolff, Richard D. The Economics of Colonialism: Britain and Kenya, 1870-1930. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

Zahar, Renate. Frantz Fanon: Colonialism and Alienation. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974.

VII GENERAL BACKGROUND ARTICLES

Abdulla, Abdilatif. "Mnazi: The Struggle for the Coconut Tree." Index on Censorship 4(1983) :32-33.

Achebe, Chinua. "Novelist as Teacher." Morning Yet on Creation Day. Garden City, New York: Doubleday/Anchor, 1975 :71-73.

"Arrest and detention in Kenya." Index on Censorship 1(1987) :23-29.

- "Culture of fear and silence." Index on Censorship 4(1983) :20-23.
- "Kenya's seditious Pambama." Index on Censorship 6(1982) :34.
- Awounda, Moussa. "Moi Fights off MwaKenya." African Concord March 12, 1987 :8-9.
- Barry, John. "How Jomo's royal family grabbed the nation's wealth." Sunday Times (London) 17 August, 1975 :5-6.
- Bulhan, Hussein Abdilahi. "Frantz Fanon: The Revolutionary Psychiatrist." Race and Class 21(1980) :251-271.
- Campbell, Horace. "Class Struggle Heightens in Kenya." Ufahamu 12.2(1983) :151-157.
- Chadaka, Kikaya. "Confusion over Kenya Ban on De Graft Play." New African April 1982 :46.
- Chandler, Michele. "A High-Risk Tradition." Africa-Asia March 1986 :44-45.
- Duodu, Cameron. "Secret Party leads to Arrests." Index on Censorship 6(1986) :18, 35-36.
- Harris, Joan. "Women in Kenya: Revolution or Evolution?" Africa Report March-April 1986 :30-32.
- Kanyogonya, Elizabeth. "23 Year Struggle - but not yet Uhuru." Africa Concord 12 March 1987 :9-10.
- Kinyatti, Maina wa. "Mau Mau: The Peak of African Political Organization in Colonial Kenya." Kenya Historical Review 5.2(1977) :287-311.
- Kouba, Leonard J. and Muasher, Judith. "Female Circumcision in Africa: An Overview." African Studies Review 28.1(1985) :95-110.
- Lonsdale, John. "Mau Mau through the looking glass." Index on Censorship 2(1986) :19-22.
- Maren, Michael. "Hear No Evil." Africa Report November-December 1986 :67-71.
- Martin, Guy. "Fanon's Relevance to Contemporary African Political Thought." Ufahamu 14.3(1974) :11-34.
- Mazrui, Al-Amin. Cry for Justice. (Kilio cha Haki). Translated by Abdilatif Abdalla. Index on Censorship 4(1983) :23-26.

Ngaywa, Alan. "Fall from Grace." South January 1984 :26.

Nyonjo, Anyang. "The Decline of Democracy and the Rise of Authoritarian and Factional Politics in Kenya." Horn of Africa 6.3(1983/84) :25-34.