Chapter IV

Satire As a Counter-discursive Strategy

Webster’s Third New International Dictionary defines satire as

A usually topical literary composition holding up human or individual vices, folly, abuses, or shortcomings to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony, or other method sometimes with an intent to bring about improvement.

So satire is an instrument of social correction used by writers of all genres and all times. Satire attempts to expose individuals, groups, institutions, societies, ideas or beliefs to ridicule or contempt. It creates humour by exposing folly. Irony and wit are the most powerful weapons of satire. Another precious weapon of the satirist is comic exaggeration in which the writer attempts to interrupt and upset the original and the reader recognizes traits of the original.

Terdiman says: “Humor [sic] is intensely counter-discursive” (198). He analyses how Marx and Flaubert, “the canonical humorists of the nineteenth century” (198) have employed satire as a counter-discursive strategy to resist bourgeoisie ascendancy in nineteenth-century France. Ngugi and Armah also use satire as a counter-discursive strategy
to subvert the colonial discourse. There is a satiric vein in all their novels. Ngugi begins with mild sarcasm and verbal irony and gradually proceeds to bitter irony and virulent sarcasm. Armah’s satire is blatant, accusing and indignant. Both of them use irony, parody, comic exaggeration and sarcasm as their major tools of satire.

Ngugi and Armah satirize the three powerful agents of colonialism—Christianity, education and capitalism. Objects of their satire range from white missionaries and Euro-American agents of capitalism to neo-colonial apemen and indigenous thieves.

1. Satirizing Christianity

There is an underlying unity among the peoples of Africa in metaphysical concepts. The traditional African communities placed man at the centre of the universe. They believed in the Supreme Creator and his minor deities, in the cult of ancestors and in the interaction of the living, the dead and the unborn. The religious system of the Gikuyus of Kenya may be considered a model. It is a three-tier system. First there is the Supreme Deity—the Ngai—to which sacrifices are made on occasions of tribal significance. Mount Kenya is its abode. Then there is the ancestor worship which seeks protection of the ancestors when misfortune befalls an individual or a household. The third is propitiating nature gods and goddesses on occasions of planting and harvesting.
Into this system of religious beliefs, came Christianity with its alien concepts of man and God. After initial resistance, the Christian missionaries established churches and won a few converts. The missionaries functioned under the assumptions of moral and cultural superiority and they marginalized traditional belief systems as inferior and deficient in morality. The traditional African thus became a pagan, and his rituals became savagery. The major Christian churches in Africa were the Roman Catholic Church, the Scottish Mission, the Basal Mission, the Presbyterians and the Methodists. These Christian churches refused to accept the legitimacy of the African beliefs.

With the coming of Christianity the native religious systems were disrupted. The acceptance of Christianity meant the rejection of the values that held the clan together. The missionaries began to condemn the rites and rituals of the natives. Many of the doctrines of the Christian theology were different from or even antagonistic to the myths and concepts that sustained the traditional communities. The Christian theology “placed God too remote from man in time and space” (Awoonor 22). The doctrine of Trinity was difficult for the African mind to comprehend or to agree with. “The idea of heaven as a place where one is rewarded for certain deeds of obedience to God’s laws on earth is non-existent in African religious thought”
(Awoonor 23). Moreover the Christian churches in Africa did not try to indigenize the religion by making the liturgy and theology African.

Many of the prominent African writers have criticized Christianity. Fanon says that Christianity is the medium through which the European culture is transmitted to Africa. "She [the church] does not call the native to God's ways but to the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor" (Wretched 32). Kofi Awoonor says that the Christian Church functioned as a powerful ally of the colonizing mission. He says:

Religious propaganda was an essential aspect of imperial expansion, and the colonial powers had long grasped the important truth that it was cheaper in the long run to use the Bible than military power to secure distant dominions. (21)

Wole Soyinka says that Africa minus the Sahara North is "the largest metaphysical vacuum ever conjured up for the purpose of racist propaganda" (97) and ironically comments that to this world Christianity came as a filler of spiritual holes. Peter Nazareth, in The Third World Writer, His Social Responsibility sums up how Christianity assisted the 'civilizing mission':

The Christianity that came from Europe acted in tandem with colonialism, softening the people so that the imperial powers could rule with minimal
resistance, both by persuading the colonized people that they were cultural and religious savages before the coming of the White colonizer and by making people feel that they had to accept the status quo as God’s will for man. (3)

Ngugi is highly critical of the role played by Christianity in the colonizing process. He regards the missionary as an agent of European imperialism. While the settler robbed the people of their land, the missionary robbed them of their soul. In Kenya people have identified the missionary with the settler. The Gikuyu have a saying, “Gutiri Muthungu na Mubia,” which means there is no difference between the European and the missionary. Ngugi regards the missionary as a spiritual policeman. In an article, “The Links that Bind Us,” Ngugi criticizes the unholy alliance of the settler, the administrator and the missionary:

Here [in Kenya] the missionary, the settler and the colonial governor came as three imperial missives of the Western monopoly-capital. The settler grabbed the land and used African labour. The Governor protected him with the political machinery and with the gun. And the missionary stood guarding the door as a colonial spiritual policeman. (qtd. in Cook and Okenimkpe 207)
Ngugi regards the Church as the great opponent of Africa’s freedom. According to him the Church opposed the Mau Mau as anti-Christian, but found nothing wrong in robbing people of their land. The Church sided with the colonial powers in subjugating the natives. Ngugi sees the Church on the side of the capitalist forces of oppression and trying to weaken the resistance of the oppressed. He raises this question and answers it in *Writers in Politics*:

> Why is it that the Church does not concentrate its preaching and efforts of conversion on the very classes and races that have brutalized others, manacled others, robbed others? The aim is obvious: it is to weaken the resistance of the oppressed classes. (22)

The Church which emphasizes the doctrine of the equality of man and speaks of universal brotherhood has presided over the cleaving of Africa into two classes of haves and have-nots.

Christianity played a major role in the cultural colonization of Africa. It was mainly through Christianity that the European middle-class culture found its route to Africa and it was through the missionaries that it spread its root in the African minds. By projecting the European middle class values through Christianity, Europe accelerated the process of disintegration of the peoples of Africa who were bound together by the tribal values.
Christianity has been a subject for Ngugi in his novels. He profusely draws analogies, imagery and metaphors from the Bible. In the course of his writing career, Ngugi’s attitude to Christianity also undergoes a transformation. Though he accepts certain basic principles of Christianity, Ngugi is highly critical of its role in Africa. Ngugi’s treatment of Christianity in his novels can be seen as a “marker of his ideological development” (Cook and Okenimkpe 84). He uses satire as a tool for criticizing Christianity. He criticizes the contradiction between the precepts and practice of Christianity. Ngugi satirizes the white missionaries, the Church elders, the catechists, the early converts and religious movements that rock the country from time to time and their over-zealous adherents. The very functioning of the Christian Churches and the inherent contradictions in them are also satirized.

It is in his first novel, *The River Between*, that Ngugi explores his theme of Christianity to a large extent. Though the novel exposes a basic acceptance of the Christian precepts by Ngugi, it pictures Ngugi’s condemnation of the Christian faith too. Ngugi who got his novel published in 1965 through an English publishing house could not afford to fully exploit the counter-discursive potential of satire. So he resorts mainly to verbal irony to criticize the Christian dogma and the Christians.
Ngugi suggests that Christianity will remain only an empty doctrine, if it is thrust upon a people from outside as an obligation. It can be useful only if it comes to the people within the context of the reality in which they live. Christianity has to wash itself clean of its religious bigotry and racial prejudices. So Waiyaki who begins as an ardent believer realizes that undue reliance on religious ideas will not serve any purpose and that a religion divorced from a people’s way of life is not of much significance to them. So Waiyaki knew that

[The religion, the faith, needed washing, cleaning away all the dirt, leaving only the eternal. And that eternal that was the truth had to be reconciled to the traditions of the people. . . . A religion that took no count of people’s way of life, a religion that did not recognize spots of beauty and truths in their way of life, was useless. (River 141)]

Waiyaki knew that Christianity that divorced the people from their customs would remain meaningless and empty to the people unless it gave them something of equal value. A religion that dealt only in ideals and moral truths would not serve any purpose. So Muthoni, Joshua’s daughter, wanted to be circumcised to become a full woman. For her it was not a mere physical act, but something that would transform her inwardly. She tells her sister, Nayambura: “‘Yes, the white man’s God does not quite satisfy me. I want, I need something more’” (River 26).
Ngugi is sceptical of the efficacy of Christianity as a religion in Africa. He hints that its approach is alien and its evangelism is mechanical. It is through the satiric touches with which he portrays Joshua, the catechist, and through the ironic treatment of the missionary, Livingstone, that Ngugi offers a counter-discourse to Christianity.

Joshua lived on the Makuyu ridge. He was working for the white missionary, Livingstone, of the Siriana Mission. Joshua was a middle-aged man. He was one of the first to be converted to Christianity. He had run away from the hills in his youth and found sanctuary at the newly established Siriana Mission. Joshua learned to read and write and fell under the power of the white man and his religion. "The new faith worked in him till it came to possess him wholly" (River 29). He renounced his tribe's magic and rituals and felt pity for his people who were living in the depth of darkness and worshipping the Gikuyu gods, the princes of darkness. Joshua became a preacher and soon rose to be the spiritual head of the hills. He negated the tribe's ways totally and enforced the Christian morality. "All the tribe's customs were bad. That was final. There could never be a compromise" (River 84). He prepared his sheep to resist Satan's temptation and to "‘march with one heart to the New Jerusalem’" (River 85).
Ngugi satirizes Joshua's blind adherence to Christianity. He is the hand with which Livingstone sows his seeds. Joshua accepts without doubting or questioning the religion handed down to him and he believes that it is his duty to impose it on his people. He does not claim to have mastered the doctrines he preaches. Joshua never hesitates to think that the Kingdom of God and the new Jerusalem he speaks of have no relevance to the concrete problems his people struggle in. "Ever since he took to the new faith he had remained true to Livingstone and his God" (River 84). Waiyaki knew that Joshua "had to cling with his hands to whatever the missionaries taught him promised future" because he had cut off his ties with the life-giving traditions of the tribe (River 141). "Joshua was not prepared to question what he knew to be God-inspired assertions of the white man" (River 99). Ngugi hits at Joshua's fanatic adherence to the Christian morality and his unflinching loyalty to Livingstone by narrating Joshua's attitude to many of his sheep slipping off the fold and taking a second wife:

Not that Joshua saw anything intrinsically wrong in having a second bride. In fact he had always been puzzled by the fact that men of the Old Testament who used to walk with God and angels had more than one wife. But the man at the Mission had said this was a sin. And so a sin it had to be. (River 99)
The conviction, zeal and urgency with which Joshua preaches to uphold the values of the alien religion are satirized in the novel. When Joshua returned from the Siriana Mission, he was washed new (River 30). He preached “with a vehemence and fury that frightened even his own old listeners” (River 30). On Sundays he was very busy conducting long services. “Whenever Joshua preached there was something fascinating in his voice. It carried a deep sense of conviction, a passionate commitment to the moral truths revealed to him through the Bible” (River 84). He is the counterpart of Enoch in Achebe’s Things Fall Apart: “The outsider who wept louder than the bereaved” (131).

Joshua saw salvation to Africa through a white God and he was thankful to the white men for bringing “Christ into the country” (River 99). He persuaded the elders of the community “to take their sons to Siriana to hear Christ’s word and get the white man’s learning . . .” (River 99).

Joshua found in Waiyaki’s rise as a leader of the tribe a threat to himself and his creed. The large number of parents who gathered to attend the meeting organized by Waiyaki to press for more schools, surprised Joshua. He realized after the meeting that the forces of Satan were strong. But he knew that a soldier of Christ had nothing to fear. He decided to organize a meeting of his followers at Kameno, “the stronghold of the devil” (River 100). The meeting which was organized on a Sunday was attended by many Christians from the neighbouring hills. Ngugi narrates Joshua’s zeal with half-comic irony:
Josha preached with so much vigour and energy that many later said that he had been speaking with the tongues of angels. Others said that the Angel of the Lord had appeared unto him, while still others thought it was Mary who had spoken to him. (River 100)

Joshua clung to the teachings of Christianity with a puritanical zeal. He followed verbatim, the instructions from above and observed the word to the letter. He was against the initiation rites of the tribe, especially female circumcision. He regarded these as sins. When his daughter, Muthoni died after the circumcision, he received the news without any sign of emotion. To him Muthoni had sold herself to the devil. In her death he saw a warning to those who rebelled against "the laws of God" (River 54). Joshua would never refrain from punishing a sin, even if this meant beating his wife. He was sad that the community was wallowing in darkness even when the Christian light was glaring bright. "And so Joshua went on his knees. He prayed that the people should leave their ways and follow the ways of the white man" (River 32). At times he found his patience growing thinner. "He felt like going out with a stick, punishing these people, forcing them on to their knees" (River 32). When the preparations for the initiations went on Joshua believed that God would bring down fire and thunder. Ngugi comments ironically: "Nothing
happened. Preparations for initiations went on, while Joshua and his followers prepared for the birth of a saviour" (River 32).

Thus Joshua epitomizes the rigid, impractical and dogmatic bigotry which transforms a native into a champion of evangelism. By caricaturing Joshua, Ngugi satirizes the pioneer Christian converts and catechists who were working among the natives to spread the gospel.

Ngugi makes a brilliant use of irony in the characterization of the Reverend Livingstone, the head of the Siriana Mission. Livingstone had left his home for a wild country because he was "fired by a dream of heroism and the vision of many new souls won for Christ through his own efforts" (River 55). When he came, he was full of great expectations. He did not like to go into the ridges himself with the word of God. Instead he trained Mission boys and sent them to the hills "to spread the good news" (River 55). He knew that the tribes around Siriana followed 'barbarous' traditions. Unlike the missionaries of the earlier generation, Livingstone did not try to ban these 'heinous practices' and to kickstart civil strife on the ridges. "Livingstone was one of those missionaries who thought themselves enlightened" (River 56). So he went to watch some of the dances on the eve of circumcision. Soon his attitude changed. What he saw and heard convinced him beyond doubt that the natives were immoral and 'barbarous.'
He came to the conviction that circumcision had to be rooted out at any cost. Being a man of moderation, he advocated gradual and slow methods of eradication. But when he found that his policy was not producing any result, "... he began to preach against the custom vigorously" (River 56). When he came to know of the death of Muthoni, he planned to use it as a case study to dissuade the people from tradition. He wanted to fight against the evil with all the energy left in him. He knew that he was old. But he would fight. "Age did not matter. It was Christ who would be fighting the Prince of Darkness through him, yes, Christ working in him, making him young in action" (River 56).

Livingstone represents the impatience, bigotry, prejudice and the ignorance of the missionaries who are not ready to probe deep into the spiritual significance of tribal customs. They are not tolerant enough to accept the ways of the tribe as cultural differences. His urgency to root-out circumcision is only a manifestation of his earnestness to carry home the credit for eradicating an evil from a community. His open condemnation of the tribal ways promotes not only Christian values but also European moral codes. Ngugi hints that the missionaries like Livingstone have been the cultural middlemen between Europe and Africa.
Thus in *The River Between* Ngugi criticizes Christianity using ironic satire. Christianity "is seen as doing more harm than good in Kenya as an entrenched vested interest, even though its unperverted tenets may be unassailable" (Cook and Okenimpke 28).

The coming of Christianity and how the missionaries collaborate with the administration for grabbing the land of the natives are satirized in *A Grain of Wheat*. Through flashbacks Ngugi narrates how the white man came to Gikuyu land. The white man came to the country holding the book of God in both hands. "His tongue was coated with sugar; his humility was touching" (*Grain* 11). People felt pity and gave him space to erect a temporary hut. When he finished building his hut he built another building a few yards away. "This he called the house of God where people could go for worship and sacrifice" (*Grain* 11). There were contradictions in his theology which the natives failed to reconcile with. "About Jesus, they could not at first understand, for how could it be that God would let himself be nailed to a tree?" (*Grain* 12). But soon the people found that the white man had acquired more land than was necessary. The elders of the land looking beyond the smiling face of the whiteman saw "a long line of other red strangers who carried, not the Bible, but the sword" (*Grain* 12). Young Kihika once narrated in one of his speeches how the people lost their land:
'We went to their church. Mubia, in white robes, opened the Bible. He said: Let us kneel down to pray. We knelt down. Mubia said: Let us shut our eyes. We did.... When we opened our eyes, our land was gone....' (Grain 15)

Ngugi uses half-comic irony in describing how Kihika as a boy challenged Teacher Muniu. Teacher Muniu used the Bible to support his views on circumcision. He said that as Christians they should not indulge in such practices. Kihika challenges his teacher and says: "The Bible does not talk about circumcising women" (Grain 75). Teacher Muniu decided to flog the insolent boy in public in front of the whole school.

However, after discussing Sunday's incident with the church elders, he had decided to give the boy a chance to save his soul. The teacher had therefore decided to whip the boy ten times on his naked buttocks in front of the whole assembly--this for the sake of the boys own soul and of all the others present. (Grains 76)

But Kihika instead of facing the punishment climbed out through the nearest window of the church to freedom and that was the end of his formal schooling.

The characterization of Rev. Jackson Kigondu in A Grain of Wheat is skilfully done to throw light on the collaborative role played by some Christian churches during
the Mau Mau. Rev. Jackson Kigondu was a respected elder among the ridges that surrounded Rung’ei. He always wore a pastor’s collar and covered his bald head with a hat. When the Revivalist Movement reached Kenya, Jackson was suddenly converted into it. The movement “swept through the ridges like a fire of vengeance” (Grain 74). Those who joined the movement began to publicly confess their sins and they became “the saved ones” (Grain 74). Jackson also made a public confession of his sins, trembling and beating his chest like a possessed man. “He was now a Christian soldier, marching as to war, politics was dirty, worldly wealth a sin” (Grain 74). He tore his collar and hat as a sign of humility. Though Jackson claimed that his home was heaven, his conversion was only out of bare earthly necessity. Ngugi reserves the best part of his ironic satire till the end of the narration. “The revivalist movement was the only organization allowed to flourish in Kenya by the government during the Emergency. Jackson became the leader in the Rung’ei area” (Grain 74). Jackson, in fact, collaborated with the colonial administration by denouncing Mau Mau from every available pulpit and functioned as a police informer. And he was one of the first Christians killed in the Rung’ei area by Mau Mau guerillas.

In Petals of Blood Ngugi’s attitude to Christianity changes so drastically that he treats it with unceasing
irony and bitter sarcasm. As Ngugi grows from a socialist-humanist concern to a revolutionary socialist plane, his attitude to Christianity also undergoes a transformation. Now he views Christianity as a partner in the cultural colonization of Africa. He asserts that there is a linkage between Christianity, colonization and capitalism. He regards the missionary a profiteer who has traversed the seas with the desire for profit. "He [the missionary] carried the Bible; the soldier carried the gun; the administrator and the settler carried the coin. Christianity, commerce, civilization: the Bible, the coin, the gun: Holy Trinity" (Petals 88).

Ngugi treats some of the Christian precepts with scathing irony. So the policeman at the Illmorog police station is alarmed when Munira shouts at him to open the gate and let him out. The policeman fears that something might happen. "Ever since childhood, he had always been afraid of Christ's second coming and he kept himself on guard ready to jump to the right side" (Petals 192).

The hypocrisy of the alienated Christians is also satirized. We see Munira carrying his Bible to the police station. When one of the police constables asks him why he is carrying the Holy Book, Munira says: "We must always be ready to plant the seed in these last days before His second coming" (Petals 2). Lillian, the prostitute, becomes an evangelist. She begins to speak of a new earth,
and a new heaven. She converts Munira into her brood of Christianity. Looking into her eyes Munira asks himself: "... whence from this power in her who only the other day was using the same religion as part of the amorous game?" (Petals 298). Munira's wife who comes from a pagan home soon becomes more Christian than the rest of her husband's household. What Munira cannot bear in her is "those silent prayers before and after making love" (Petals 91). Religion has become a mechanical activity with its spirituality draining off day by day.

The characters of Brother Ezekiel and Rev. Jerrod Brown are more hatefully portrayed than that of Joshua. Brother Ezekiel's African name is Nducu Waweru. He is the father of Munira. He is a wealthy landowner and a respected elder of the Presbyterian Church. He has grown his children on rations because he is very miserly and mean. He shamelessly exploits the labour power of his parishioners. They are a host of illiterates who remain faithful to him. Anyone demanding better wages is summarily dismissed. He sexually exploits Mariamu, a squatter on his farm. He is responsible for the death of Mukami who was in love with Karega, the son of Mariamu.

Brother Ezekiel's conversion to Christianity is basically for material gains. He uses trickery and cunning to buy land from the impoverished peasantry who need money to pay their taxes. He makes money by "bringing more souls
to Christ" (Petals 90). He is one of the first Africans allowed to grow pyrethrum as a cash crop and sell it to the white growers. The contradiction in his precepts and practice is symbolically represented in the photograph in his house in which Waveru stands by a gramaphone: "He is dressed in a jacket and riding breeches and boots and a chain passes over the front of the waistcoat. He is wearing a sun-helmet and in his hands he is holding the Bible" (Petals 91). Waveru had defied the Mau Mau and had even preached against the liberation movement. His relationship with others and his opinions about them are based on their material attainments. He calculates success in terms of acquisition of wealth and position. Waveru compares his eldest son, Munira, with his other children and regards him as a failure because he has failed to amass wealth like his banker son who has "houses all over Nairobi" (Petals 94). Munira’s exile in Illmorog as a primary school teacher is mainly as a protest against his father. His marrying a girl from a pagan family is mainly due to "a prompting from the heart against what his father stood for" (Petals 91).

Rev. Jerrod Brown is a well-to-do black priest through whom Ngugi exposes the priests who do lip service to their creed and interpret the Bible to suit the needs of the hour. During the epic march of the Illmorog peasantry to Nairobi when Joseph fell ill, Munira, Karega and Abdullah
approached Rev. Jerrod Brown for help. On finding a European name on the iron gate, the party was a bit discouraged. They would have preferred an African name, but consoled themselves that "a man of God under whatever skin was a soul of goodness and mercy ..." (Petals 145). But Rev. Jerrod Brown proved himself to be the opposite of what the fugitives expected, not only in colour but also in deeds. The priest lived in a huge bungalow with neatly trimmed cypress hedges on either side of the driveway and neatly mowed grass lawns beyond. Munira recognized him. "He was one of the most respected men in the Anglican hierarchy: he was even considered a possible candidate for a bishopric" (Petals 147). On hearing of their pathetic condition, Jerrod offered prayers and read from the Bible. He gave them a sermon on God’s compassion and a lecture on the need for a life of hard work. He said that the Bible condemns "‘a life of idleness and begging’" (Petals 148). He disposed of the starving Illmorog party with "‘the food of the spirit, the bread and fish of Jesus . . .’" (Petals 149). And Abdullah remarked: "‘Let’s try another house. This time we must avoid Europeans and clergymen’" (Petals 149). Thus Ngugi equates Christianity with capitalism and clergymen with Europeans. Ngugi’s satire now has grown to be more direct, open and bitter.

The form which Ngugi chose for Devil on the Cross is appropriate to the brilliant exploitation of satire as a counter-discursive strategy. The novel adopts a form quite
popular in most oral literatures—the narration by a Gicaandi player. Biting satire is a characteristic feature of most oral literatures. Moreover the narrative is like a fable so that Ngugi can openly criticize using bitter irony and sarcasm. So in this novel Ngugi’s satire achieves a sharper cutting edge.

The very title of the novel is an ironic inversion of Christ’s crucifixion. It is based on the vision of the Devil’s crucifixion which Wariinga sees on her way to the ‘matatu’ stop. In the Devil’s feast the Hell’s Angels sing as if they are in a church. “The tune did not have a tilting rhythm. It was more like a psalm or a hymn” (Devil 90).

Ngugi satirizes the Christians for whom religion is a façade for their personal gains. Most of the thieves and robbers who take part in the competition to choose the best among them are Christians. They are pseudo-Christians for whom religion is a means for an end. Mwireri says: “‘The majority of those who will be attending the feast believe in God. I, for instance, go to the PCEA Church at Thogoto, the ‘Church of the Torch’, every Sunday’” (Devil 76). Robin Mwaura is the leader of a group called Devil’s Angels whose task is “‘to liquidate those who prevent the work of God from being done on Earth’” (Devil 252). Mwaura was a homeguard during emergency. He used to work with a killer squad led by a European, terrorizing people in the Rift Valley.
Mwireri is a hypocrite who claims that he deeply believes in God and in Christianity. Though he holds multiple degrees, he believes in class division and class hierarchy. He says that there are two types of human being in every country: "'the manager and the managed, the one who grabs and the one who hopes for leftovers...’" (Devil 79). Mwireri says that equality is an impossibility. Human nature itself is against it. He manipulates the Christian beliefs to support his argument. He says:

'Just look at God’s Heaven. God sits on the throne. On his right side stands his only Son. On his left side stands the Holy Spirit. At his feet the angels sit. At the feet of the angels sit the saints. At the feet of the saints sit all the Disciples, and so on, one rank standing below another, until we come to the class of believers here on Earth.' (Devil 78)

Ngugi satirizes the misrepresentation of Christian beliefs to justify the injustice one indulges in. Even the educated are not free from it.

Ngugi hits hard at the weak morality of the Christians. Gitutu who has been joined to his wife at Thogoto Mission Church keeps two mistresses because he knows that "'...he who keeps something in reserve never goes hungry...’" (Devil 99). Kihahu never runs after school girls. He knows it is dangerous. Instead he steals
other people's wives. Mwireri does not have any girlfriends. But whenever he wants to have a good time, he looks for white or Indian girls. He says: "I don't believe in tribal or racial 'discrimination' when it comes to women" (Devil 160).

The capitalists use Christianity as a powerful aid in perpetuating slavery and legitimatizing exploitation. It is pictured as a narcotic which offers the promise of a heaven at the other end of the earthly sorrows to the suffering humanity. It affirms class divisions as eternal and predestined. So Satan, as the Voice in Wariinga's vision, tells her of Kimeendeeri's plan to exploit the workers. He will exploit the workers without their knowing that they are being milked. He will show them that there are two worlds—that of the eaters and the eaten and the workers "will always assume that the two worlds of the eater and the eaten are eternal" (Devil 188). To fool the workers like this Kimeendeeri will build on the farm, on which he pens the workers, churches and mosques and employ priests. Every Sunday the workers will be instructed through sermons that the present system of exploiting their labour power "is ordained by God, and that it has something to do with the eventual salvation of their souls. It is written in the Holy Scriptures: Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Devil 188). The Voice tells Wariinga that the religion which tells the oppressed
not to observe the rule of an eye for an eye, allows the Kimeendeeris to exact their pound of flesh. “And you people will continue going to Church or to the mosque every week to listen to the catechism of slavery” (Devil 191). Ngugi regards religion, education, literature and mass media as instruments used by the capitalists to brain-wash the workers. The voice says: “The intellectual and spiritual and cultural brain-washing poisons will make the workers believe, literally, that to obey the Kimeendeeri class is to obey God, and that to anger or oppose their overlords is to anger and oppose God” (Devil 189). In this novel Ngugi attacks Christians and Christianity without any reservations. His satire is directed more against the Christians than against Christianity.

In his last two novels Armah refers to the role of Christianity in the economic and cultural colonization of Africa. Armah satirizes Christianity as an alien creed not suitable to the African soil. Most of the dogmas are incomprehensible to the blacks as their concept of God differs significantly. The white destroyers came to Anoa’s people “shrieking fables of a white god and a son unconceived, exemplar of their proffered, senseless suffering” (Seasons 2). While speaking about the wishes of the first white men, Insanusi refers to the difference in the concept of God among the blacks and whites:
Hear now the last wish of the white men. They have a road they follow, and something called a god they worship—not the living spirit there is in everything but a creature separate, raised above all surrounding things. . . .’ (Seasons 83)

Armah hints that the Christian theology is challengeable in an African context.

Armah uses bitter ironic satire in picturing the patronizing attitude of the missionaries who regard themselves as the messengers of culture, morality and humanity to the heathen people. They consider their arrival in Africa a favour that Europe extends to the dark continent. The white missionary in Two Thousand Seasons asks:

‘How could you have known before our coming unto you that a god invisible, unheard, but still known to us the whites, created this universe? How could you have known . . . that this god sent his only offspring to be a teacher unto you, an expert in how to suffer without resistance against those who make you suffer. . . .’ (200)

The missionary invites the people to church, to whiteness and to purity and warns them that rebels against whiteness are “rebels against god” (Seasons 200). Armah hints that Christianity has been imposed on the blacks and the missionaries are not free from racial and religious bigotry.
Armah is also critical of the collaborative role played by Christianity in the subjugation and exploitation of the black races. In *Two Thousand Seasons* the first destroyers were a trader, a hunter and a missionary. The white missionary helped the puppet King Koranche rule with a dictatorial hand. He brought in theological justification for the King's tyranny. He said through a message that "a king had a right, a duty in fact, to impose his will strongly on his people, for to the white men the king was always the head, the people merely the body" (*Seasons* 99). When the liberation army reached the palace, the King was feasting with the trader and the priest.

In *The Healers* Armah reiterates that the priests helped the colonial administration in enforcing the inequalities and tyrannies of the colonial rule. They were indifferent to the injustice done to the blacks by the British army. The British General Wolseley decided to march an army to Kumase to defeat the Asante. People thought that it would be impossible because there was no road. But the British decided to build a road from Cape Coast to the river Pra in the north. So the white army raided the villages for men to work for the road. The priests extended a helping hand by preaching on the need for a road. The priests pretended ignorance of the capture of black bodies as they were busy capturing black souls. Armah narrates the situation using scathing irony:
At Cape Coast the whites sent soldiers into homes to capture men. Priests supposed to be saving souls of believers in the white god turned their followers into the white man's labourers. This was another time when even the most credulous understood the purposes of the Christian god were not so mysterious after all. They were whatever white men decided they should be. (Healers 271)

Thus Armah shows that Christianity collaborated in eternalizing slavery of the black people.

2. Satirizing Neo-colonial Apemanship

Education is one of the most powerful discursive apparatuses used by any ruling class in enlisting long-term allegiance and lasting subjugation. Foucault argues in The Archaeology of Knowledge that every educational system is "a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it" (227). Althusser has located education as the "dominant ideological State apparatus in capitalist social formations" (146). So education as a discourse is a powerful means of control. The control operates by transforming the consciousness of the people. The content of the curriculum shapes the world view of the learners and makes them co-operate with the ruling class for their own subjugation.
Gauri Viswanathan has argued in "The Beginnings of English Literary Study in British India" that England could establish an ideological control over India through its colonial education strategies. It was done by deploying the vast field of canonical English literature which "functioned as a surrogate Englishman in his highest and most perfect state..." (437). The colonial education policy, which made the study of British literary texts compulsory, was, in fact, using these texts as the conveyer-belts of the quintessence of British culture and aesthetics. Thus England's superiority in culture, morals, taste, judgement and values got embedded in the minds of the native from the early stages of his education. A conducive climate was also available during the nineteenth century for the introduction of English studies in the colonies with the rise of English as a discipline in the universities of Britain, replacing the classics. The study of English language and literature, thus took the natives farther from themselves and from their worlds. Ngugi also speaks of the immense potential of language and literature in transforming the native learner. He says:

African children who encountered literature in colonial schools and universities were thus experiencing the world as defined and reflected in the European experience of history. Their entire way of looking at the world, even the world of the immediate environment, was Eurocentric. (Decolonising 93)
So the colonial administration found education as a potent ally in the ‘civilizing mission.’ The motive behind the introduction of Western system of education in the colonies was to circulate the educated few as stereotypes who would function as subordinate officers in the colonial administration. Thomas Macaulay had made this clear when he argued for the introduction of English education in British India. He says:

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. (430)

The missionary involvement in the colonizing process coincided with the introduction of Western system of education in Africa. On their arrival the missionaries found that there was no system of educating the young among the various ethnic groups. What they meant was that there was no formal education system as in the West. The African societies had their own native systems of educating the new generation. The Gikuyu system of education serves as a model. Jomo Kenyatta says in *Facing Mount Kenya*:

Among the Gikuyu the child has to pass various stages of age-grouping with a system of education defined for every status in life. The parents take the responsibility of educating their
children until they reach the stage of tribal education. (99)

During the day the father trains his sons in farming and the mother teaches the daughters how to manage the household. In the evening, the mother teaches all her children the moral codes, rules and traditions of the community. There are initiation rites for passing from one stage to the other. At every stage tribal knowledge and new skills are imparted to the initiates. Circumcision grants a boy or girl full membership of the community. Uncircumcised boys cannot make his own home or participate in a war. As the Gikuyu is an agrarian community, the training is limited to farming, home-management and defence of the tribe.

It was to this informal system of education that the missionaries introduced the formal education through the mission schools. The education process was primarily aimed at attracting Africans to Christianity. Secondly it aimed at creating a new class of people for assisting the colonial administration and for spreading the gospel. Soon education became a criterion for entering the margins of the coveted life of the settlers and colonial administrators. Thus a social significance came to be attached to education. Only the most promising boys were admitted into the mission schools and the enrolment of a son in the school elevated the family’s status. So
Njoroge’s mother Nyokabi was proud of having a son in school and Ngotho also was proud that, his son would start learning. “It made him feel almost equal to Jacobo” (Weep 14).

People began to consider education as the panacea for the ills of the traditional society. Education was regarded as a means for the economic prosperity of the family and the community. The community expected that the educated would use their newly acquired wisdom for the defence of the community from the white settlers. So Waiyaki hoped that education would empower the community to chase away the settlers and the missionaries. “And Waiyaki saw a tribe great with many educated sons and daughters, all living together, tilling the land of their ancestors in perpetual serenity, pursuing their rituals and beautiful customs . . .” (River 87). Those who entered the mission schools found themselves endowed with a messianic vision. Njoroge believed that he is the prophesied saviour of his people and education would equip him for fulfilling his wider vision of saving his community. “He saw himself destined for something big, and this made his heart glow” (Weep 44). Both Waiyaki and Njoroge represent the attitude of their generation towards Western education. They sincerely believed that only education would help them to wriggle out of the backwardness they were in. Thus in the nineteen-forties and fifties there was an increased
enrolment in the mission schools and an increase in the number of blacks going out for education. But soon it was made clear that education would not benefit the larger community, rather it would alienate the educated from the community and ultimately from himself.

A child who got into a mission school had to assume a Christian name. He was given instructions in Christian precepts and European ethics. Most of the mission schools discouraged the use of indigenous languages. The students were encouraged to avoid participating in the rituals and ceremonies in his household. His ritualistic and religious ties with his family and tribe were cut off. Thus in the process of education, the superiority of Europe in arts, literature, ethics and morality was established and Western culture was projected as world culture and the British Empire as its guardian.

In Petals of Blood Ngugi presents Siriana as the model of the mission school where black children were indoctrinated to accept the legitimacy of the empire’s role in Africa. Munira remembers how they saluted the British flag every morning and evening and how they marched to the chapel and sang ‘. . . wash me, Redeemer, and I shall be whiter than snow’ (Petals 29). They would then pray for the continuation of the British Empire that had defeated ‘the satanic evil which had erupted in Europe to try the children of God’ (Petals 29). A student’s worth depended
on his loyalty to the Empire and devotion to Jesus. Munira
remembers: "To be made a prefect . . . you must . . . out pray
Jesus in prayers of devotion" (Petals 27). The lawyer
tells Munira and Karega that the education he got at
Siriana was meant to obscure racism and other forms of
oppression. "It was meant to make us accept our
inferiority so as to accept their superiority and their
rule over us" (Petals 165). Ngugi pictures Siriana as a
typical mission school which demanded absolute obedience
from the pupils whether under Rev. Hallowes Ironmonger or
Cambridge Fraudsham, or Raymond Chui. Any attempt at
bringing in Africanization was dealt with despotism and
expulsion of leaders.

Many who returned from the mission schools and
universities had already developed a derision for the
tribal ways and regretted the backwardness in which their
people were. The older generation was proud of the newly
educated. They saw in them their saviours. The educated
were prematurely elevated to a position of reverence. But
they were ill-equipped to offer solutions to the
community's problems. Gradually the educated felt that
they were misfits in their own communities. Education
offered them the passport to enter senior positions in the
administration and they began to lead a European-style life
with perks, cars and bungalows. Education thus created a
neo-elite middle class and instead of uniting the community
against the aliens it became a powerful agent of social divisiveness. The neo-elite displayed their alienation from their communities in two ways. One was an attempt to create a sense of belonging with the community, the ultimate failure of which led to withdrawal and loneliness. The other was to opt for a life of power and plenty. This led to the accumulation of wealth and a love for gadgets made in Europe which ultimately converted the neo-elite into neo-colonial apemen.

The alienation of the individual is a thematic preoccupation in the novels of Ngugi and Armah. They deal with alienation at the two levels. Those who opt for the first alternative like Murira, Baako or Modin live lives of self-imposed exile, whereas the others who choose the second alternative like Nderi, Koomson or Brempong end up as mimic men with a colonial mentality who are ashamed of their past and believe that only white men can do things for them.

Those individuals who show their alienation through loneliness and withdrawal are the ones who want to use their education for the betterment of their communities. But they find it difficult to adjust with their immediate society—the family—and then with the larger community. They find it difficult to live the life led by all around them. The community begins to brand them as failures and this develops an internal conflict in the individual which leads to his attempt either to withdraw to a corner of his own home or to a corner of the world where he can pass...
unnoticed. Thus Munira in *Petals of Blood* escapes from Limuru and lives in exile in Illmorog. He has failed to rise to the expectations of his father. He feels a sense of inadequacy at having failed in contrast to his brothers and sisters. So leaving his father's estates to eke out a living as a primary teacher, is "his first conscious act of breaking with this sense of non-being" (*Petals* 15). In the beginning of *The River Between*, Waiyaki is obsessed with the idea of education. But in the end he says that education for an oppressed people is not all. The education that Waiyaki dreams will deliver his people, alienates him from the same people.

Similarly the mental breakdown of Baako in *Fragments* is the climax of his alienation. And Modin in *Why Are We So Blest?* opts out of a Harvard degree because he believes that education will further alienate him from his people. Modin uses the centre periphery analogy to describe the consequences of education. Education, according to him, is an attempt to move to the centre from the periphery which leads to alienation. He says:

> Knowledge about the world we live in is the property of the alien because the alien has conquered us. The thirst for / knowledge therefore becomes perverted into the desire for getting close to the alien, getting out of the self. Result: loneliness as a way of life. (*Blest* 32-33)
The majority of the neo-elite display their alienation through a blind imitation of all that is Western. They see the world "with glasses 'Made in Europe'" (Ngugi, "National Identity" 170). Jean-Paul Sartre says in his preface to Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* that the native elite is a creation of the European elite who picked out promising adolescents and branded them with the principles of Western culture and stuffed their mouths with high-sounding words and sent them home whitewashed (7). Fanon also has pictured the neo-elite as a parasitic class with a slave mentality with respect towards all that is white and accumulating all that is made in Europe. Thus the national bourgeoisie "becomes not even the replica of Europe, but its caricature" (*Wretched* 141). Kofi Awoonor also says that the educated man "was cast in the whiteman's image, a woeful caricature of this man, without focus or identity" (30). Education also promoted the development of excessive individualism in the elite. The primacy of the community over the individual was dissipated. This led to excessive individualism which was against the communal ethics. Within the traditional set-up the community had tight control over the individual. To make-up for the self-inadequacy, the elite began to mimic European lifestyles and to look down upon all that was indigenous. In short, he lost his cultural confidence.
Satirizing this apemanship of the neo-elite is a counter-discursive strategy found in the novels of Armah and Ngugi. They satirize the neo-elite’s craze for Western gadgets, love of Christian names and the imitation of Europe in dress, in hair-style, in make-up, in accent and in mannerisms. The neo-elite who are satirized include politicians, ‘been-tos’ and government servants who surrender their Africanness and identify themselves with the culture of the West. Through their lifestyle they betray an internalized acceptance of Western culture as superior. Armah and Ngugi use bitter irony and sarcasm to satirize the apemanship of the neo-elite.

Armah in The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born traces Koomson’s love of foreign gadgets as an example of the neo-elite’s servile dependence on the West. Koomson lives in a palacious bungalow with a big garden in the front and a gardener “watering an expanse of lush grass” (Beautyful 143). The Man and his wife, Oyo, meet Koomson at his bungalow. The Man is surprised to find the huge collection of foreign goods in the house. There are things in the house for a human being to spend a lifetime desiring. There are things “to attract the beholding eye and make it accept the power of their owner” (Beautyful 144). In his sitting room there are “shelves all covered with small, intricate objects that must have come from foreign lands . . .” (Beautyful 146). Appreciating his
beautiful radio set Koomson says: "'There is nothing to beat a German set . . .’" (E,evityful 147). When Koomson and his wife visit the Man, they are treated with local beer. But Koomson’s wife, Estella, does not join the rest in drinking. She says that the local beer does not agree with her constitution. But after some time Estella also joins the others in drinking the beer. And Armah comments ironically: "Even Estella eventually reconciled herself to being an African and drank the beer with a sour face" (Beautyful 132). Similarly Brempong, the typical ‘been to’ in Fragments, is wise enough to ship home as many foreign goods as possible. He believes that only foreign goods are beautiful and are their money’s worth. Bringing out a lighter he asks Baako: "'Where in Ghana would you find a thing like this?'" (Fragments 66). He adds that he bought it in Amsterdam and goods made in Europe do not give any trouble.

Most of the neo-elite drop their African names and adopt Christian names. They pride themselves on their newly acquired long European names. So Brempong introduces himself to Baako as Henry Robert Hudson Brempong. On hearing Baako’s surname, ‘Onipa’ Brempong says: "'It’s an unusual name'” (Fragments 63). Similarly Prince Bentum in Two Thousand Seasons is renamed Bradford George. The competitors in Devil on the Cross while introducing themselves do not forget to mention their Christian names.
So Gitutu’s Christian name is Rottenborough Groundflesh Shitland Narrow Isthmus Joint Stock Brown (Devil 99) and Khihahu’s foreign name is Lord Gabriel Bloodwell-Stuart-Jones (Devil 109). As Karega says in Petals of Blood, by dropping their African names and by adopting Christian names, the neo-elite make a ridiculous caricature of themselves. Karega asks:

‘For what could be a more ridiculous caricature of self than those of our African brothers and sisters proudly calling themselves James Phillipson, Rispa, Hottensiah, Ron Rodgerson, Richard Glucose, Charity, Honey Moonsnow, Ezekiel, Shiprah, Winterbottomson—all the collection of names and non-names from the Western world?’ (Petals 125)

The neo-elite imitate the European in dress, hairstyle, accent and mannerisms. So the M. P. in A Grain of Wheat whom Gikonyo meets to discuss the land deal is dressed in a dark suit and carries a leather portfolio and he smokes a pipe (55). Nderi wa Riera, the M. P. who meets the Illmorog delegation in Petals of Blood, wears a three-piece grey suit (176). And Karega speaks of young men in tight American jeans and huge belts studded with shiny metal stars gyrating their bodies in front of the juke-box (Petals 100). In Devil on the Cross the master of ceremonies wears “a silk suit which shone in the light”
Gitutu wears a dark suit and a white shirt with frills and a black bow tie. "His walking stick was decorated with pure gold" (Devil 99). Kihaahu is dressed in “black-and-grey striped trousers, a black tail coat, a white shirt and a black tie” (Devil 108). And Nditiika is dressed in a black suit. His jacket has tails, his shirt has frills and he is wearing a black bow tie (Devil 176).

In Fragments Baako recollects a scene from the out-dooring ceremony in which the neo-elite parade themselves in made in Europe fabrics, jewellery and make up:

This was a rich crowd of guests... Woolen [sic] suits, flashing shoes... an authentic cold-climate overcoat from Europe or America held traveler-fashion [sic] over an arm, five or six waistcoats, silken ties and silver clasps... women in white lace covershirts on new dumas cloth; long, twinkling earrings, gold necklaces, quick-shining wristwatches... (259)

To this group of mimic men and women, Baako appears in “a shirt and a northern ‘batakari’ over a pair of shorts” (259). Armah’s satire becomes sharper when the simplicity of Baako is juxtaposed with the hypocrisy and artificiality of the bourgeoisie who need “embroidery to cover their inferiority complex . . .” (Ogede, “Patterns” 536).
In order to de-Africanize one’s body, the hair is hidden under wigs or straightened, and the skin is bleached. So Estella wears wigs and Oyo straightens her hair with an iron comb. She tells her husband that she straightens her hair to make it presentable. According to her it is only “‘bush women who wear their hair natural’” (Beautyful 129). Wariinga’s hair has “browned to the colour of moleskin because it had been straightened with red-hot iron combs” (Devil 11). What Wariinga hates the most is her blackness. So she disfigures her body “with skin-lightening creams like ‘Ambi’ and ‘Snowfire’ . . .” (Devil 11). Munira’s attempt to endear himself with Wanja leads to his reading advertisements of consumer products. He wants to help her with advertisements to increase her Theng’eta sales. Most of the advertisements are for products to bleach the black skin or to cover the African hair. Some of them run like this: “Be a platinum blonde: be a redhead: be a whole new you in 100% imported hand-made human hair. Join the new Africans: join Ambi people” (Petals 273).

Imitating the British accent or mispronouncing the native words is an attempt to identify oneself with the foreigner. So Koomson’s daughter, Pincess, speaks English “like a white child, with the fearless, direct look of a white child” (Beautyful 144). And when Koomson calls his steward boy, Atinga (a fifty-year-old man) it is a peculiar
kind of shout, "the kind made by white men trying to pronounce African names without any particular desire to pronounce them well, indeed deriving that certain superior pleasure from their inability" (Beautyful 147). In Devil on the Cross Kihaahu's children "speak English through the nose, exactly like people born and brought up in England" (109). They speak Gikuyu or Kiswhahili in such a funny way that anyone who hears them speak would laugh. They speak these two languages "as if they were Italian priests newly arrived from Rome . . ." (110). And Nditika is proud of his children calling him "'Daddy! Daddy!,’ just like European children!” (Devil 177).

Imitation of European mannerisms learned through advertisements and movies is also satirized. When the Man and his wife visit Koomson, Estella comes down and sits doing nothing for some time except stroking her wig from front to back in long, slow and studied motion (Beautyful 148). And during the Koomsons' visit to the Man, Estella sits contemplating the diamond on her finger and raising her hand like a white woman seen in films "to raise a curl that was obscuring her vision and push it back, into the main mass of her wig . . ." (Beautyful 131). Brempong makes several trips to the rear of the plane exuding happiness and finally sits down near Baako with a smile "like something learned from the advertisements for beer or whisky or cigarettes made specially for the new
Africans . . .” (Fragments 62). In Petals of Blood Karega speaks of young men who chew gum or break match-sticks between their teeth “with the abandoned nonchalance of cowboys in the American Wild West” seen in films (101).

3. Satirizing Monopoly Capitalism

Ngugi satirizes monopoly capitalism in Devil on the Cross using mainly irony and comic exaggeration as tools. The story of the crucifixion is reversed to satirize the capitalists who are worshippers of the devil. Wariinga sees in her vision a crowd of people in rags lifting the devil towards the cross. “The Devil was clad in a silk suit, and he carried a walking stick shaped like a folded umbrella” (Devil 13). The Devil requests the people not to crucify him and promises that he “would never again build Hell for the people on Earth” (Devil 13). The people charge the Devil with cunning, murder, theft and lasciviousness. The people leave after the crucifixion singing songs of victory. After three days another group of people come. They are dressed in suits and ties. They bring the devil down from the cross and kneel down before him, praying for his cunning and vice so that they can grow confirmed in the Devil’s ways. So the Devil crucified by the peasants and workers is brought down from the cross and worshipped by the capitalists.

The capitalist interpretation of the parable of the talents in the New Testament is highly satirical. Ngugi
satirizes the complicity between Western monopoly capitalism and its native stooges by satirizing the parable known to his readers. The master of the parable in Ngugi's hands becomes the colonialist who foresees that the masses and the guerilla fighters will overthrow him and decides to go out of the colony graciously through the front door so as to return through the back door. He calls his slaves and servants and teaches them all the earthly vices he knows. Then he gives them the key to the country and tells them that they will be accepted by the nationalists, not knowing that there is only a change in colour. The master gives his servants five hundred thousand, two hundred thousand and one hundred thousand shillings "according to how loyally he had served his master, and followed his faith, and shared his outlook" (Devil 83). The first two as the comprador bourgeoisie multiply the capital entrusted to them. The third seeing through the cunning of the foreign overlord buries the money in a hole by a banana plant. Before long the master returns to reap where he has not sown. He is very happy with the first two servants and makes them managing directors of banks and other big enterprises. He says:

'From today I shall hide my face. I shall stay behind the scenes, and you will stand at the door and at the windows, so that it is your face that will always be visible. You will the [sic] watchdog of my investments in your country.'

(Devil 84)
But the man who buried the money returns the exact amount to the master and tells him that the money has not multiplied because he has not watered it with his sweat. He thus proves that foreign capital will not multiply unless it is watered with the sweat of native workers. The master is annoyed and calls him an unfaithful and lazy servant and orders to take back the money entrusted to him and offers it to the other two servants to share between them. He justifies his action: "'For unto the man of property more will be given, but from the poor man will be taken even the little that he has kept in reserve'" (Devil 85).

Ngugi satirizes the comprador bourgeoisie who compete for the title of the best thief in the Devil’s Feast which is held in a cave near Illmorog. Each participant has to mount the stage and narrate the history of his profession of theft and suggest a most modern and ingenious method of robbing the poor. This competition which forms the centre-piece of the novel is satirically exaggerated. After the master of ceremonies doles out the rules and regulations of the competition, Ndaaya mounts the platform to try a hand at the crown. But he is chased off the stage because he is only a petty thief who steals chickens in villages. The master of ceremonies tells the audience that such petty thieves and robbers are criminals and the foreigners have not travelled all the way for listening to
such tales of people who steal because their bellies are empty, but to listen to those who steal because their bellies are full (Devil 95). According to him stories of people breaking padlocks in village huts or snatching the purses of market women are shameful and not fit for narration in front of international thieves and robbers (Devil 95).

Ngugi associates fat cheeks and big belly as the physical features that symbolize the capitalists. The master of ceremonies says that one of the rules of the competition is that “no one without a big belly and fat cheeks should bother to come up here to waste our time” (Devil 96). So most of the thieves who mount the stage have fat cheeks and pot-bellies. Gitutu is like a rolling ball. He has a protruding belly which would have touched the ground had it not been supported by the braces. “Gitutu had no neck—at least, his neck was not visible. His arms and legs were short stumps. His head had shrunk to the size of a fist” (Devil 99). Nditika also is very fat. His head is like a mountain. “His belly hung over his belt, big and arrogant” (Devil 176). Kimeendeeri’s cheeks are as smooth as those of a new born baby. His legs are huge and shapeless like banana stems. “His neck is formed from rolls of fat, like the skin of the hairy maggot” (Devil 186). Similarly the master of ceremonies has a well fed body. His cheeks are like melons. His eyes
are big and red like plums and his neck is like the stem of a 'baobab' tree (Devil 87). And when the rally of the workers reach the cave, the thieves run for their lives. Ngugi pictures the frantic struggle of the thieves to escape by squeezing their fat bellies through the door of the cave. They will then lumber across to their cars like hippos. Muturi in his address to the workers after chasing the thieves refers to the belly as the sign of a thief. He says: ‘Those bellies are not swollen by disease. They have been fattened by the fruit of our sweat and blood’ (Devil 208).

Ngugi’s satire takes a new turn when he exposes to ridicule the hypocrisy and vanity of the native thieves who use chauffeur driven limousines as a façade for the self-inadequacy they feel. One of the rules of the competition is that every competitor has to provide information about “the car he drives, the model his wife drives and the model driven by his girlfriend(s)” (Devil 98). According to the master of ceremonies, a car is a man’s identity. Mwireri is on the brink of being thrown off the cave because he has travelled in a ‘matatu’. So he brings in Robin Mwaura as a witness to testify that his car has stalled at Kikuyu and is left outside Ondiri Hotel. We find the capitalists boasting of the number, make and efficiency of their cars. So Gitutu uses a chauffeur-driven Mercedes Benz, a Peugeot 604 and a Range
Rover. His wife uses a Toyota Carina—a small shopping basket to carry goods from the market. To one sugar girl, he has given a Toyota Corolla and to the other a Datsun 1600 SS (Devil 100). Similarly Kihahu changes his cars like clothes and buys "playthings like Toyotas, Datsuns and Peugeots" to his wives and older children (Devil 110).

Ngugi satirizes pseudo-nationalism which, in fact, functions as a means for furthering one’s selfish motives and personal interests. So Mwireri believes that theft and robbery must be allowed to flourish on a domestic or national level—thieves and robbers of a given country stealing from workers and peasants of their own country. He argues that the gates of a country may be shut against foreign robbers who plunder a country and take the spoils back to their own country. He says: "Let us steal from among ourselves, so that the wealth of the country remains in the country..." (Devil 167). Mwireri wants to prove that foreigners alone are not adepts at milking the masses, soothing them "with a little fodder as they are being milked..." (Devil 168).

Satire reaches unexpected heights when the thieves suggest some of the most modern and ingenious future plans for robbing the poor. The brilliant idea of future theft put forward by Nditika is marketing human organs so that the rich, if they prefer, can have many instead of one belly, heart, mouth or life. He says that if spare human
parts are made available, the rich can "'purchase immortality'" and "'leave death as the prerogative of the poor'" (Devil 180).

The new scheme of exploitation suggested by Gitutu is to sell land not as tiny plots, but in tiny pots. As soon as the hunger and thirst for land rise up among the masses, the land-holding rich can make millions by "'selling soil in pots and tins, so that a man will at least be able to plant a seed in them and hang them from the roof of his shelter!'" (Devil 107). Another idea is to fill the air in tins and sell it to peasants and workers. An added advantage of this bottling project is that when workers and peasants become restive, they can be subdued by denying them air.

Kihaahu suggests a wonderful idea to pocket huge profits as margin money by building houses for the poor. He visualizes a time when at the height of the famine, people will be rendered homeless. Then the builders can cash in by constructing houses as small as bird's nests. The houses may be designed in such a way that they can be folded and slipped into pockets. The landless and homeless now need not feel hopeless. "'Whenever and wherever darkness catches up with him, he will simply set up the nest at the roadside and lay down his head'" (Devil 118). The raw materials—grass and rope—for building the nests can be imported from America, Europe and Japan or simply ready-made nests can be imported.
Kimeendeeri outsmarts the rest by proposing a very clever scheme for exporting the sweat and blood of the masses. Kimeendeeri was a District Officer during the emergency who drove on his Land Rover over the bodies of freedom fighters to a swivel chair as a Permanent Secretary after independence. His scheme is founded on the principle that “the sweat and the blood of the workers are the wellsprings of wealth” (Devil 187). He proposes to set up a farm to pen the workers like animals. Machines will be set up to milk the sweat and blood of workers which will be exported through pipelines to foreign countries to feed the industries there. “The company handling the trade will be called Kenyo-Saxon Exporters: Human Blood and Flesh” (Devil 187). Kimeendeeri will build schools for the children of the workers to teach them that the system of exploiting the poor is quite natural and has been existing since the creation of the world and will continue till its end and that nothing can be done to change the situation. “The children will be allowed to read only those books that glorify the system of drinking human blood and eating human flesh” (Devil 189).

Thus Ngugi and Armah use satire as a powerful counter-discursive strategy to subvert the discursive potential of Christianity, Western education and monopoly capitalism. Their satire is inspired by a passion for
decolonization. Though at times their satire becomes bitter, it is not malignant. The intention is to ridicule, not to abuse and the satire gains its power because it is forceful and outspoken.