

THEATRE: Ngugi and Revolution in The Trial of Dedan Kimathi

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this work is to explore The Trial of Dedan Kimathi through the lenses of revolutionary aesthetics and class stratification as a kind of socio-literary participation. The book's exploration of the notion of revolution delves deeply into topics of tyranny, exploitation, and poverty. Numerous consequences emerged from the examination of the selected text.

Research methodology: Theoretical Framework: Marxist literary theory guided the analysis of the study.

Results: This research documents European aggression, economic exploitation of Africans, taxes and forced labor, the degradation of people's humanity, a decrease in human capital, the depths of hunger and poverty, and Africans' reaction and resistance to these terrible conditions. In order to come up with a long-term solution, we need to understand and agree that Africans have been oppressed and treated cruelly in the past.

Limitations: The study is limited to the play The Trial of Dedan Kimathi.

Contribution: The Marxist philosophy has been used as a weapon of change in order to bring about revolutions. Through the medium of theater, people may be entertained, educated, and made more aware.

Keywords: Africa, Class, Kimathi, Marxism, Revolution

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1. Introduction

Except for Ethiopia, every African country has had some sort of colonial authority. From pre-colonial times to colonial times to post-colonial times, it has risen exponentially. (Dukore, 1974). In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, Ngugi and Mugo use revolutionary aesthetics to make the people in the play, as well as themselves, think about their situation and act on it.

Numerous works of literature, many of which date from the 1930s or earlier, exist in many languages and reflect revolutionary or other harsh societal conditions. Literature is intended to provide a window into the world we live in today. Wa Thiong'O (Wa Thiong'O, 1981) claims literature is more than a mechanical reflection of social reality... It shapes our attitude toward life, the daily struggles of a community, and the daily struggles of our individual souls and selves. Literature is a kind of expression that recounts or imagines events in or for society. It is used as a weapon of revolution to bring about change.

The word "revolution" comes from the Latin word "revolucio," which means "turning about." According to the *Encyclopedia Americana International* (1979, p.445), a revolution is defined as an effort, whether successful or not, to transfer power from one class or group to another in a country. As a last resort, revolution is the most radical yet essential societal choice. The revolutionary ideology

aims to awaken people's consciousness. Man's ability to comprehend, master, and shape his environment is also aided by it.

According to the [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary \(2000\)](#), a revolution is when a lot of people try to change the way a country is run. This is what the dictionary says a revolution is. *According to Merriam-Webster's* (1995, p.1), "revolution" is defined as "a kind of dramatic change in the economy, culture, and socio-political institutions, an activity or movement that aims to change the socio-economic situation of man in a big way".

Humanization versus dehumanization is seen as the crux of the revolution's dilemma. Humanization is man's preference out of the two. When people are deprived of their freedom, they are forced to make choices that have little or no impact on their lives.

Of course, there are opposing viewpoints on revolution. African artists have tried to build a revolutionary ideology that will fight colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, and capitalism, among other things.

The strategic weapons and philosophy of creative creation are employed in the process of creating. Aesthetics are a child of creativity. When it comes to aesthetics, [Encyclopedia Britannica \(1926, p. 277\)](#) defines it as "the philosophy of the science of the beauty of taste or the fine arts."

The use of aesthetics in African writing dates back to the very beginning of the profession. Soyinka, Ngugi, Hussein, Armah, and the rest of the great African writers of the 20th and 21st centuries have all produced wonderful works of art that are full of thrilling innovation ([Abubakar, 2002](#)). Both books use revolution and aesthetics to express important ideas, and they are both revolutionary works that use theater as a way to communicate. In this way, revolutionary art is very important because it helps people see the social structures that had an effect on their actions and how they were shown in art. And can capture events in both rural and urban areas to provide a unique perspective and complete picture of people's predicament ([Ordu, 2022](#)).

Writers who are devoted to their craft are spreading the word about these ideas in the hope that, in the future, people who are aware of their rights will take action. Art as a means of uplifting the oppressed is a key component of revolution (masses). What makes a piece beautiful is that it may motivate those who are oppressed to take action against their oppressors. ([Mbughuni, 1980](#)). As an example, revolutionary aesthetics requires people to be sensitive to other cultures, be culturally aware, and be good at talking about what they're saying.

2. Literature Review

Ngugi Wa Thiong'O and Micere Githae Mugo collaborated on the drama, *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, which tells the story of a young man accused of murder. The play depicts the rise of the Mau Mau in Kenya. Instead of a clash of ideologies, the drama centers on a struggle for political liberty. The drama is being staged to reclaim Kimathi's rightful position in Kenyan history. ([Etherton, 1980](#)).

Only Mugo and Ngugi's innovative drama has the political fervor to make Kimathi's life and death important to Kenyans today. Revolutionary ideas have been developed by African artists to counteract the evils of colonialism, neo-colonialism, empire, and capitalism. The two playwrights, however, have deployed strategic weapons and ideology in imaginative production.

Using the historical figure of Kimathi, Kimathi demonstrates a revolutionary dedication and battle against British colonial power. For the oppressed masses, Kimathi is a symbol of their unspoken ambition for revolution and their ability to take action as a result of it. It is claimed by [Amuta \(1989\)](#) that:

It turns out that the trial of Dedan Kimathi doesn't follow any exact historical predictions. It turns into a huge metaphor for the history of African people's fights in the past and present, as well as a vision of patriotic and progressive forces triumphing in the future.

Ngugi's art, according to critics, obviously displays the colonial element, and he presents his works from "two sides of a coin" (African and European). Ngugi, looks at both Africans and Europeans from a balanced point of view, taking into account both their flaws and their strengths ([Palmer, 1979](#)).

Wa Thiong'O's work demonstrates that he not only shows the predicament of Kenyans but also suggests solutions to these problems as a method of teaching Kenyans and Africans in general. There's no denying that his paintings are influenced by his homeland's heritage. When [Onoge \(1986\)](#) describes Wa Thiong'O, he calls him: "... a social realist who is not only aware of the social crisis but also gives a detailed diagnosis."

Some of Wa Thiong'O's literature focuses on tribalism, which he sees as a major factor in Kenya's inability to gain independence. In other words, the message is clear: only through military struggle against a common adversary and the creation of a new national consciousness can tribalism and other forms of division caused by rivalry for colonial authority be overcome. In the foreword to this work, *The Black Hermit*, he expressed his opinion on the ills of tribalism. He said: "... dwells on the evils of tribalism, the effects of cultural alienation, and the hopes of Uhuru or independence that haven't come to pass."

Because of their focus on oppression, Wa Thiong'O feels that his writings may help bring about a beneficial change in society because of their focus. He hopes that by writing in a style that appeals to the general public, he will inspire the general public to take action. He is also concerned about the effects of their daily actions and how individuals respond to society. He is a firm believer in the power of art to improve the lives of the people around him. That's according to [Cook and Okenimpe \(1983\)](#).

Some individuals are worried about their own financial security, which may lead to a desire for political power on the part of others who are already excluded. The voice, too, is attributed to Mugo. He seems to be black, impoverished, and from the working class.

The trial of one of the most prominent Mau Mau revolutionaries has inspired Wa Thiong'O and Mugo to create a strong and demanding performance. People remember him as a hero for refusing to succumb to the British empire. By pointing out the historical allusions in their work, they hope to provide their readers with an accurate picture of Kenya's pre-and post-independence history. They use their revolutionary philosophy and skills to make people more aware of the world around them.

The playwright's Marxist views and activism for the emancipation of Kenya's poor make them good candidates for the title of Kenyan literary activist. Even in this day and age, the dramatist wants to show and tell people about the injustices that were done to the Kenyan people, Kimathi, and other historical figures who were important before, during, and after colonialism.

Theoretical framework

Another theory employed in this study is the Marxist literary theory. Theories of social dynamics, including labor and peasant uprisings, intra-party strife, and conflict management, are part of this theory's scope ([Eagleton, 1966](#)). Inspired by Marx, Wa Thiong'O advocates the exploited banding together to obtain effective outcomes and guarantee that their demands are met. As soon as he states, humanity is in turn born from many hands working.

Together, because, as Gikuyu once said, a single finger is not enough. A single log can not kill a mouse or keep a fire going. Through the night, a single man, however strong, can not a large number of people can help lift a heavy object, regardless of how heavy it is ([Wa Thiong'O, 1982](#)).

As evidenced by the passage above, Marxism was evident throughout the book studied in this research. Individuals should fight for themselves instead of working for others so that they can reap the benefits of their effort, as he argues in *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* ([Hobsbawm, 2011](#)). ([Easterly,](#)

[1997](#)). As a man of the people, Dedan Kimathi has vowed never to repeat the mistakes he made in the past when he put his trust in dishonest politicians. He says it is imperative that they keep up the spirit of comradeship until the capitalist system is overturned, Akinyi, a girl who has come to visit him in prison, says.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'O and Micere Githae Mugo wrote *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* together. The play depicts the circumstances surrounding the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya. The play's issue is not one of culture, but rather one of political freedom. The play aims to reclaim Kimathi's rightful position in Kenyan history. Etherton (p.68) has the following beliefs:

Mugo and Ngugi's imaginative play" has been written with a such fervent political commitment to making Kimathi's life and death meaningful for modern Kenya as Mugo and Ngugi's imaginative play".

African artists have attempted to develop a revolutionary philosophy that opposes colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, and capitalism. The playwrights, on the other hand, have used strategic armament and philosophy to help them come up with new ideas.

Through its historical nature, Kimathi emphasizes revolutionary dedication and battles against British colonial control. The revolutionary leader, Kimathi, is the people's voice, encapsulated metaphorically by the oppressed masses' unconscious ambition and revolutionary potential ([Amuta, 1989](#)). Leadership gets a great deal of attention in every facet of life, and great and good leadership brings globalization and technological advancement to the masses ([Godson, 2021](#)).

The trial of Dedan Kimathi is a metaphor for the history of the African people's struggle through history and today, as well as a picture of how patriotic and progressive forces will win in the future.

They say Ngugi's art shows the colonial part, and that he projects his work from "two sides of a coin" (Africans and Europeans) ([Palmer, 1999](#)). Ngugi's balanced perspective considers both African and European weaknesses.

The fact that Ngugi not only depicts the plight of Kenyans but also proposes solutions to these problems as a means of educating Kenyans and Africans as a whole can be seen and recognized in all of his works. His compositions are also said to be inspired by the historical characteristics of his homeland. As a result, according to [Onoge \(1986\)](#), Ngugi is seen as:

A social realist who does not only testify to the condition of social crisis but goes on to offer a "A precise diagnosis."

Ngugi devotes a portion of his work to tribalism, which is seen as one of the elements contributing to Kenya's delayed independence. Telling people to fight together against a common enemy and build a new national identity is the only way to get rid of tribalism and other kinds of division caused by competing for colonial power.

In the foreword to this work, *The Black Hermit*, he expresses his views on the dangers of tribalism. It says on page viii that Ngugi:

He talks about how tribalism is bad, how cultural alienation hurts, and how Uhuru, or independence never came. As a writer, Ngugi is particularly concerned with themes of oppression, and he hopes that his writings will contribute to a constructive transformation in society. He writes in a way that appeals to the public, and he hopes that his writing will motivate people to take action. He's also interested in how society influences their daily routines and how individuals respond to them. He thinks that art should be utilized as a tool to elevate and improve people's living situations in society. According to [Cook and Okenimpke \(1983\)](#), "There is a concern for the economic well-being of the majority." This could turn into a vision of political power for the group that is less well-off.

Mugo is also seen as the voice of the black race, as well as the disadvantaged, and seems to speak for all Africans and blacks, women, and the oppressed.

The circumstances surrounding the prosecution of one of the legendary leaders of the Mau Mau upheavals have inspired Ngugi and Mugo to create a compelling and demanding play. They sing of this resistance hero's efforts to refuse to submit to British oppression. They write in a revolutionary tone because they aim to offer their readers a complete picture of the situation in Kenya before and after independence by pointing out historical references in their work. By using their revolutionary philosophy and potential, they enhance societal consciousness. Invariably, where there is no exploitation and freedom, there must always be the improvement of life and production ([Mahammad & Seyed, 2021](#)).

However, it is critical to note that the playwrights are Marxists committed to the liberation of Kenya's people, and it is this spirit of liberation that informs their work and qualifies them as Kenya's literary activists. These playwrights want to show and say what happened to Kenyan citizens, like Kimathi, and other important historical figures who made a difference before, during, and after colonialism. They also want to show how the European administration and control over Kenyan Africans are bad.

3. Research Methodology

This is a qualitative study. The issue of literary text and critical resources is evaluated, assessed, and interpreted using qualitative research criteria. To begin, a summary of the chosen book's analytical methodology is offered. Then, using the applied theoretical framework, critical reading is used to pick out important parts of the play and group them into sub-themes.

4. Results and Discussions

In Africa's Fight for Independence, Pre-Independent Kenya,

Numerous representatives of various European nations were in search of material gain in the early eighteenth century. They accomplished this by plundering the African continent, but the region lacked the necessary weapons to defend itself. As a result, these Europeans discovered that they were able to effortlessly infiltrate nations and amass fortunes. Africans fought invaders into their countries at first, but Europeans eventually conquered them because their weaponry was better than theirs. Following their total control of economic activity, the Europeans began to fight and argue about who should be in command of certain areas. This led Bismarck, the German emperor, to call a meeting in Berlin in 1884 or 1885. During this meeting, Africa was officially divided and ruled by the colonial powers.

In Africa's quest for independence, violence was used as a revolutionary tool to break free from the clutches of European oppressors who had confiscated their farms and rendered them landless while forcing them to work on their own land. ([Abubakar, 2002](#)).

Revolutions, especially politically-influenced ones, predate colonial domination in Africa. Africans have not been known to accept oppression and domination lying down. Before and during colonial rule, there were many uprisings in the region because people wanted new leaders and new political systems in the region.

In the year 1830, France conquered Algeria, a North African kingdom. In 1954, the National Liberation Front declared war on the British colonial authorities. In 1962, the two sides reached an agreement on a cease-fire and proclaimed independence.

Nigeria, a West African country, gained independence in 1960 after Nigerians educated in Europe and the United States formed activist organizations such as WASU (West African Students' Union) to push for independence. Other African countries were not left behind for independence, with the exception of Ethiopia, which never had a colonial authority. Our focus is on two East African nations, Kenya and Tanzania, which achieved independence by revolution. Across the globe, countless

numbers of people have been subjected to dehumanizing practices under the disguise of rulership, traditions, or culture. ([Omoniyi, 2020](#)).

Kenya was an African colony of the British Empire. Following WWI and WWII, the British government transferred tens of thousands of British servicemen to Kenya. As a result, the locals lost their land and were eventually reduced to low-wage laborers, which was one of the driving forces behind the colonial fight.

Several efforts by the people to demolish colonial power highlighted the battle against colonialism. At first, the masses formed peaceful resistance organizations such as the EAA (East African Association) led by Harry Thuku, the KCA (Kikuyu Central Association) led by Jesse Kariuki, Joseph King'ethe, James Beuttan, and others, which later evolved into the KAU (Kenyan African Union) led by Jomo Kenyatta in 1946. The imperialist circles, on the other hand, rebuffed these opposition groups with hostility and resistance. Some of these groups' leaders were detained and expelled, and some Kenyans were murdered.

Due to the failure of this strategy, the people created a culture of violent resistance, which led to the founding of the Mau Mau movement. The movement's initial goal was to educate, organize, and unify as many people as possible, and the pledge of allegiance was used to do so. It was unique because it made it clear to Kenyans how to fight back with guns, with Dedan Kimathi and Stanley Mathenge as the new leaders.

Kimathi rose to become one of the most prominent of Mau Mau's land and liberation forces' leading commanders, having supervisory responsibility over the Aberdare Forest. A state of emergency was imposed, with harsh measures being applied against Kikuyu peasants. On October 20, 1952, a state of emergency was put in place because it was wrongly thought that Jomo Kenyatta was the main leader of the Mau Mau movement.

To coordinate guerrilla actions, Kimathi established the Kenya Defense Council and relocated to the Nyandarua bush. The government used repressive measures to combat the Mau Mau. They began by outlawing KAU, oblivious to the fact that the Mau Mau is a separate movement. "Operation Anvil" was initiated in Nairobi with 25,000 military and police officers. Peasants were abused, slaughtered, or castrated. As a result, food and medical supplies for the Mau Mau troops were unable to reach them. The Mau Mau's demise was precipitated by the capture and surrender of General China. By divulging their goals and secrets, he confessed and betrayed the Mau Mau. On February 18, 1957, Kimathi was apprehended alongside Wambui, his "forest bride," and executed.

The analysis of *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*

One could think of the trial as a picture of Dedan Kimathi's heroic role in the emancipation of his people. History's most powerful force is shown in the play's main character, Dedan Kimathi, a historical figure. In order to keep the battle for liberty alive for the next generation, the playwrights re-establish Kimathi's importance in history.

The play has a prologue, a first movement, and a third movement (the final). Due to the manner adopted, the play is relevant in light of today's revolutions. History, a re-enactment of slavery's roots, and the efforts and pains of the revolutionary warriors are all covered in this prologue. It also talks about the history of the black man. Besides that, this book also talks about the Mau Mau movement, the colonial government's actions against the rebels, and Kimathi's capture and detention at Nyeri prison. As a result, all subsequent circumstances conspired to bring Kimathi to trial in Nyeri.

Themes in the *Trial of Dedan Kimathi*

In this part, we'll focus on the main themes in Ngugi Wa Thiong'O's *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, which show how colonial governance is shown in both plays.

Poverty and dehumanization

When the colonial authorities came, the *Trial of Dedan Kimathi* showed the terrible truths about poverty and dehumanization. The “boy” and “girl” fighting over leftovers under the tourist's table clearly show the effects of living in a poor country. They prowl the streets together or hang out at hotels like New Stanley, where they work as luggage handlers and pretend to be deaf and blind. It began when the “girl” departed with some coins given to them by a white visitor. A “woman” attempts to resolve their conflict. A common Kenyan's fight for survival is depicted in “Boy's” letter to “Woman,” who writes:

Boy: “We scoured every trash can... would act crippled or blind and deaf.” They would give us money if (p.16)

They say this comment shows how common and widespread poverty was for colonists at that time. Most Kenyans had to leave their homes during the Mau Mau revolution because the colonial authorities were afraid of everyone, and some areas had already been thought to be dominated by Mau Mau supporters. The “boy” also proclaims the amount of dehumanization and degradation.

Boy: Nairobi, aaa. I've wrestled dogs and cats for food in garbage cans... An Indian would discard the stale bread. We all bolted for it. (p.19)

The race for discarded food scraps is depicted here as a competitive event. Most Kenyans find it difficult to eat regularly, especially if they are a family.

Kimathi was tortured to death because he refused to betray his fellow guerillas after he was arrested. A white man who is an enemy of the African people, Kimathi, stands up against Shaw Henderson in the first trial. He says, “Shaw Henderson is a racist.”

Yes, we've always been British losers, but this is a new age. This is the start of a new fight. We fought alongside you against the Germans, Japanese, and Italians. We'll bleed for our souls, for our liberty, until you finally let us go this time. (p.34)

This is similar to the historical fact of Africans being compelled to fight in white men's battles. Most African males who are physically capable have been sent across the continent to fight for white men, but most of them have lost limbs when they come home.

Because of his role as Kimathi's judge and prosecutor and his preference for severe measures like the physical torture carried out by Waitina and Gakunia (both of whom are black), Shaw Henderson turns to brutal measures like slaps and punches when things aren't going the way he wants them to. Henderson tries to break Kimathi by tormenting him in the final stage of the trial and states that Henderson: “Right, Askari! “Remove him to the torture chamber (and at Gatotia, give him intensive treatment.” (p.56)

Henderson was an example of how the colonial government used force and torture during the Mau Mau revolt.

Exploitation and economic deprivation

One of the effects of colonialism on white men in *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* is exploitation and economic deprivation, both of which are caused by white men. Bankers and Indians are domestic abusers in *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*. They act as go-betweens between African countries and foreign investors who want to get their money from them. The Kenyan, who says nothing but nods his head, is a Kenyan peasant who, because he is illiterate and doesn't understand, accepts what the middlemen say because he doesn't know any better. As you can see, the banker tells Kimathi:

Time is a valuable commodity. I am, or rather, we are, from the banking, insurance, and industrial sectors. As you can see, Dedan, the conflict is preventing investment and financial development. (p.38)

Kimathi: “What new song is this?” Can we buy back our land from those who stole it from us? our land? Have we not bought it with streams of blood? Rivers of sweat? “ (p.45)

The treatment of the Kenyan people by the colonial authorities can be compared to Kimathi's words. Kenyans are not just poor; they are also exploited. Their estates were taken away by the British government, which gave them little or nothing in compensation. Despite the fact that the colonial administration used them to do hard work, they were not allowed to vote.

Foreign investors, the banker's primary clients, are his primary focus here. The Banker and the Indian show a lot about Kenya's economic system as a whole. Putting an end to the liberation fight would put an end to their economic and political hegemony over the people, which is a major worry for them.

To put an end to exploitation and economic suffering in Kenya, Kimathi asks a business executive, a representative of imperialism, why his people are being asked to purchase back rightfully owned goods. Kimathi asks rhetorically, a mix of annoyance and rage in her voice.

Oppression

The *Trial of Dedan Kimathi* has a strong emphasis on oppression. The drama makes use of this concept to better understand the colonial interaction between Europeans and Africans.

The colonial administration mistreated Kenyans in *the trial of Dedan Kimathi*, according to Woman. She replied "... our own food is eaten and the leftovers are thrown at us in our country, where we are entitled to the entire portion. We buy timber from our own woods and work on our own land for our oppressors' profit." (p.18)

It is clear from this statement that the colonial authorities made Kenyans submit and took advantage of and abused them at the same time. In order to make life difficult for the average person who does not have access to these goods, they frequently indulge in the practice of hoarding basic necessities. These oppressors get more money by targeting the majority.

In *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*, the oppressors include businesspeople, religious leaders, bankers, and others who work together to take advantage of the collective riches of the people. Kimathi describes the collaborators as those who:

Allow our people to remain slaves to hunger, sickness, and sadness in their own countries, while strangers eat and slumber in comfort? (p.38)

A rustic mentality permeates the personas "Boy" and "Girl." "Boy" is relentless in his pursuit and terrorization of "Girl," but she offers no opposition, encouraging "Boy" to continue his abuse. Rather than rising up in resistance, the people have been fleeing away from the colonialists like the girl.

When the machine cut off the boy's right hand and he bled to death, his father's employers didn't provide enough medical care. The boy's encounter with a woman over time brought him to self-awareness, allowing him to look at the dangerous and harsh realities of his life.

As a result of this, he has a better sense of reality in the last act. In the wake of her departure, the woman's resonant voice declares:

woman's voice: "The day you'll ask yourself... what can I do so that another such grisly circumstance... that day you'll become a man, my son." (p.22)

When he does something that goes against what the woman tells him to do, he typically feels remorseful.

Boy:"... as though she is watching me, admonishing me." I feel so ashamed" (p.11)

A revolution can only take place when there is an understanding of one's own power, which is what women accomplished by developing consciousness. Political, religious, and cultural persecution are only some of the sub-themes in this drama.

Before independence, Christianity, a religious group, was used by Kenya to keep people quiet and stop them from trying to get back their land and pride. Despite the fact that the “priest” played a big role in destabilizing the Mau Mau peasant movement, it was also a way to force Africans to give up. This is shown by how he played a big role in destabilizing the movement. Kimathi tells the priest that he is nothing more than a “pawn” on the white man's chessboard. He tells the priest, “I don't like the Christian notion of “turning the other cheek” when someone is abused or oppressed.” Kimathi: Betrayal, betrayal, prophets, seers, peculiar. I've always been dubious of individuals who preach in the face of violence with a cold piece of paper. Alternate your cheeks. Do not struggle with those who disguise themselves as butterflies. collaborators. (p.49)

The colonial overlords used politicians as a puppet shows. Because of the British government's influence on its political leaders, Kenya is “sold” to them in return. The white guys feel that oppression is a useful weapon and a successful style.

Unity and Resistance

The play *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* shows that Kimathi, the selfless leader of the Mau Mau revolution, is shown to be so in the book. He's a good organizer who knows how to inspire others to act. He takes on the persona of an ideal revolutionary. Kimathi rebuffs the colonial powers represented by Henderson, grabbing Henderson's neck in a rage and yelling, “I'm going to kill you!”

Kimathi will never sell Kenya to the British or any other breed of man-eaters now or in the years to come (p.36).

Kimathi is a staunch supporter of the Maastricht-based Mau Mau movement. When a colonial government official tried to get him to change his ways, he didn't listen, even though he was bruised and injured. He retorts:

Protect our soil. I will fight to the bitter end. Protect our people. This is what I, KimathiWa Wachiuri, swore at initiation. (p.54)

“Initiation” here refers to the process by which people join the Mau Mau movement. When it comes to the emancipation of his people, Kimathi thinks that nothing should be spared. In the fourth trial, he was scourged and carried to the torture stake like Jesus Christ was when he was crucified. What drives the plot forward is Kimathi's willingness to give his life to help liberate the people.

The girl's resistance causes a dramatic shift, while the boy, the terrorist, backs down at the same moment. The boy and woman had just had an experience. The young lady is quoted as saying: Cowards, brutes, and bullies all act in the same manner. They threaten thunder and rain if you show fear. By putting your tail in your mouth. They embarrass, I insult and harm you. Demonstrate that you are a human by struggling and fighting back, and it will be. It's their time to flee, flatter you, and try to make you their buddy. ([Wa Thiong'O & Micere, 1976, p.42](#))

If Africans want to succeed, they must understand that they must be willing to change their social situation to do so. With the resistance movement now in full swing, the people are ready to stand up to Europe's occupiers.

The paradox of liberation is that oppressed people are not united, yet they aspire to fight oppressors in order to obtain freedom. They urgently need to put their differences aside and unite against their common adversary. After overcoming their differences, both the boy and the girl joined a team to aid in the liberation of Kenya, as portrayed in the discussion between the woman and the girl. The writers convey this battle deftly in the dispute between the two protagonists. Woman: (proudly) That should be the case all the time. We who are against exploitation and tyranny shouldn't fight each other. Instead, we should give each other strength and hope until we win.

Girl: (despondently) It is hard. It is hard to see that we are weak.

Woman: United, our strength becomes the faith that moves mountains. (p.60)

The Woman, in a concluding note about the need for unity in revolution, states that:
Woman: We will keep going through this until we can truly identify our own, our true kin. (p.73-74)

Collectivism is also required to attain this objective. Everything you do is vital to the cause. Regardless of one's age or sex, maturity is shown by responding to the call. To liberate society, the play is a rallying cry for a unified front. It might be easier to think of Kimathi's ideal of unification as a national goal than a local one. He sent letters to many parts of his kingdom to try to get the support of other tribes. The character says this in the play, which is:

Kenya is one indivisible whole. The cause we fight for is larger than provinces; it shatters ethnic barriers. It is a whole people's cause. (p.46)

The play's language is also always new, with the use of simple poetry to make it understandable to the general public. Kimathi wants to make sure that their work will be a success, so he tells his followers to make a big deal about the importance of strict discipline and working together.

Our bullet represents our devotion to liberty. Our accomplishments are reflected in our publications. But... greater in stature than our finest generals, Is our cohesion and discipline strained? (p.69)

A revolution requires a level of dedication from those who take it on. Resolved and focused, Kimathi resolutely takes on his oppressors:
However, our people will never submit. Internal and external adversaries will be destroyed, and Kenya will be liberated. (p.83)

The writer shows how people who are against the revolution will either betray or threaten it by using the four trials of Dedan Kimathi to show this. When it comes to Kimathi, the real revolution must be focused and prepared to face any repercussions. Kimathi is a metaphor for the whole world, and it shows that you can't give up when things get tough. The play serves as a reminder to the audience that they can be set free.

5. Conclusion

By using realist ideology as an intellectual weapon for transformation, revolutions have been sparked. The use of theatre entertains, educates, and enlightens people. The content has also been utilized to illustrate the people's daily lives as well as the motivation for their rebellion. As a result, it's critical to remember that Africans turned to insurrection in response to the inhumane treatment they received from Europeans. Using the idea of reality, the writer wants to change society by promoting the rights of people who have been oppressed.

Limitation

The study is limited to one play by Ngugi, written after the post-independence of Kenya. The study recommends intellectual revolution. Hence, further study should be looking at Africans' inhumanity to Africans, and the characters' representation and class struggles.

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