Ngugi wa Thiong’o has been writing since the days of the African Renaissance in the 1950’s and has enriched the corpus of African literature through his varied writing. His ideological stand is made clear in his radical, polemical and critical essays. They have justified his perception of Africa in his interviews and journalistic essays. But it is the novels that he brings out his creative talent and imaginative skill in portraying Africa.

Ngugi belongs to Kenya in the East Africa. He belongs to the prominent tribe of his country, Gikuyu. The formative education that he had in the Christian Missionary school, the socio-economic background of his family and the political atmosphere in which he grew have a telling effect on the development of his ideology. Ngugi, a champion of the Mau Mau, a crusader against the Neo-Colonial hegemony in modern Kenya, owes his debt to Marxist ideology and has now become a Socialist Realist in fiction. The fictional works of Ngugi have been studied from various theoretical stand points in recent years. There are also many cultural studies of his fiction. In his works we find his continuing crusade against the Capitalist and the Neo-colonial forces operating in Africa.
There has been a remarkable influence of Marxist ideology on Ngugi and the same is evident in his novels, plays and other polemical writings. These days, he himself has emerged as a leading ideologue like Fanon, Cabral and so on.

Modern African literature needs to be studied in the historical context of Colonialism of yester years, the economic factors that have affected the colonial legacy, the political and ideological confrontation in the post independent African states and the neo-colonial hegemony affecting the stability of these states.

Doubts have been raised about the validity of the application of the dialectics of Marxism to the works of literature after the collapse of the socialist regime and disintegration of the U.S.S.R. But there seems to be no truth in such a charge. In reality there is no one to one relationship between communist regime and the mode of production of literature. Marxism is an all embracing ideology which employs different socio-political and cultural perspectives. In fact, Marx and Engel dreamt of the establishment of a proletarian government in a highly industrialised country like England. But it is irony of history that it was in the Czarist Russia, with its well founded feudal set up which was always prone to poverty, drought and exploitation, that the first proletarian government in the world was established in 1917. The contribution of Lenin and his band of committed workers in realizing the dreams of Marx and Engel is highly commendable.
In 1973 James Olney commented on Ngugi’s "paradoxical politics of reactionary revolution" and expressed his view that most other African novelists would disagree with him. He quoted Achebe and Soyinka in support of his contention and said:

"Ngugi seems to want to make his past his future: he would revive social and cultural structures of the past as a reality of the future, and what he calls for to accomplish this is a present revolution not to achieve something new but to restore an ideal precolonial state that he, at least, takes to have been of original peace, harmony, justice, and goodness." (Olney, James. *Tell Me Africa: An Approach to African Literature*. Princeton: Princeton U P , 1973.p- 284.)

Olney, obviously, was referring to the two parallel and simultaneous movements visible in Ngugi's thought: while socially and politically he was moving in a more radical and revolutionary direction, morally and culturally he was moving in the direction of a more pronounced traditionalism. Marxist socialism was the decisive influence on his political and social thought while Christianity and African tradition were the leading influences on its moral and cultural aspects. But whereas his commitment to Marxist socialism remains as firm as ever, there has been an increasing tendency to look to the African past even as a guide in the social and political spheres. I think, however, that "revolutionary traditionalism" rather than "reactionary revolution" would be a more appropriate term for characterizing Ngugi's peculiar blend of socialism and his reverence for the past civilization of Africa.
Ngugi wrote in 1968:

"In a capitalistic society, the past has a romantic glamour: gazing at it, as witness Wordsworth and D. H. Lawrence, or more recently Yukio Mishima of Japan, is often a means of escaping the present. It is only in 'a socialist' context that a look at yesterday can be meaningful in illuminating today and tomorrow." (Ngugi, *Homecoming*. New York: Lawrence Hill and Company, 1982. p-46).

Ngugi's generalization about capitalistic society is too sweeping, for all non-socialist writers do no treat the past as a means of escape. To liberal thinkers such as Bentham, James and John Stuart Mill, and Macaulay, the past is hardly of any greater significance than it is for radicals and revolutionaries such as Marx.

Ngugi is a committed Marxist and could not be said to display any lack of trust in ideology, but at the same time he attaches considerable weight to the experience of the community. There is a whole series of characters in his novels —from Mugo wa Kibiro and Waiyaki's father Chege in *The River Between* to Mwathi and Nyakinyua in *Petals of Blood* — who represent the wisdom of the community. Even the name Waiyaki given to the main character in the former novel is to suggest the tradition of leadership represented by the famous Kikuyu chief and warrior who put up stout resistance to British colonialism in the 1890s.

His piercing contemplative eyes suggest comparison with Jomo Kenyatta who, like Waiyaki, was descended from a family of seers. Micere Mugo is correct in asserting on the basis of a personal interview that
"Ngugi reviews the past in Okot p'Bitek's Lawino's militant, assertive, progressive and creative sense" and that "to him everything within the traditional setting had significance, symbolism and deep religious meaning." (Mugo, Micere Githae. *Visions of Africa* (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1978) pp-51-52, 56.)

The objection could be raised that Micere Mugo's observations are based on a study of Ngugi's earlier novels, that by the time he wrote *Petals of Blood* there had been a marked change in his attitude to the past as revealed in Karega's remarks quoted at the beginning. This is true to some extent. However, since the writing of *Petals of Blood* Ngugi has experienced another change in his attitude to the past, which has led him to an equally deep, perhaps even deeper, attachment to it than before. It is proper to examine the indications, both in his art and his thought, which support this conclusion and the factors which have contributed to this change.

While Ngugi's commitment to Marxism is a recognized fact, his deviations from the orthodox Marxist position have hardly ever been noticed. For instance, Marx and Engels, in spite of their condemnation of the bourgeoisie for its insatiable lust for power and money and its ruthlessness in pursuing these ends, still regarded it as a revolutionary force. It had, says the famous passage in *The Communist Manifesto*, "during its rule of scarce one hundred years, created more massive and more colossal productive forces than (had) all preceding generations together." (Mugo, Micere Githae. *Visions of Africa* (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1978) pp- 51-52, 56).
It was responsible for the subjection of nature's forces to man, for the application of machinery to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, for making entire deserts bloom like the rose. Through its breaking up of the stagnation of feudal society it has been the most important agent in the social dynamics which will ultimately lead to the triumph of the proletariat. Ngugi never acknowledges this revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie and from his pen we never see anything but condemnation of this class. The peasantry, on the contrary, is always praised and glorified. Ngugi follows not only Marx and Engels but also Fanon, who made a distinction between the Western bourgeoisie and the colonial bourgeoisie and regarded the poor peasantry as the most genuinely revolutionary class in the Third World. The peasants alone are revolutionary in these countries for three reasons. First, because "they have nothing to lose and everything to gain" by any change in the existing set-up as imposed by colonialism. Second, because the country people are the only people who have "more or less kept their individuality free from colonial impositions." This achievement of theirs is marvellous, "reminiscent of a conjuror's most successful sleight of hand." Third, because they are the only ones who are prepared to take recourse to violence to claim their birthright: "The starving peasant, outside the class system, is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays. For him there is no compromise, no possible coming to terms." .

Frantz Fanon is rightly called as one of the leading post colonial African philosophers and one of his most important works of postcolonial literature includes *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon aims at deconstructing the speculative metaphysical underpinnings of the Eurocentric world that has held the Africans under bondage for the last five centuries. In the ensuing pages an attempt has been made to understand the colonial situation, its effects on the people of Africa and the last chapter is concerned with Fanon’s central thesis of ‘emancipation through violence’.

Fanon does not shy away from suggesting the use of force to achieve freedom. He believes that decolonization is a violent phenomenon. It is in the light of the two original works of Fanon- *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth* that one needs to understand his philosophical convictions.

Frantz Fanon was a psychiatrist and a revolutionary writer, whose writings had profound influence on the radical movements in the 1960s in the United States and Europe. He was perhaps the preeminent thinker of the 20th century on the issue of decolonization and the psychopathology of colonization. His works have inspired anti-colonial liberation movements throughout the world for the past thirty years.

Though Fanon’s formal training was in medicine and psychiatry, he also studied philosophy, and throughout his life he continued to grapple with the thought-patterns of European modernity such as Hegel, Marx, Freud, Sartre and Merleau-
Ponty. He embarked on a journey of testing their ideas through a confrontation with the dehumanized situation created by racism and colonialism. Fanon launched a humanist project to understand the divisive and hierarchical zones that divide, fragment and destroy human beings.

His project and goal was to go beyond manicheanism both in its colonial form and as an anticolonial reaction. By manicheanism, is meant “a binary system of thought that paints the world as split between good and evil. Its roots go back to the religion of Mani (third century of the common era), which viewed the creators of the world, God and the Devil, as still fighting it out.” (Gibson, Nigel. *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*. Great Britain: Polity Press, 2003.p- 6.)

The roots of racial and colonial manicheanism in the modern period are found in the European Enlightenment, which viewed Europe as the center of the world and the transmitter of light to distant regions. This was the view held by many European Enlightenment Philosophers including Kant and Hegel. In the colonist’s eyes the native black was thought to be childish, lazy, indolent and slow, lacking in history and humanity, and needing coercive measures such as chattel slavery to force them to be productive. Hegel says, “the negro is an example of animal man in all his savagery and lawlessness, and if we wish to understand him we must put aside all our European attitudes… all that is foreign in man in his immediate existence, and nothing constant with humanity is to be found in his character.” (Gibson, Nigel *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*. Great Britain: Polity Press, 2003.p- 207.)
The colonial literature too viewed the Africans with the help of enlightenment categories. It painted the native as the ‘quintessence of evil’, and the colonizer as the effigy of good. According to Nigel Gibson who inquired into a revolt in Haiti in 1972:

The Negro is a being, whose nature and disposition are not merely different from those of the European, they are the reverse of them. Thus blacks needed to be treated only with violence and abuse, kindness and compassion excite in his breast implacable and deadly hatred; but stripes, insults and abuse generate gratitude, affection and inviolable attachment. (Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*. Great Britain: Polity Press, 2003.p- 7.)

Fanon's first major work, *Black Skin, White Mask*, appeared in 1952. In this book he tries to analyze the impact of colonialism and its deforming effects. Fanon argued that white colonialism imposed an existentially false and degrading existence upon its black victims to the extent that it demanded their conformity to its distorted values. The colonized is not seen by the colonizer as a human being; this is also the picture the colonized is forced to accept. The colonized begin to accept and interiorize these distortions and suffer from grave inferiority complexes. Fanon demonstrates how the problem of race, of color, connects with a whole range of words and images, starting from the symbol of the dark side of the soul. Fanon examines race prejudices as a philosopher and psychologist although he acknowledges social and economic realities. The text is however a genuine analysis.
of a philosopher striving to unravel the deeper connotations of being terrorized and humiliated by the rule of white men.

Another important work of Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, published in the year 1961, is a brilliant analysis of the psychology of the colonized and their path to liberation. Sartre in the preface mentions that the Third World finds itself and speaks to itself through the voice of Fanon. Bearing singular insight into the rage and frustration of colonized peoples, and the role of violence in effecting historical change, the book intelligently attacks the twin perils of post independence colonial politics: the disenfranchisement of the masses by the elites on the one hand, and intertribal and interfaith animosities on the other.

Fanon's analysis of the colonial situation in Africa serves as an authentic handbook of social reorganization for leaders of emerging nations. It could also serve as a manual for the present-day African society that is plagued with corruption and violence. *The Wretched of the Earth* has had a major impact on civil rights, anticolonialism, and black consciousness movements around the world.

As a psychiatrist he studied the impact of colonialism on colonized people. Fanon concluded that the use of violence to overthrow injustice was justified to break the emotional oppression caused by colonialism. Fanon’s work was widely cited in defense of struggles to achieve national independence. These selections are from the section “Concerning Violence” in his book *The Wretched of the Earth*. 
Fanon was obsessed by notions of ending the “old system”, whether conventional or inherited from colonialism. Revolution, and revolutionary violence, he hoped, would bring down the inherited structures to the benefit of the more oppressed class, the peasantry. Unless the peasants are moved by their revolutionary consciousness, their own social structure would not entice them into action. This is why the sense of consciousness, for Fanon, was existential rather than super-imposed. The central views of Fanon on violence are as follows:

A. Decolonization is always a violent phenomenon . . . the proof of success lies in a whole social structure being changed from the bottom up. The extraordinary importance of this change is that it is willed, called for, demanded. The need for this change exists . . . in the consciousness and in the lives of the men and women who are colonized. But the possibility of this change is equally experienced in the form of a terrifying future in the consciousness of another “species” of men and women: the colonizers. (The Wretched of the Earth, pp-35-36)

B. The violence of the colonial regime and the counter-violence of the native balance each other and respond to each other in an extraordinary reciprocal homogeneity. This reign of violence will be the more terrible in proportion to the size of the implantation (settlement) from the mother country. The development of violence among the colonized people will be proportionate to the violence exercised by the threatened colonial regime . . . However, the results are not equivalent, for machine-gunning from airplanes and bombardments from the fleet go far beyond in
horror and magnitude any answer the natives can make. (*The Wretched of the Earth* pp-88-89)

C. In all armed struggles, there exists what we might call the point of no return. Almost always it is marked off by a huge and all-inclusive repression which engulfs all sectors of the colonized people . . . Then it became clear to everybody, including even the settlers, that “things couldn't go on as before.” (*The Wretched of the Earth*, pp-90-92)

D. For the colonized people this violence . . . invests their characters with positive and creative qualities. The practice of violence binds them together as a whole, since each individual forms a violent link in the great chain, a part of the great organism of violence which has surged upward in reaction to the settler’s violence in the beginning. The groups recognize each other and the future nation is already indivisible. (*The Wretched of the Earth*, p-93)

E. The mobilization of the masses, when it arises out of the war of liberation, introduces into each man's consciousness the ideas of a common cause, of a national destiny, and of a collective history . . . During the colonial period the people are called upon to fight against oppression; after national liberation, they are called upon to fight against poverty, illiteracy, and underdevelopment. (*The Wretched of the Earth*, pp-93-94)
F. Europe has stuffed herself inordinately with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries: Latin America, China, and Africa. From all these continents, under whose eyes Europe today raises up her tower of opulence (wealth), there has flowed out for centuries toward that same Europe diamonds and oil, silk and cotton, wood and exotic products. Europe is literally the creation of the Third World. The wealth which smothers her is that which was stolen from the underdeveloped peoples. The ports of Holland, the docks of Bordeaux and Liverpool were specialized in the Negro slave trade, and owe their renown to millions of deported slaves. (*The Wretched of the Earth*, p-102)

Karl Marx in *Das Capital* has proposed a theory of alienation. It is however important to note, whether Marx theory of alienation can be applied to the colonial situation, and whether the colonies or the countries of the Third World in general, can be aptly analyzed with reference to the economic categories alone. For Marx, it is the economic factor that plays a significant role and is at the root of alienation.

**MARX’S THEORY OF ALIENATION**

According to Karl Marx, pre-capitalist forms of production are characterized by the fact that the individuals as members of community own the means of production, primarily the land. Under pre-capitalist conditions of production mainly articles of utility are produced, and payment in kind outweighs payments in money. Marx arrives at the concept of alienation as a result of objectification, as the reification of

Marxian understanding of alienation is based on the relation of the producer to the product of his labour, as well as in the relation of the worker to his own activity. In capitalist society the workers produce commodities, the production of which requires capital. The commodities are placed on the market by private entrepreneurs and sold with a view to increasing their capital through profits and enhancing further production of commodities. The worker, through his wage he earns surrenders to the capitalist the product of his labour which having become a commodity is subsequently made available to him on the market as an exchange value. Thus according to Herbert,


Marx conceives of alienation as reification, through which capitalist society causes all interpersonal relations to take the form of objective relations between things: “relations such as those between capital and labour, capital and commodity, and those between commodities are understood as human relations, relations in man’s social existence” (Karl Marx *Capital Vol. I* (Moscow: Foreign Languages
In the capitalist mode of production, man is alienated from himself, since he is incapable of objectifying himself through labour. The worker is alienated by the very fact that the means of subsistence belongs to another. It is dominated by an inhuman power and the worker is alien to his own activity. Marx calls the process of alienation as ‘the fetishism of commodities’. (Zahar, Renate. *Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), p-5.) This process of alienation can be put to an end only through the abolition of capitalist class society by the socialist revolution. But in order to be able to make a revolution, the working class from being a class ‘in itself’ must become a class ‘for itself’.

It has to become aware of its own proper self-existence and hence develop a class-consciousness. Through this process each of the working class members becomes conscious of his alienation and its underlying economic cause.

**FANON’S INQUIRY INTO ALIENATION**

A question however arises, whether the notion of alienation as understood by Marx can be adequately applied to the colonial conditions? In order to answer this question, we must first understand the level of economic development and the kind of capitalism that was prevalent in the so called underdeveloped countries that were under the colonial domination. In the pre-capitalist modes of production, the
producers own the means of production but the situation is not the same in the colonial economies according to Fanon. In the colonial countries the natives were reduced to the status of proletarians who had to work in mines and on plantations. This cannot be considered to be a process of transition to a wage-labour relationship since in most cases it was actually a forced labour relationship, and the payment was frequently made only in kind.

Though there prevailed, some form of feudal society in some regions, it was of secondary interest to the colonial power. There was no economic development that took place in these countries during the colonial rule. It only led to the exploitation of the dependent countries. Colonialism has only provoked structural changes and one cannot apply the same yardstick of pre-capitalist European society. The surplus in the underdeveloped countries does not benefit them; it is mainly transferred to the metropolitan countries. In the words of Zahar:

> The several capitalist contradictions and the historical development of the capitalist system have generated underdevelopment in the peripheral satellites whose economic surplus was expropriated, while generating economic development in the metropolitan centres which appropriate that surplus. (Zahar, Renate. *Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation.* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974,p-10)

The world-wide process of capitalist development leads to a polarization between highly developed, industrialized metropolitan countries and on the other hand, stagnating satellites. The metropolitan countries expropriate economic surplus from
their satellites and appropriate it for their own development, while the latter stagnate in their underdevelopment. The natives lack access to their own surplus and secondly they have to bear the brunt of the metropolis/satellite polarization and the exploitative contradictions introduced by the colonial economic structures. In the colonial situation the majority of the workers were separated from the means of production and there existed the division of labour only to a limited extent. The colonized people were compelled to gear their production to the demand of a market-economy, i.e. to cultivate products which they were no longer able to use for their own subsistence. In colonial situation unlike other European capitalist countries, there is neither a developed commodity production nor a developed commodity exchange which integrates people’s society. The alienation brought about by colonialism is thus a double one. While in capitalism the exploitation takes place in the realm of production and while the exchange keeps at least a semblance of equivalence. In contrast, the colonized is exploited twofold: first in his conditions of production by the colonial overlord, and secondly in his exchange relations by the metropolis. (Zahar, Renate. Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974,p-5) The alienation causes an alleged racial feeling of inferiority in the natives and the superiority of the colonizers is often manifested through brute force. We can here take not of French assimilation policy. Although it claimed to be non-racial in its basic assumptions, it offered only relatively few people the opportunity of rising from the level of natives
to the status of human beings through a process of Europeanization, i.e. complete alienation from their own history and culture. It thus caused frustrations, compensatory phenomena and cases of psycho-somatic illness, all of which can be viewed as a result of colonial alienation.

**THE CONCEPT OF INTELLECTUAL ALIENATION**

In the process of alienation an individual is unable to recognize himself and his own potentialities, thus alienation has both economic and intellectual aspects. Fanon’s primary focus is on the analysis of intellectual alienation. All people are subjected to economic conditions of alienation, which are the constitutive elements of psychological phenomena of alienation. However there can also exist certain type of intellectual alienation in various forms in most of the colonized countries. The intellectual alienation of the colonized shows itself in their identification with a racial stereotype and causes all kinds of frustrations and complexes. It prevents the exploited from gaining an insight into their economic plight and gauging it in terms of their own position as a class. As long as their consciousness is structured by racist norms the colonized would remain incapable of developing a revolutionary class- consciousness. (Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1952), 219, quoted in Renate Zahar, *Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), p-15)
An individual can grow in self-consciousness when he moves from being-in itself to being-for-itself. In this process the being acknowledges and recognizes itself. According to Fanon, this recognition is lacking in the relationship between the white master and the black bondsman. The white man accepted the black when he abolished slavery, but no true emancipation has taken place since the black did not emancipate himself: “Historically, the Negro steeped in the inessentiality of servitude was set free by his master. He did not fight for his freedom”. (Fanon Frantz, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1952), p-219, quoted in Renate Zahar, Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), p-6).

As long as the Negro has not worked for his own freedom, he will continue imitating his white master; as long as his fixation to the white man exists, he cannot turn freely towards the world. The reciprocal relation between the white and the black man is missing because no struggle has taken place between them. The blacks know nothing of the cost of freedom, for he has not fought for it. (Fanon Frantz, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1952), p-219.)

Thus we see that Fanon tries of understand the real mechanism of alienation and tries to arrive at praxis-oriented political intentions. The colonial situation is marked by two antagonistic poles: the colonizer and the colonized. The prosperity and privileges of the former are directly based on the exploitation and pauperization of
the other. In order to maintain this condition the colonizers constantly reproduce the act of oppression. According to Fanon,

“it is the settler who has brought the native into existence and who perpetuates his existence. The settler owes the fact of his very existence, that is to say his property, to the colonial system.” (Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p-30).

**THE IDEOLOGY OF RACISM**

The colonial situation is marked by an important characteristic feature of racism, which underpins ideologically the division of society into ‘human beings’ and ‘natives’ caused by the colonial process of production. The privileged one makes himself a man by freely exercising his rights; on the other hand, ‘the other’ is denied of all rights and is condemned to misery, hunger ignorance and reduced to subhuman status. (Zahar, Renate. *Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), p-19) Racism endows the colonial system with cohesion. By reducing the native to a natural object, a chattel, it enables the European to cleave to the ideals of Western democracy while at the same time exploiting the natives in the most inhuman fashion. It is the terror and exploitation which dehumanizes the natives, and the exploiter uses this dehumanization as a pretext to step up his exploitation.
The exploitation of the natives is carried out in a systematic manner. The exploitation has its limit in the colonial system itself. The oppression must not lead to the negation of the colonized, to his physical annihilation, since such a state of affairs would also imply the negation of the colonizer. He denies the colonized with all his strength but at the same time the existence of his victim is indispensable to the continuance of his own being. If the colonizer pushes too far the colonized will disappear and this would mean that the whole of colonization including the colonizer would disappear with him. The privileges and the profit of the colonizer depend on the misery and the exploitation of the colonized. In the colonial countries, the higher the standard of living of the colonizers, the lower is that of the colonized; the more deeply he breathes the more the other suffocates. (Zahar, Renate. *Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), p-20)

In the colonial situation, any assimilation accompanied by the granting of equality to the natives would deprive colonial society of its very foundation. He considers the native to be an untutored savage and justifies his own actions by calling himself promoter and protector. The white man takes upon himself a moral responsibility of civilizing the black through mission activities. The racial discrimination is also perpetuated by the foreign missionary activities. The Christian missions by condemning the customs and religions of the natives as heathen and inhuman, they bolstered and upheld colonial racism ideologically. Fanon is of the view, “the church in the colonies is the white people’s church, the foreigner’s church. She does
not call the native to God’s ways but to the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor.” (Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p-42.)

**THE PSYCHOLOGY OF OPPRESSION**

In the colonial countries, the native becomes a victim of oppression only when s/he internalizes the colonized design as perpetuated by the colonizer. In social psychology this can be explained with the help of distinction between out-group and in-group. Usually the out-group which becomes the object of prejudices, eventually leading to self-hatred, is a minority. But in the case of colonialism, the repression is directed against the great majority of the population. It is practiced by a minority, which is a minority only in terms of numbers but not in a sociological and political sense. The adoption of racial stereotype by the colonized themselves is the example of the self-fulfilling prophecy.

The members of the out-group though resemble majority, surrender to the constant pressure of discrimination, both institutional and personal, and end up by actually developing the features ascribed to them by the racial stereotype. The members of the in-group see themselves confirmed in their prejudices. What began as a figment of the imagination eventually becomes a reality. In this process the colonizer fulfills ones own economic and emotional functions. Excluded from all social institutions, cut off from his own history, deprived of his own language and of all possibilities of
untrammeled self-expression, the colonized is left with only two alternatives: open revolt or withdrawal to his own traditional institutions and values, such as the family and religion.

In the process of colonialism, it is not only the colonized who experiences alienation but also the colonizers. The process which transforms the immigrant from Europe into a colonialist is also alienated from his mother-country. The dehumanization of the oppressed falls back on the oppressor, thus finally leading to his own alienation. There is a vicious circle, as the colonizer falls into the habit of seeing the colonized as a thing or treating him like an animal, he himself assumes inhuman features:

When all is said and done the colonizer must be recognized by the colonized. The bond between colonizer and colonized is thus both destructive and creative. It destroys and recreates the two partners in the colonization process as colonizer and colonized: the former is disfigured into an oppressor, and uncouth, fragmented human being, a cheat solely preoccupied with his privileges, the latter into a victim of oppression, broken in his development and accepting is own degradation.( Zahar, Renate. *Frantz Fanon: Colonialism & Alienation* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974),p-25).

Fanon in his analysis, on the colonial situation gives more importance to the psychological factors rather than considering merely the alienation caused by the economic factors as understood by Marx. In his attempt to overcome the alienation
he emphasizes the need for psychological and intellectual freedom as an important step in the emancipation process.

Another important phase in Ngugi’s career was marked by his discovery of Marxism and the works of Frantz Fanon when he was a student at Leeds University. When he arrived at Leeds to undertake graduate studies, Ngugi was having serious doubts about the liberal politics he had espoused in his early works, a politics vividly represented in the early essays collected in *Homecoming* (1972). In those essays he had argued that the moment of independence was not simply a time when African aspirations would be fulfilled, but also a point of reconciliation when the racial and class conflicts dramatized in his early works would be transcended. But in the very first few years of independence, Ngugi was discovering, as were many African writers of his generation, that both tenets were under threat: the new government seemed eager to embrace white settlers and to protect their economic interests at the expense of the peasants who had opposed them. In addition, the postcolonial regime was now dominated by those Africans who had actively fought Mau Mau, although the great nationalist like Jomo Kenyatta was now president. Among the Marxist professors and students at Leeds, Ngugi seems to have discovered a more radical method of social and cultural analysis, one that would enable him to account for the persistence of neocolonialism in the new African state.

But it was from Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963) that he was to discover the tropes that would enable him to narrate the crisis of decolonization. In his book,
one of Fanon’s key concerns was the failure of nationalism to live up to its mandate and the continued dominance of colonial institutions in the new African state. He provided a powerful and prophetic warning of a failed decolonization and its consequences on art, culture, and society:

National consciousness, instead of being the all-embracing crystallization of the innermost hopes of the whole people, instead of being the immediate and most obvious result of the mobilization of the people, will be an empty shell, a crude and fragile travesty of what it might have been. (Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, p-92)

Ngugi faithfully echoes these views of Fanon in the interview given by him to his fellow radicals at Leeds:

"He (Fanon) believes that the peasants must control the state, must be involved in the work of social and economic reconstruction. He sees the peasantry as the real revolutionary force in the Third World — if you take the example of China, you can see how relevant Fanon is to the African experience." (*Union News* (Leeds University) 18 Nov. 1966: p-7)

Ngugi also shares Fanon's contempt for the national middle class and "their shocking ways — shocking because anti-national of a traditional bourgeoisie, of a bourgeoisie which is stupidly, cynically bourgeois" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, pp-120-21). The entire chapter, "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness," is devoted to excoriating this unprincipled and shameless class in Asia and Africa which would have no qualms about setting up its country as the brothel of Europe
Fanon defines the historical mission of this class of being the intermediary, "the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant though camouflaged, which today puts on the masque of colonialism" (The Wretched of the Earth ,p-122).

In Detained Ngugi describes this "comprador bourgeoisie" as "by its very economic base, a dependent class, a parasitic class in the kupe (tick) sense . . . in essence, a mnyapala (overseer) class, a handsomely paid supervisor for the smooth operation of foreign economic interests." He comments on "its imitative culture" and quotes Fanon to explain his point. "For this class, as Franz Fanon once put it, has an extreme, incurable wish for permanent identification with the culture of the imperialist bourgeoisie."( Ngugi,Detained (London: Heinemann, 1981) p-56)

But the contempt and detestation go deeper. Ngugi first quotes with approval President Nyerere's comparison of the African regimes who dote on their neo-colonial status to a prostitute who walks with proud display of the fur coat given to her by her moneyed lover. And then he expresses his own opinion: "Actually the situation of a comprador neo-colonial ruling class is more appropriately comparable to that of a pimp who would proudly hold down his mother to be brutally raped by foreigners, and then shout in glee: look at the shining handful of dollars I have received for my efficiency and integrity, in carrying out my part of the bargain" (Union News:p-7)
This is very clearly not the Marxist view of the bourgeoisie, according to which it has to fulfill its historic role of breaking the stranglehold of feudalism and unleash the productive forces in society. It is in the course of this process that the proletariat with its historic mission to bring about revolution and establish socialism is to come into existence. But it may not be possible to achieve this objective immediately: a transition period may be necessary.

Ngugi is not clear on this point, or one could say that he refuses to concede that any role is to be played by the bourgeoisie. When asked by his interviewer Alan Marcuson in the same Leeds interview in 1966,

"... do you think that in the classical Marxist sense, there has to be a period of education under a bourgeois regime or is this only going to inculcate bourgeois values and perhaps stop the revolution?" Ngugi's reply was,

"I am not too sure about the answer to this question. I think Africa is ripe for revolution. The conditions of the peasants and workers are very bad, and they are disillusioned with their independence. Also they have experienced revolt — as I said, they were the key factor in the colonial revolt. But when, and where a revolution takes place will be determined by conditions I can't predict." (Union News: p-7)

Ngugi is, thus, relying not more on Marx but on Fanon. However, Fanon himself has been criticized for mistaking a temporary social deformation for a permanent sociological one. (Union News (Leeds University) 18 Nov. 1966: p-7.)
He provides few examples to substantiate his theory, relying almost exclusively on his Algerian experience. But he does refer to the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya and comments on the refusal of any well-known nationalist to declare his affiliation with the movement or even trying to defend the men involved in it. (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p-93).

Fanon's praise of the Mau Mau must have pleased Ngugi, for to him it is the epitome of a revolutionary movement by the peasantry as well as a conclusive proof of the peasantry's being a revolutionary class. His emphasis on certain aspects of the movement has, however, been questioned by some authorities during recent years. Ngugi has characterized the movement as revolutionary as well as socialistic. But scholars such as Frank Furedi have pointed out that though the peasants formed the rank and file of the movement, the majority of the activists came from the ranks of the more skilled farm labourers, artisans, and petty traders. The latter provided the link with Kikuyuland and the Kikuyu living in Nairobi and played the central role in spreading the movement and giving it a radical perspective. But these people were neither revolutionary nor socialist. They were, as Furedi emphasizes, talented and ambitious and resented the marginal status conferred on them by the colonial system. But if they should themselves come to power, they would not want to establish an egalitarian society. (Furedi, Frank. "The Social Composition of the Mau Mau Movement in the White Highlands," The Journal of Peasant Studies 1.4 (July 1974): p- 495)
We get an indication of their social philosophy in the structure and organization of the Land and Freedom Army in which there was a distinct tendency towards the imitation of British models. Kimathi, for instance, according to Karari Njama, a Mau Mau fighter who fought under his leadership, assumed the rank of "Field Marshall" and liked to style himself as "Sir Dedan Kimathi, Knight Commander of the African Empire." (Barnett, Donald L. and Karari Njama, *Mau Mau from Within* (New York and London: Modern Reader PapeThe River Betweenacks, 1966) p-239.)

Also, some of the religious symbolism used by the Mau Mau and as reflected in the oathing ceremonies has raised doubts in the minds of a few observers about its progressive character.

Ngugi does not seem to be disturbed by these facets of the Mau Mau movement and continues to look up to it as an authentic revolutionary force, the only hope for any worthwhile change in Kenyan society in the future. We have to treat Ngugi's views with great respect because his faith is based on his personal experience. Ngugi was born in Kikuyu land, the so-called White Highlands, which felt most intensely the impact of white settlement in Kenya. It is well known that he hails from a family which took an active part in the Mau Mau struggle and suffered grievously. Though he attended later the famous Alliance High School at Kikuyu, founded by Protestant Christian missions in alliance, his early schooling was in the Kikuyu Karing'a School at Maanguuu, which represented the more extreme wing of the Independent Schools Movement started by the Kikuyu nationalists. And in spite of his Western
education in institutions such as Makerere and Leeds, his frequent visits to and prolonged stays in Western countries such as Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, Germany, Sweden, and Denmark, he has remained a peasant in his habits and style of living. He told in downtown Nairobi that he feels lost in a city like Nairobi, and even when he was at the commanding heights of academic life in Kenya as chairman of the Department of Literature at Nairobi University, he continued to reside in his ancestral village of Gitogothi near Limuru, about eighteen miles from the university.

Ngugi's arrest on 31 December 1977, detention for a year in the Maximum Security Prison at Kamiti, and being deprived of his prestigious position at Nairobi University was a traumatic experience. It has left him bitter and disillusioned, not only with the government and the power group in Kenya but even more with those he describes in the Preface to Detained as "petty-bourgeois intellectuals at the University who hide ethnic chauvinism and their mortal terror of progressive class politics behind masks of abstract super-nationalism and bury their own inaction behind mugs of beer and empty intellectualism about conditions being not yet ripe for action" (Preface to Detained, p-xxi). "These petty bourgeois academics," according to him, "fit into the category of intellectuals once described by Karl Marx as geniuses in the ways of bourgeois stupidity" (Preface to Detained, p-xxviii).

Ngugi's disgust with his leftist colleagues has led him to look up more and more to his peasant brethren. In his Prison Diary he identifies "two dialectically opposed
traditions of Kenyan history, culture and aesthetics." One is the tradition of submissive trust, of revelling in slavery, fostered by the foreign missionary churches through their dissemination of colonial religions and cultures and adopted by the Kenyan bourgeoisie. The other is the tradition of determined and stout resistance to colonialism followed by the Kenyan peasants, which formed its most glorious expression in the Mau Mau movement. Through snapping of its links with the past, the first tradition has been the chief agent in bringing about the African's alienation, so graphically portrayed in Petals of Blood by the picture of Karega's elder brother Ndinguri adrift on a raft (Petals of Blood,p-237). This homelessness of the African will be ended when he is able to bring about a proletarian revolution, but psychologically, morally, and spiritually, it will come to an end only when he overcomes his self-contempt and embraces his own culture and tradition by a return to the ways of the ancestors as represented by characters like Nyakinyua. The past is now increasingly being looked up to (a) as an inspiration for political and social action; (b) as a guide to social organization; (c) as a life-style model.

In the course of a discussion "On Civilization" in the BBC Africa programme in July 1979, Ngugi made a distinction between physical nature and social nature and said: "Some African civilizations had not developed the conquest of nature to a very high degree; but they had developed to a high degree their control of social nature." From it we can see that by the above "social nature" he means "human relations," "human values," in which African civilization of the past was far superior to modern

In the past, Ngugi presented in the Opera of Eros and the Theng'eta ceremony organized by Nyakinyua an image of the organic, happy community that existed in Africa at one time, a community in which land was held in common and there was mutual sharing of goods; in which courage, heroism, and self-sacrifice were greatly valued; and people realized their potential for creative life in games and sports, music, song, and dance, uninhibited by the bourgeois morality of European Christianity. (Petals of Blood, p-205) But Ngugi's tone, then, was easy and relaxed. In I Will Marry When I Want and Devil on the Cross, it is bitter, tense, and contemptuous whenever he refers to the destructive work of the White Man and his Black running dogs. In Petals of Blood, there was at least one character from the bourgeoisie — the lawyer - who could feel for the country and the common man. In Devil on the Cross there is none. Gatuiria, the American educated cultural nationalist who falls in love with Wariinga, is confused and indecisive and is unable to choose between right and wrong — his father and Wariinga. And it is a measure of Ngugi's commitment to the African tradition that in Devil on the Cross he bids good-bye to the novel, a Western literary form, and returns to the narrative folk-tradition of Africa, putting on the garb of the Gicaandi Player, the Prophet of Justice.
African Marxism, founded by Frantz Fanon and Amilcar Cabral together, respectively within Algerian and Guinean revolutions, has replaced Classical Pan-Africanism as the only living philosophy of contemporary African history and political history. The historical mission of African Marxism is to defeat neocolonialism and imperialism which are running rampant in Africa today: Ngugi wa Thiong'o is the living embodiment of that mission. To revert to Du Bois for a moment: it is interesting to note that as much as Du Bois found his rendezvous with Classical Marxism unavoidable, so also the other great figures of Classical Pan-Africanism, like George Padore, C.L.R. James and Kwame Nkrumah, found it also unavoidable. Their confrontation with Classical Marxism had more to do with the entanglements of European history, however much this assisted them in their great achievement of defeating European classical colonialism.

In other words, African Marxism is a major African political philosophy emerging from the African continent, not from the Diaspora as was the case with Classical Pan-Africanism. African Marxism is a direct outcome and product of contemporary African history. Ngugi wa Thiong'o first came across it in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* during his student days at the University of Leeds in 1966: Peter Nazareth, the Ugandan Indian scholar, now resident in the United States, has recorded the impact of Fanon on Ngugi. The effect of this impact was to make Ngugi delay producing any serious creative work for a full decade. And when finally a literary work emerged, *Petals of Blood*, it was profoundly imbued with Fanonist philosophy.
In many ways, this novel is an attempt to realize Fanonism in a creative literary work; this attempt partly explains the failure of this novel as a work of the imagination. But much more fundamental is that Fanon's influence was to have a much profounder impact on Ngugi's understanding of African cultural history and on his practice of cultural politics in Africa. It should also be recalled that Ngugi was also involved in that great cultural process, which happened more concretely in South Africa and Nigeria and just pre-independence and post-independence, that is the formation of national literatures in Africa written in the European languages. The famous Kampala Conference of 1963 was a historical expression of this literary phenomenon. In many ways, however, paradoxical, ironical and bewildering, this attempt to forge a national cultures and national literatures through the medium of the European languages in the 1950s and the 1960s was expressed in three great cultural and literary reviews: Transition based in Uganda, Drum in South Africa, and Black Orpheus in Nigeria. Transition and Black Orpheus were truly continental periodicals, whereas Drum was mainly a national phenomenon. It was in the two former periodicals that the South African national literary school, the Sophiatown Renaissance writers (Drum), found a home after being exiled following the Sharpville Massacre of 1960. Likewise, Ngugi found a home in Transition, as well as Christopher Okigbo and Wole Soyinka from Nigeria.

Thus, in the 1960s there developed two parallel processes which were divergent from each other in Africa's political and cultural history: namely African Marxism
and the movement towards the formation of National Cultures and National Literatures: one expressing the class position of the proletariat and the peasantry, the other the class position of petty-bourgeois intellectuals. The historical importance of Ngugi wa Thiong'o in contemporary African cultural history, perhaps more than any intellectual, is that both these process of African Marxism and the movement towards the formation of authentic National Cultures converge in his person. This convergence has had incalculable consequences within African cultural history. In the 1960s was the confrontation between these historical forces in the historical person of Ngugi, in the 1970s the genesis, in the 1980s the consequences and the historical results are still to come: Ngugi's critical works, *Homecoming, Writers in Politics, Detained, Barrel of a Pen,* and *Decolonising the Mind* are expression of this monumental process.

It is remarkable how one of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's fundamental critical documents he has ever written, "*Mau Mau Is Coming Back: The Revolutionary Significance of 20th October 1952 Kenya Today*", a text of 1982 re-conceptualizing the structure of Kenyan national history and the metamorphosis of its cultural configurations, is heavily influenced by Fanon's formulations on the politics of neo-colonialism and on cultural politics. This document might be the most penetrative and thorough going application of Fanon's political insights within a particular African national context. Without a shadow of a doubt, a liberated and democratic Kenya will start from this text in re-interpreting Kenyan history, totally far from neocolonialist
interpretations which dominate this area. But much more central to our preoccupations today, that is, a new reading of the cultural and political legacy of Du Bois, is Ngugi's formulation of a political and cultural credo which is the consequence of the convergence mentioned above.

In *Barrel of a Pen*, Ngugi writes that the major contradiction in the third world is between national identity and imperialist domination. This to me is still the real and fundamental conflict of cultures: viz, a national patriotic culture arising out of and getting its character from the struggle against imperialism. Other contradictions, between the *The River Between* and the rural, the modern and the traditional, and between the different nationalities are secondary and they can only be properly appreciated within the context of the larger basic contradiction.

From this political credo, Ngugi was to effect and has been effecting a total reappraisal and re-evaluation of African cultural history. This reshaping of African cultural history was dialectically connected to a new cultural politics initiated by him. Among the several consequences, the following are among the noteworthy:

first, Ngugi was to argue that a truly patriotic and authentic national literature within an African context should and must be written in the African languages;

secondly, this new patriotic national literature ought to be written fundamentally from the perspective of the peasantry, in alliance with the proletariat;
thirdly, this new mode of national literatures in the African languages would make possible a historical connection to oral forms of artistic expression, which imperialism and colonialism had severely disconnected;

fourthly, in order for this patriotic national literature to find its proper cultural space, imperial white colonial settler culture and its accompanying racist literature, which had imposed itself on the national territory, should be thoroughly historically criticized together with its remnants with the aim of expelling it from the national consciousness of the young Third World nations;

fifth, for all of this to be effected, a new patriotic political leadership, totally oriented towards the people and towards socialism, should assume State power. There can be little doubt that Ngugi wa Thiong'o has very slowly and with much resistance against him effecting a Long Revolution in our cultural history in Africa.

Following Frantz Fanon, Ngugi is the first great modern poet of the African peasantry, as much as Fanon was its great political philosopher. Ngugi in this regard can be contrasted to Sembene Ousmane, the first great modern poet of the African proletariat. To be sure, Ngugi would object to such a designation, but the fact of the matter is that when Ngugi has attempted to force the poetics of African proletariat in his creative imagination, the results have been the disaster of Petals of Blood. It is perhaps the dislocation of the structure of this novel that has led the brilliant American Marxist scholar, Fredric Jameson, to politely designate Ngugi in his study
of Third World literature as being very problematical. Whenever Ngugi has put the peasantry at the center of his poetics, the fertility of his creative imagination has been unstoppable; whenever Ngugi has attempted to put the working class, well the results are there for everyone to see for themselves. In other words, Ngugi has incorporated into his historical imagination only one wing of African Marxism, the Fanonist wing.

*The Wretched of the Earth* became one of the central documents of the black liberation movement. Fanon's writings also influenced such anti-colonial writers as Kenya's Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Zimbabwe's Tsitsi Dangarembga, and Senegal's Ousmane Sembène. In contrast to Mao and orthodox Leninism, Fanon did not accept the view that the Communist party leads the revolution, but he believed that the revolutionary party grows from the struggle. As a Marxist Fanon argued that postcolonial African nations end in disaster if they simply replace their white colonial bourgeois leaders with black African bourgeoisie trained by Europeans - oppression remains under capitalistic class structure. He argues that the national bourgeoisie will be greatly helped on its way toward decadence by the Western bourgeoisies, who come to it as tourists avid for the exotic, for big game hunting, and for casinos. The national bourgeoisie organizes centers of rest and relaxation and pleasure resorts to meet the wishes of the Western bourgeoisie. Such activity is given the mane of tourism, and for the occasion will be built up as a national industry.
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.*" (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Homecoming: Essays on African Caribbean Literature, Culture and Politics* (London: Heinemann, 1972) p-xv)

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. (Ngugi, *Homecoming*, p-28)

This parallels the thinking of Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth*, yet Ngugi's review was published a year before Ngugi read Fanon at Leeds University. The theme of betrayal in modern literature often reveals the dishonest and corrosive foundations of personal and historical relationships. In Harold Pinter's *Betrayal*, Jerry and Robert, two close friends, betray their friendship as their marriages. Emma, Robert's wife, also betrays him having an affair with Jerry. All three characters avoid
discussing their betrayals and in doing so perpetuate initial betrayal between Jerry and Emma. Social alienation observed in this play is a direct cause of betrayal.

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 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' (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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.' (*Interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o, January 1964*, Dennis Duerden and Cosmo Pieterse, eds, African Writers Speaking (London: Heinemann, 1972) p-121).

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 he confessed the oath, and thus betrayed the movement. (Arab,Aberrahmane , *Politics and the Novel in Africa* (Hydra, Alger: Office des Publications Universitaires, 1982) p-297)

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

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" 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 one man (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, pp-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 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 (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-169).

Paradoxically, Mugo is a victim as well as a traitor. His poverty and ignorance lead him to his decision 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 that Kihika and the kind of action he proposes threaten Mugo's hopes of success and liberation from a life of squalor.”


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

Mugo's jealous fixation will weaken 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. 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 by the relocation of the village by colonial authorities. Dew soaks his feet, causing him to tremble uncontrollably. Resting, wind blows "dust" and "rubbish" in his face. All of these events seem to foreshadow the 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 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 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? (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-171).
The thoughts of reward and renewed life with 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 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 (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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" (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*,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, baThe River Betweened-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? (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-149).

A confrontation the following day with Mugo, nearly results in Mumbi's death as Mugo madly attempts to her. When he confesses to her she is not able to seek revenge: "... she did not want anybody to die or come to her because of her brother" (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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 ....


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 white man. And this thing has eaten into my life all these years' (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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 1955-55 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. (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Detained*: p-90)

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. (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) p-168.)
The image of Kihika's Christ-like martyrdom 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 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. (Ngugi, *Homecoming*, p-34)

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

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. (Nazareth, *An African View of Literature*. (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1974,p-131) 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 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 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 him to accept the value of an "individual's" honesty than the collective power of the oath and tribe. Despite Kihika's rejection of the ideological support for 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. 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. (Sharma, pp-169-70)

Yet this symbol is not without its contradictions. Kihika's leadership lacks a firm ideology. His 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 (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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 of the popular will of the masses. (Cook and Okenimkpe, *Ngugi wa Thiong'o: An Exploration His Writings*, pp-233,238.)
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 (Maughan-Brown p-240.)

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" (Ngugi, A Grain of Wheat, p-100).

If Kihika is guilty of betraying "the movement through his arrogance and by his undisciplined recruitment of Mugo, these weaknesses 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.

>(Fanon, Wretched of the Earth, p-117)

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. Those who sought to collaborate openly with the colonial administration, such as Karanja, were ostracized and eventually exiled from their communities. 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 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 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 loffered their naked bodies to him; even some of the most respectable come him by night (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-182).

Palmer suggests that Karanja's 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. (Palmer, *An Introduction to the Novel*, p-29)

In the world of his own village Karanja is both hated and held in contempt for his role as an intermediary for 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 Karanja:

A 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 (Ngugi, A Grain of Wheat, p-35).

He is afraid to ask the Thompson's about their 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, 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 (Ngugi, A Grain of Wheat, p-36).

Karanja's alienation and later his betrayal 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. Karanja feels so dependent on the established power of the Thompsons cannot conceive of a life separate from them. In this way, Karanja is a victim of colonialism which both his community and his individual psyche. Karanja's oppression complete once he has divorced himself from
his. His self-betrayal is that of a victim. As Fanon pointed out, peasants cannot relinquish control of land without giving 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 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.

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 people comes to no good end' (Ngugi, A Grain of Wheat, pp-195-196).

Ironically, his survival is ensured by the confession of another traitor, Mugo. During Independence Day, the arrival two captioned buses, "Narrow Escape" and "Lucky 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 General R. called for the traitor to go to the platform" (Ngugi, A Grain of Wheat , p-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 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? (Ngugi, A Grain of Wheat , p-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" 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. (Robson, C.B. Ngugi wa Thiong'o London: MacMillan, 1979. p-56.)

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 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 train which painfully reminds Karanja of another failure, his race with Gikonyo to Rung'ei station. The "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
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 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 betrayal of the oath community. His choices of others: Firstly, faster runner, Karanja, to the liberation struggle, but his weakens his role in both family and or options will be guided the fate. Mumbi chooses him as a lover. 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. 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 (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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. 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 the 'confession of the Judas, Mugo will be awaken from his naïve reticence. Earlier, he attempts to find happiness by emulating the petit-bourgeoisie practices of Indian traders, by hoarding corn and beans, and by overcharging to increase profit margins. In some respects then, he too is a traitor 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-man who has attained wealth and position, forgetting the thousands of others labour and starve, day in, day out, without even improving their material lot. This moral so readily administered seemed of Gikonyo. People in Thabai said: detention camps have taught him to rule himself (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-51).
Like Mugo and Karanja, Gikonyo became a victim of 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' (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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. (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-32)

The morning of his release from Yala detention 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. I 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 t their rooms to wait for another journey the quarry...

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" 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" (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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 Mumbi, he wallows in self-pity instead. While Mumbi was salvation during internment so now she is his "betrayer":

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 pleasure from this reflection which he saw as a terrible revelation. To live and die alone was the ultimate truth (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-102).
He had chosen the same isolated path as Mugo and Karanja. Unlike them he had an opportunity for reconciliation 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 ....


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" (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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. (JanMohamed, pp-219-220).

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 by the attempted reproachment between 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 practices, and engaging in black market activities 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 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? ’( Ngugi, *Detained*, p-89)

Another problem will be whether or not Gikonyo complete the stool he imagines as a gift for Mumbi. There is 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 (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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. (Curtis, Lisa *Novels of Ngugi*, p-197)

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 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? (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, p-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, 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 facing it. As a "guardian of the tribe" Mumbi as a culture bearer for her people not only by sustaining traditional standards, but also by leading the struggle social change. (Curtis,Lisa. *Novels of Ngugi*, p-197). Other female characters will struggle in *Petals of Blood* and *Devil on the Cross*.

Both Mumbi and Kihika, brother and sister of the revolution, are victimized by the social contradictions 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 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 Mumbi's sexual betrayal of Gikonyo was one brought about by the trickery of Karanja. Gikonyo's betrayal of the unity oath 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 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 use the colonial administration as a shield. 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 (Ngugi, *A Grain of Wheat*, pp-60-61).

In *Petals of Blood*, we find Ngugi’s artistic representation of betrayal of independence movement and its authors, the nature of cost of modernity as it coincides with the emergence of a Kenyan middle class. He also thinks of the need for the creation of “a cultural liberation struggle fostered by peasants and workers” (Killam, p-96). 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 .... (Ngugi wa Thiong’o, *Writers in Politics*. London: Heinemann, 1981. p-94.)

The "social upheaval" brought to Ilmorog, a mythical village which is an archetypal representative of the exploited neo-colonial community, 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 Kenya.
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. (Cook and Okenimpke, *Ngugi wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writing*: London: Heinemann, 1983, p. 90.)

The exploration of a neo-colonial landscape as well as the contradictions of the betrayal of form the basis for discussion in this chapter. Both 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 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.
IV The completion of the destruction of the origins of a new resistance movement.

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 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 the egocentric assumptions of the questioning its ethics or seeking to reform the system." (Cook and Okenimpke, p-93.)

Ojung Ayuk has isolated this theme of neglect and called it "environmental decadence." He defines it

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

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 ...(Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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 of a ripened Kei apple makes him nauseous. He is mistakenly blamed for "shitting a mountain" near he sneezes in an old woman'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 seems to be a chief source of the betrayal of the attraction of a monied economy in Nairobi has forced the young to abandon their families. As an old woman complains 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.


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 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. (Ngara, Emmanuel. *Art and Ideology in the African Novel* (London: Heinemann, 1985) p-80.)

This fixation on Munira however negates the role of other protagonists: Wanja, Karega, Abdullah, and Nyakinyua. references to "petals of blood", including the title are associated with Munira, they are not exclusively concerned his fate. Peter Nazareth sees a connection between the petals: "various characters are linked at the core." (Nazareth, Peter. *The Second Homecoming: Multiple in Petals of "Blood*, ed., George M. Gugelberger Marxism African Literature (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1986) p-126.) Each of the main protagonists tries to keep the infected flower from growing. Munira through his stilted teaching and later 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.. (Treister, Cyril. Nairobi Times, November 6, 1978 from G.D. Killam, Introduction to Ngugi wa Thiong'o (London: Heinemann Books, 1980) p-106.)

As a metaphorical "stump" Munira is incapable of growth as a human and political figure. Evidence of this is seen from jealous punishment of Karega for having a relationship 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 by the agents of corruption and death. (Palmer, Eustace "Ngugi's *Petals of Blood*," African Literature Today, 10, (1979) :pp-153-165)

The symbolic significance of the Swamp according to Ngugi:

is that it ...p revents little flowers from reaching out into the light." (It) symbolized the way... in which the social system of capitalism acts to stifle life."( 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) :p-126).

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 neo-colonial agents such as: Chui, Kimeria, Nderi, and Mzigo. According to Brown, the poem represents: ' I . . . the colonizer's fear and loathing, born of guilt, of those whom he has

In *Petals of Blood* therefore, the neo-colonializer fears the consequences of his 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 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 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 walls and grass thatch; tarmac highways, international airports and gambling casinos versus cattle-path and gossip before sunset. Our erstwhile 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. (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-49).
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 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 (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, pp-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! (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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' (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 desperately needed to cope with the expanding Ilmorog. Passively instead, he looked with nostalgia power of Chui a former student radical who betrays his heritage by accelerating English public school at Siriani School while headmaster.

Because of his earlier twisted association with the prostitute, Amina, Munira is both repelled and attracted Wanja. Unlike most critics Jennifer Evans 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 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. (Evans, Jennifer *Mother Africa
and Heroic Whore: Female Images in Petals of Blood,* ed., Hal Wylie, Eileen
further by connecting Munira's of "the devouring woman" to Walcott's 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

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 of an old woman raising
dust and then being pursued by a "lusty young man sun." Munira's pathetic response
merely 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?" (Ngugi, *Petals
of Blood*, p-75).
Instead of "choosing" to acknowledge his ignorance and the betrayal of neo-colonialism, Munira internalizes 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-76).

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

I know what it is to carry a live wound. And I am notalking of this leg stump. Stay in Ilmorog. Let us face what you call this hole together (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 sense of ecology traces the origins of deforestation to the construction of the railway to Uganda. White colonialists 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" (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, pp-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 Nderi's betrayal of Ilmorog, "Fat Stomach" blames the "lake people" (Luo) and an Indian communist (likely Pio Gama Pinto) for the drought. Anger and frustration force women of Ilmorog to chase these opportunists out of the village.

In stark contrast to the plight of Ilmorog is the village of Kamiritho which was integrated into the capitalist as an enclave of "development" which an elaborate shopping centre and beer halls.." In one of the beer halls, Munira discovers Wanja who has reverted back to her job as a barmaid." Together with Karega, they struggle back to Ilmorog: "They returned to Ilmorog, this time driven neither by idealism nor the for a personal cure, but by the overriding necessity to escape." (Ngugi, Petals of Blood ,p-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 drought of Ilmorog.

On returning, Karega and Wanja are struck by the acceleration of the drought, which Munira cynically "is the way of the world." All three exiles are of the impoverished landscape, unable to escape its effect: "... coughing and sneezing and watching specks of dry maize whirled to the sky"( Ngugi, Petals of Blood ,pp-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 the importance of informing the M.P. of the severity drought in Ilmorog. Nyakinyua's supporting of the journey summarized the historical sacrifices 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?. . . (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, pp-155-166).

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 "Chameleon 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. (Ngugi, *Writers in Politics*, p-7)

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.


Part II *Towards Bethlehem* is more than one journey. 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 and "Insect." Structurally, "The Journey" consists of three stages for the Ilmorog community. Firstly, the hopeful physical of travelling though hostile landscape 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" and the Ilmorog 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 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 a learning environment in which to assess 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-123).

However, Abdullah would provide the spiritual unity 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 strength and purpose into the enterprise. The sun persistently hit at them and short stems of the elephant grass pricked bare souls" (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-134).

As a symbol of the seasoned anti-colonial resistance, Abdullah is able to lead the delegation 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. 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. (Cook and Okenimpke, p-95)

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 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 well 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 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.' (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 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 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 could belong to the people: so that his children could one day have enough to eat 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 (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-136).

Abdullah relives his arduous "journey" against 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' (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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 Abdullah warns of the dangers 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 (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-142).

Because of the hardships of the 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 new relationship to the ground on which they tred: 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? (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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 His estate, like many of the national bourgeoisie, well guarded by security guards and guard dogs. Instead of helping 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 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 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 (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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 (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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 later of the capitalists at the "Devil's 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... . . (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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 careful 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 an acre! ... the god grows big and fat and shines even brighter and whets appetites of his priests, for the monster has, through the priesthood, decreed only one ethical code: Greed and accumulation. (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-164)

Each member of the Ilmorog delegation grappled with 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 about black ownership of the means of production. Wanja 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 M.P.’s betrayal of the community would open their eyes to the corruption of the neo-colonial system. Formerly a "champion causes such as putting a ceiling on land ownership, nationalization of major industries, abolition of illiteracy and unemployment," Nderi had now sold his principles investments in land, connections in the tourist industry membership in "special clubs." Disguised as a "man of the people," he spoke in platitudes; unlike Kimeria he to expose his true nature. Nderi attempts to disguise 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” (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-178).

Nderi goes to Jeevanjee Gardens to meet the delegation, but his speech attracts other hungry and jobless members the proletariat. Nderi’s proposed solution, "Harambee" that 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 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, pp-182-183).

At the end of his speech in a vain attempt to divide 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 as a forum to expose the abuse of Ilmorog:
an island of underdevelopment which being sucked thin and dry was itself left standing, a grotesque image of peasant life .... (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-184).

Ilmorog's difficult journey suddenly seemed to have been worthwhile. Publicity from newspapers produced more enough food to fill the donkey cart. Publicity also attracted opportunists as well, who through their greed and to continue to betray the impoverished for their own benefit. Reverend Brown, so pious and neglectful earlier, proposed alliance of churches to research the difficulties 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 new base of economic exploitation for an ever flexible neo-economy, Nderi, like the vulture he is named after, plans "elimination" of "the lawyer" to ensure there will no further resistance to his expansionism. (Cook and Okenimpke. p-9)

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" (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 .... (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-190).

By the ninth day of imprisonment Munira demands interrogator, Inspector Godfrey. Remarks by his jailor reflect the level of political betrayal that has penetrated even lowest level of bureaucracy in jails. The jailor is concerned about the lose 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. Delameres (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-192).

Munira's reply, although despairing and cynical, identifies the dominant mood of these who suddenly realize have been victimized:
You are only a jailor. Both you and I are in prison. Well, everybody is in prison (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 "the rain had been God's response to the sacrifice ... signal(ing) the end of a year of drought", it was a false omen. Munira's view despite its tinge of fanaticism had the of hindsight:

> We went on a journe-y to the city to save Ilmorog from drought. We brought back spiritual drought from the city (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 period of communal euphoria personified by "an earth 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 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. (Stratton, Florence "Cyclical Patterns in Petals of Blood," Journal of Commonwealth Literature 15.1(1980) :pp-121-122.) For Wanja it was new opportunity 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-196).

Later Wanja and her grandmother formed the Nderi-Nyakinyua Group to work the land communally. Ilmorog's second 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-203).

Yet this idealized landscape is offset by nagging self-doubts of Karega and Abdullah. "Karega again threw his weight into teaching, to avoid answering anything (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-201).

He recounts his earlier mistreatment of 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 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 (Ngugi, Petals of Blood, p-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' (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 mind, 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-253).

For Karega, Theng'eta meant the discovery that Abdullah was the best of the community, (a) "symbol of Kenya's truest courage" (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 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? (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-240).
He also learns of the potential destruction of personal betrayal from Abdullah who identifies betrayer, Kimeria as both the seducer of Wanja and the murderer of Karega's brother. Instead of dealing with these issues he temporarily 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 markets for his exploitation of Ilmorog. Ilmorog's rebirth has ended. The cooperative 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.

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 the infrastructure of a neo-colonial state. extended metaphor for the regional disparity caused by the development of capitalist enclaves in the midst of poverty 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. Literally translated as "The Struggle Continues," Part IV represents adverse conditions the political landscape of a neo-colonial
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 the national bourgeoisie.

The opening image of the Trans-Africa is a contradictory one. One 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 and exploitation (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 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 African Safari car race, or the ever-present stream of
tankers and automobiles "squelching tar on a long trail across plains to feed a thousand arteries of and motors... . " (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p- 262 ).

Even more frightening is the distorted dream of the children who ". .. prance about the banks, trying to spell 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" (Ngugi *Petals of Blood*p-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. (Cook and Okenimpke,p-104).

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 tour of migrant and floating workers, the unemployed, the prostitutes and small traders in tin and scrap metal (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*.pp-280-81).

While Wanja and Abdullah provide the to construct a New Ilmorog, it is Nderi wa Riera and his "Fat Stomach" and "Insect" who organize the transformation by using New Ilmorog as a ploy to get re-elected. Land 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 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood* p-269).

Wanja's obsession with the profits of 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 quilt of having destroyed her only child. Thirdly, the influence 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.... (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood* p-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.(Evans, p-59)

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

In our Kenya you can make a living out of anything. Even fear. Look at 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 (Ngugi, Petals of Blood ,p-286).

Union at Theng'eta Breweries despite the intervention and Lillian's revivalist movement. Karega late Karega is not as Lisa Curtis suggests: "a militant mouthpiece whose speeches have the air of having been transcribed from agitator's pamphlets."(Curtis, p-206.) Karega may be sanctimonious and self-righteous, but that is because of youth and inexperience. He is capable of personal change 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 involvement in the trade union movement. Ilmorog after a 10 year absence, he notices evidence economic betrayal of Ilmorog: 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 the African Economic Bank Ltd" (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-302). He questions individualism to "peoples common shamba". Neither could he cynically accept Wanja's "eat or be eaten" viewpoint. Finding Abdullah, he chooses to help organize the Brewery Worker's gains political experience from his interrogation by Inspector Godfrey. Yet Karega's militant political 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 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 above individual interests. Some action had to be taken, particularly because of her union with Abdullah and her protect Joseph's continued success at Siriana. She objectively analyzes her new consciousness and exercises 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-328).

She would take revenge on the three men who exploited 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" (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-157).

The political will comes only when Wanja is politically committed to vengeance. Albrecht see 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. (Albrecht, Francoise "Blood and Fire in Petals of Blood,"Echos du Commonwealth 6(1980-1981) :p-45.)

Munira 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 "Satanic" Wanja, Munira has "chosen" as victim to punish another victim (Wanja) instead of the true betrayers nation: Chui, Kimeria, Mzigo, and Nderi.

Both "murders" of the betrayers are pre-Abdullah would have killed the three 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 (Ngugi, Petals of Blood ,p- 337).

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 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” (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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. Action in fact thwarted the revolutionary process.

Abdullah's brief introspection 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 its people of this country. I have been reading a lot about Mau Mau: I
hope that one day we shall make Karuna-hi, 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....' (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, pp-339 - 340).

Perhaps Joseph's wish, small as it is, for shrines for Kimathi and J.M. Karuiki as well as a theatre like 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 inspiration for the Kamiriithu Theatre.

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 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" (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 young worker, Akinyi tells him of worker's strike in Ilmorog as well as the role of a new guerrilla organization, WAKOMBOZI. Akinyi convinces Karega that he will be able to rejoin the political struggle. Inspired by the possibility of 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 (Ngugi, *Petals of Blood*, p-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 year in prison, from 1977 to 1978. He remarks on the irony his detention compared to that of Karega:

Many critics have pointed out the parallels between my own arrest and detention 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. (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary* (London: Heinemann, 1981) p-128.)

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 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, 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 it. Yet Abdullah is immersed in the tradition of resistance: is capable of overcoming adversity whether it be his impoverished role as street food vendor, his reassessment of his abuse of Joseph or his commitment to Wanja despite her degradation as prostitute. As an exile from his own community, Abdullah is not alone in his betrayal of his adopted community. 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 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 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. 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 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. Retreats to his shop and bar, lapsing into a world of and alienation. Wanja's marketing of sex, like the liquor Theng'eta, is a means of forgetting the anguish of 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. 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 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 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 power. Mzigo uses his position as "school-inspector" enhance his own fortunes, callously forgetting needs of Ilmorog. He sees women as willing victims 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 betrayers because they are willing to go to any lengths to preserve their right to exploit the less fortunate. He is so confident of his role within a capitalist system is willing to explain or confess his destructive capacity within neo-colonial betrayal.