

## MEMORY IN TRANSLATION: “MAU MAU” DETAINEE AND ITS SWAHILI TRANSLATION

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Enzi baada ya uhuru baadhi ya tafsiri mpya kwa Kiswahili zilianza kutokea nchini Kenya, zikiwemo tafsiri za riwaya na tawasifu za waandishi Wakenya. Makala haya yanazingatia tawasifu ya Josiah Mwangi Kariuki iitwayo “Mau Mau” Detainee (1963) inayosimulia kumbukumbu za mateso aliyoyapata mwandishi mwenyewe wakati wa miaka ya ‘hali ya hatari’, na tafsiri yake kwa Kiswahili yaani *Mau Mau Kizuizini* (1965) iliyofasiriwa na Joel Maina. Kwanza, tawasifu ya “*Mau Mau*” Detainee itachambuliwa kwa kujikita hasa katika jinsi mwandishi mwenyewe alivyobuni lugha changamano takitumia Kiingereza kinachochanganywa na Kigĩkũyũ pamoja na Kiswahili. Halafu, tafsiri yake iiwayo *Mau Mau Kizuizini* itachambuliwa kwa kina kwa ajili ya kuanza kufafanua jinsi na kwa mbinu gani mfasiri alivyokabiliana na vipengele vya pekee vya matini hiyo wakati alipokuwa anatafsiri kumbukumbu hizo za ukoloni akiwa anawalenga wasomaji wa lugha pokezi.

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### Introduction

In much the same way as with Swahili creative writing, translations from foreign languages into Swahili held a great symbolic connotation in the decades after independence. During colonial times, translations into Swahili were generally produced by non-native speakers, missionaries and – mostly British – education officers (Bertoncini Zúbková et al. 2009: 31). In antithesis to that production, postcolonial translation was primarily perceived of as a re-appropriation of cultural agency on the part of East African translators, as is well exemplified by Julius Nyerere’s rendering of Shakespeare’s dramas *Julius Caesar* and *The Merchant of Venice* not as prose texts or synopses, as it had been done in colonial times, but as plays composed in a poetic Swahili (Geider 2008: 75).

This particular condition can help explain the ongoing tendency in East Africa, as remarked upon by Alamin Mazrui, to view translations as a component of the Swahili literary discourse and, in some cases, even of its corpus of modern works (2007: 123). In this way, translated texts have become deeply entrenched in local and trans-local debates in the context of the differently orientated East African nationalisms.

In this article, by focusing on Josiah Mwangi Kariuki’s autobiographical work “*Mau Mau*” Detainee (1963), and its Swahili translation by Joel Maina, entitled *Mau Mau Kizuizini* (1965), I will have a close look at post-independence Kenyan translations into Swahili. This is directly interrelated with its Tanzanian equivalent, but also shows some peculiarities linked to the particular socio-political and literary context. On the one hand, the ideological discourses of independent Kenya were articulated around, or responded to, Kenyatta’s ‘narration of the nation’, without excluding the tensions arising around the role permitted to the memory of the anti-colonial strug-

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gles. On the other hand, the status of English vis à vis Swahili in Kenya, unlike in Tanzania, was substantially in continuity with colonial times (Whiteley 1974: 45). This was a situation which stimulated a huge production of Kenyan Anglophone literature and non-fictional writings, such as autobiographies and essays, some of which were later translated into Swahili. As will be shown through the case of “*Mau Mau*” *Detainee*, where Kariuki inserts Gĩkũyũ and Swahili into the text, the process involved in the creation of these English-language works by Kenyan writers may be understood as a form of translation – in the sense of an intercultural and multilingual practice, as it has been expressed by Bassnett & Trivedi (1999: 2) and Bandia (2014: 13).

The paper will then address interlingual translation, and take into consideration *Mau Mau Kizuzini*, the Swahili edition of Kariuki’s self-narrative of his long stay in Mau Mau’s detention camps, which perfectly condenses the interconnections between memory, language and translation in post-independence Kenya. Considering that, as observed by Lawrence Venuti (2000: 468), the translation process “begins with the very choice of a text for translation”, the respective section starts by locating this particular work within the context of the editorial politics of its publishing house. After that, the analysis will elaborate on the categories of foreignisation and domestication as formulated by Venuti (1995: 20) in order to highlight a number of editorial interventions on the paratext and some of the translator’s strategies which act together to mediate Kariuki’s remembering of the Mau Mau years to the Swahili-speaking audience.

### **The memory of the State of Emergency years in Kenyan prose**

In most of sub-Saharan Africa, post-independence nationalist ideological discourses were generally dichotomised between a ‘traditional past’ and a ‘modern present’, thus leaving scarce space for the reminiscence of the colonial experience (cf. Mudimbe & Jewsiewicki 1993: 3). In Kenya, this was particularly true with regards to the State of Emergency years. Indeed, the process of decolonisation was particularly traumatic in Kenya, primarily due to the presence of a large community of white settlers who had been given the best lands in the fertile highlands in concession. These had been defined as “vacant” by the British, but were, in reality, inhabited by a sparse, scattered, majority Gĩkũyũ, rural population. This was the origin of the land problem which, in the 1950s, escalated into the insurrection of the movement known as Mau Mau, whose militants, calling themselves the Land Freedom Army, were based in the forests (Fage 2013: 487). The State of Emergency was declared in 1952 by the British colonial government, and lasted until 1960, when the Mau Mau uprising was defeated militarily. Nevertheless, the guerrilla action was a political success because it pushed the colonial government into initiating a series of negotiations with KANU (Kenyan African National Union) which led to independence in 1963, and to the foundation of the Kenyan Re-public, with Jomo Kenyatta as president, the following year (Fage 2013: 460).

However, in as early as 1962, Kenyatta, who had indisputably profited politically from the revolt, dismissed Mau Mau as “a disease which had been eradicated, and must never be re-membered again” (Kenyatta 1968: 189). From his earliest speeches, he invited his compatriots to forgive past sufferings in the name of national unity and to put the Mau Mau struggle behind them, probably because he feared further mass agitation (Ogude 2003: 271). These solicitations, though, were not always agreed upon, even among KANU activists. This is shown by the publication, on the eve of independence, of “*Mau Mau*” *Detainee* (1963), the account by Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, a member of the party accused of being a Mau Mau, of his seven years in detention camps between 1953 and 1960. This autobiographical narrative, a first mild criticism of Kenyatta’s call for oblivion, opened the way to a massive output of fictional and non-fictional works about the Mau Mau fighters. Most of these writings were composed in English, such as Waruhiu Itote’s *Mau Mau General* (1967), Godwin Wachira’s *Ordeal in the Forest* (1968), Meja Mwangi’s *Carcase for Hounds* (1974), and James Ngũgĩ/Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s *Weep Not, Child* (1964), *The River Between* (1965), *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), *Petals of Blood* (1977), and *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* (1979, co-author Mĩcere Gĩthae Mũgo).

In post-independence Kenya, in fact, the Swahili language did not play the same central role in the development of national policies as it did in Tanzania, and English maintained a primary position in the public sector (education, information and politics). Unlike poetry, which is an essential feature of coastal Swahili culture, the ‘new’ prose in Swahili was adopted more slowly than it was in Tanzania because, during the 1960s and 1970s, the majority of writers were orientated towards Anglophone literature. An increase in the creation of Swahili prose works only became noticeable in the late 1980s/early 1990s (Wamitila 1997: 118). However, Swahili maintained a symbolic prestige in Kenya as an autochthonous language of nationalist and Pan-African mobilisation, and it is therefore not surprising that “*Mau Mau*” *Detainee* was translated into Swahili under the title *Mau Mau Kizuizini* a few years after its publication (1965). During the 1970s, the majority of Ngũgĩ’s English-language works were also translated into Swahili, including some of his above cited writings which refer to the Mau Mau years, e.g. *Usilie Mpenzi Wangu* (lit. ‘Don’t Cry My Dear’, 1971), translation of *Weep Not, Child*, and *Njia Panda* (‘Crossroads’, 1974), translation of *The River Between*, both of which were the work of John Ndeti Somba, while *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* was translated as *Mzalendo Kimathi* (‘Kimathi the Patriot’, 1978) by Raphael Kahaso (Geider 2008: 83-84).

The publication of *Mau Mau Kizuizini* introduced the Mau Mau theme into Kenyan Swahili language writing, and, in the following years, two more writers adopted Swahili in order to deal with the experience of the State of Emergency years: Peter M. Kareithi, in *Kaburi Bila Msalaba* (‘Grave without a Cross’, 1969), and Peter Ngare, in *Kikulacho Ki Nguoni Mwako* (‘That which bites you is in your clothes’, 1975). As suggested by the title of this latter work, a Swahili pro-

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erb which implies that our worst problems are often brought about by the people who are closest to us, the prose works on the Mau Mau struggle often acquired the tinge of being resistance literature with the passing years, conveying a sense of disillusionment regarding the new ruling class.

In short, many authors gave centre stage to the Mau Mau in their writings in the first decades after independence. Despite their different backgrounds and point of views, the authors of these works were all voicing the imperative of preserving the memory of the State of Emergency years and of colonial violence – a trauma which lived on in local communities, thus providing “Kenyan literature with a myth or symbol upon which much of its idea of nationhood is constructed” (Ogude 2003: 268). This myth continued to be a persistent theme during Daniel Arap Moi’s presidency and remains as such even today.

### ***“Mau Mau” Detainee (1963)***

Another crucial point in these post-independence writings was the affirmation of the right of Africans to self-representation, and a call for recognition of the dignity of a movement which had been stigmatised as a ‘barbaric’ refusal of European civilisation in the colonial and settler press (and fiction). By publishing his memories entitled *“Mau Mau” Detainee* as early as in 1963, Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, who was Kenyatta’s personal secretary from 1963 to 1969, testified to such a commitment to self-representation.

His autobiographical account was written after his release in 1960, first in Kenya and then in England. The funds for the journey to England were provided with the help of the future first vice-president, Oginga Odinga, and the UK based “Committee of African Organisations” and “Movement for Colonial Freedom”, while he was provided with a room in which to work by Margery Perham (Kariuki 1963: ix). An academic historian, colonial educator (appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1948) and public intellectual, Margery Perham is also the author of the preface to Kariuki’s book, which she tries to render accessible to British readers by cautiously balancing different points of view, i.e. acknowledging the credibility of the text, taking a distance from ‘terrorist’ actions and promoting a climate of reconciliation in Kenya.

In *“Mau Mau” Detainee*, Kariuki is clearly ‘writing back to the empire’ so to provide a narration of the Mau Mau uprising from an African perspective. This affirmation of agency begins with the naming of things, i.e. the term “Mau Mau”, which was used in a derogatory sense by British people, white settlers and loyalists to refer to the forest fighters and their supporters, but whose origins were unknown and have given rise to various theories. Kariuki gives his own explanation in his account (all the English translations of Gĩkũyũ words are quoted from the original text, also in the next pages):

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This is the real origin of the name “Mau Mau”. Kikuyu children when playing and talking together often make puns and anagrams with common words. When I was a child I would say to other children “Ithi, Ithi” instead of “Thii, Thii” (meaning “Go, Go”) and “Mau Mau” instead of “Uma, Uma”. (1963: 23)

During the ceremonies of the oath of unity, this anagram was sometimes used as a code to be shouted out by the guard if he suspected that the police or an enemy was arriving, so that the members of the group could escape. Although members did not refer to them in this way, the name ‘Mau Mau’ came to be associated with both the oath and the whole movement when the police heard these words being shouted one night just before discovering the paraphernalia of the oath. Very soon the term was also employed by loyalist leaders as a way to deride the movement as a childish thing. (Kariuki 1963: 24).

Kariuki also recounts that this oath of unity and brotherhood in the struggle for land and independence spread initially through the Gĩkũyũ districts, with no central direction, after the end of World War II, when “normal political methods through K.A.U. [Kenyan African Union] seemed to be getting nowhere”. Eventually, the movement expanded beyond this area as it became inflamed by desperation and the tough reaction of the Kenyan colonial government (1963: 23-24).

The reading of *“Mau Mau” Detainee* confirms the interpretation shared by many historians that the Mau Mau movement was a complex phenomenon, resulting as it did from the overlapping of a variety of social struggles (Gentili 1995: 266–267). It was essentially the product of the alliance of at least three disadvantaged, predominantly Gĩkũyũ groups, i.e. the marginal urban jobless, the squatters forced from the ‘White Highlands’ and the poor peasants of the native reserves. Amongst these groups, there were many ex-World War II combatants who had returned with a greater political commitment and a baggage of military techniques (Kariuki 1963: 21). Their struggle intersected to some extent, and not without ambiguity, with the nationalist activities of many, moderate and radical, leaders amongst whom there were some K.A.U. members, like Kariuki himself.

Kariuki is very precise in the account of his experience in fourteen detention camps. He narrates all the violence, the humiliation, the methods to “rehabilitate” the detainees, and their resistance through silence and other strategies. Kariuki also recalls the means that he, as an educated man, employed in order to defend the rights of the captives, for instance teaching courses and writing letters to politicians in Kenya and Britain. However, stress is placed in the autobiography on forgiveness in the name of the nationalist agenda and of Kenyatta’s leader-ship:

He is more than any political party. He does not speak of his people as detainees, loyalists, terrorists, Home Guards, Mau Mau, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Asians, Europeans. Kenyatta is greater than any Kikuyu, he is greater than any Luo or Nandi or Masai or Giriama, he is greater than any Kenyan, he is the greatest African of them all (Kariuki 1963: 179).

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Kariuki's call for pacification and his absolute trust in Kenyatta, besides the orientation of his work towards a foreign audience, are elements that probably rendered more 'tolerable' this memoir which, in divergence from Kenyatta's recommendation to Kenyans to forget the Mau Mau years, depicts the forest fighters as nation builders who deserve a place in the collective remembrance. This book, moreover, explicitly called for other autobiographies and, thus, indirectly inspired the creation of fictional works about the uprising which later transformed the Mau Mau into a symbol of fractured, unachieved nationhood:

I was never in the forest myself but I hope that the true story of the glorious fight of the armies in the Aberdares and Mount Kenya forests will be written soon by someone who was. It is a calamity that Dedan Kimathi was executed [...], but perhaps Warihiu Itote, General China, one day will do so. (1963: 35)

With the passing of the years, Kariuki progressively distanced himself from Kenyatta's leadership. Elected as a Member of Parliament in 1974, he gained huge popularity by denouncing the unfair land distribution policies of the regime and particularly for accusing Kenyatta of allocating the lion's share of state-owned Rift Valley land to his cronies rather than to the poor and those who had actually fought for Kenya's independence (Boone 2012: 85). He was assassinated on 2 March 1975 and no one has ever been punished for his murder.

### **The African writer as translator: language complexity in *"Mau Mau" Detainee***

Since the colonial period, African writers expressing themselves in European languages have found themselves in a particular condition by working with a medium which is not their primary language in daily life (Gyasi 1999: 75). This condition, which makes him/her first and foremost "a translator before being a creative artist" (Ojo-Ade 1986: 295), is shared by other authors in ex-colonial societies, thus prompting a new approach to the notion of translation in the field of post-colonial studies. This is no longer understood simply in terms of a transfer between stable, homogeneous entities, but also as the intercultural process involved in the activity of bilingual or multilingual postcolonial writers (Bassnett & Trivedi 1999: 2). Such a practice results in the creation of a hybrid, in-between language, which is defined by Paul Bandia as a "third code", analogous with Homi Bhabha's concept of a "third space" (Bandia 2014: 7). These forms of linguistic experimentation or translation naturally vary according to a number of factors, such as the historical and sociolinguistic context, the writer's level of education, the degree of closeness to the oral narrative and the indigenous language and, of course, the idiosyncratic input of the writer as an artist (Bandia 2014: 6).

From this perspective, the modern African writer composing in a Western language may be rightly regarded as a translator. His work is generally viewed in terms of transposing an indigenous language and culture into a foreign, alien language so as to subvert it and resist the symbolic

power relationships deriving from colonial history (Bandia 2014: 17). Indeed, in pre- and post-independence Africa, European languages inherited from the colonial experience are idioms which are not foreign in the same way as, for instance, Finnish would be. They are veritable traces of memory where the trauma of the colonial experience is embodied and constantly re-interpreted through African forms of appropriation and subversion of the imposed language and culture, a phenomenon which persists within ordinary, performative and literary communication (Mudimbe-Boyi 2011: 64). This picture is further complicated by the fact that multilingualism is very widespread on the African continent, especially in urban contexts, so that speakers (and writers) can often use more than one African language.

This language complexity is very clear in the Kenyan writing taken into consideration here, where the author, Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, narrates by using three languages. English is the medium of writing in *“Mau Mau” Detainee*, but the author also employs his mother tongue Gĩkũyũ and, to a lesser degree, Swahili, i.e. the coastal language which spread as a lingua franca in Kenya.

English is the primary language used by the narrating ‘I’ of this autobiography, although it was certainly not Kariuki’s main tool of daily-life communication in the camps, where the detainees were all Africans and mostly of Gĩkũyũ origin. English, though, wasn’t at all unfamiliar to the writer and, in socio-linguistic terms, he can be defined as an acrolectal speaker of the language. Indeed, in colonial (as well as in post-independence) Kenya, a basically trilingual language policy was adopted, with an ethnic ‘vernacular’ for local communication, Swahili in ordinary multiethnic situations and English for the higher functions of administration, law and education (Whiteley 1974: 45). Being highly competent in English was distinctive of that minority of Africans who had access to higher education, and Kariuki, like many other activists, employed his command of English as a means to voice the political struggles on a formal level, both in local colonial institutions and abroad. Consequently, in a similar vein to that of other Anglophone and Francophone writers of the 1960s, the author is generally orientated towards a correct use of the foreign, colonial language, something which underlines his status as an educated man. His attention to what is considered the standard form of the language is confirmed in the introduction, where he punctually thanks a mother tongue speaker, the journalist Clyde Sanger, “for assistance with the grammar” (Kariuki 1963: ix).

This language choice, moreover, was a reaction to the racial discrimination which was symbolically expressed through the broken language or simplified Swahili used indiscriminately by white settlers and colonial functionaries when talking to Kenyan Africans (Kariuki 1963: 21). By reading Kariuki’s autobiography, it appears that his competence and use of the English language was a very important aspect during his long detention experience. As at times he was the only

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educated detainee, Kariuki frequently resorted to his knowledge of English in order to defend the rights of the prisoners, for instance when interacting with British camp authorities or when writing letters of complaint to Kenyan authorities and UK politicians, which were smuggled out of the camp with the complicity of some guards (Kariuki 1963: 101).

Gĩkũyũ, which was most likely the primary medium of interpersonal communication for the detainees, is widely used by Kariuki in his memoir. The mother tongue is prevalently used didactically and “ethnographically”, and associated with various cultural referents (with the Gĩkũyũ words followed by the English translation or vice versa). The author often quotes single Gĩkũyũ terms which refer to material objects, such as *gathii* (goatskin cloak; 5), *ndua* (calabash), *kiondo* (basket; 18), to social roles, such as *muhihi* (bride; 32), or *athoni* (the term a bridegroom uses for his wife’s brothers and sisters; 54); to rituals, such as *Ndemwa Ithatu* (‘the three cuts’, name of the oath of unity to the ‘Mau Mau’ movement; 31), or *Njohi ya mwana* (‘the beer party for the child that is lost’, a ceremony for the bridegroom and the old men of the wife’s clan; 63); and to cultural concepts, such as *giteo* (respect; 74) or *gitati* (communal labour; 142). Proverbs are used frequently in the account, generally with a literal translation and a further explanation, such as in the following example, where Kariuki explains the decision taken by the detainees, when the Emergency was over, not to allow any revenge on the Home Guards (1963: 38-39):

We have a Kikuyu proverb, *Tutikuhe hiti keeri*, which is to say, “Let us not give a hyena two meals”. When a man was killed in olden times, his body was given to the hyenas. To kill his killer as well would help no one except the hyenas and so we did not do this.

The use of this language appears to stress cultural identity and, simultaneously, to communicate an African imaginary to a British audience. Furthermore, it appears that the use of the Gĩkũyũ language was perceived of by Kariuki and other activists as a fundamental tool for nationalist propaganda in Gĩkũyũ areas. For instance, Kariuki recalls the use of Gĩkũyũ news-sheets and that he had to “translate into Kikuyu the K.A.N.U. constitution and we would then distribute duplicated copies of it throughout the district” (1963: 169). In the autobiography a number of Gĩkũyũ songs which call for the liberation of the country are also quoted. Some of them are in praise of the forest fighters, such as *Rwimbo rwa Kimathi* (The song of Kimathi; *ibid.*: 121), and others pay tribute to Kenyatta, for instance *Rwimbo rwa Kapenguria* (The song of Kenyatta at Kapenguria; 145). Moreover, the Pan-African spirit of the times is exemplified by the Gĩkũyũ song *Rwimbo rwa Africa* (Song of Africa; 123), composed by Kariuki himself in honour of the independence of Ghana in 1957.

Swahili is also used throughout the text of “*Mau Mau*” *Detainee*, although to a lesser extent than Gĩkũyũ. Kariuki mainly employs single Swahili words, for instance *kipande* (registration card; Kariuki 1963: 11), *shamba* (plot for cultivation; 25), *posho* (food ration; 46), *majengo*



(‘buildings’, in this context name of Nyeri’s township; 149), and *kiboko* (whip; 152). Other examples are titles of newspapers, such as *baraza* (veranda, room for discussion; 16); nick-names given to guards or officials, like *Mapiga* (the hitter; 67), *Baba* (father; 158) or *Bwana Kali* (Mister Fierce; 164); and honorific names, like *mzee* (old, respected person), which Kenyans often give to Kenyatta (Kariuki 1963: 22). In the memoir there are also some short sentences in Swahili, like Kenyatta’s description of Lodwar’s camp as *Uhuru na Vumbi*, “Freedom and dust” (Kariuki 1963: 125), or the orders shouted to Kariuki, *Simama, simama!* (Get up, get up!), and *Amka, amka!* (Wake up, wake up!), in a dramatic scene where he is threatened, told not to write any more letters and risks being shot down (Kariuki 1963: 76). The author also once quotes a proverb in Swahili, *Usimuamini mtu ikiwa hamjamaliza gunia la chumvi pamoja* (Never trust somebody until you have finished a bag of salt together, Kariuki 1963: 109).

Moreover, the author refers from time to time to the various important roles of this language. For example, when recalling his personal and political experience before being arrested, Kariuki recounts the first time he heard a public discourse by Kenyatta and how his level of competence in Gĩkũyũ and Swahili impressed the audience: “He [Kenyatta] was mixing Kikuyu and Swahili words in a wonderful way.” (Kariuki 1963: 11). Swahili is viewed as a means for nationalist mobilisation, not only at public meetings, but also through the mass media. Kariuki comments, for instance, on the popularity of a Swahili lyric by H. Ambu Patel, a composer of Indian descent, which “beautifully expressed our national aspirations” (Kariuki 1963: 150). The importance of the Swahili press is also recurrently stressed by the author. He recalls the role of independent broadsheets such as *Habari za Kenya* (News of Kenya, where he worked as an editor, Kariuki 1963: 152) and of the official weekly *Baraza* which, together with the Anglophone press, was a precious source of information during the years spent in detention.

One of the police constables [...] arranged for two newspapers, the *East African Standard* and *Baraza*, to be sent to the camp for me under his name. One of my jobs was to translate these into Kikuyu for the other detainees. (1963: 48)

Kariuki not only read the news, but acted as an intermediary by translating from English and Swahili into Gĩkũyũ, in order to spread information to those detainees whose competence in speaking and/or reading languages other than Gĩkũyũ was limited. This circumstance confirms the importance of translation in the experience of educated Africans, not only as writers targeting a restricted readership (mostly foreign in the 1960s), but also in their role as public figures or political activists who facilitated the diffusion of knowledge in society through ordinary communication.

Finally, the author underlines more than once the function of Swahili as a means of inter-ethnic communication, not only within the camps, particularly in talking to the guards, but also with the people living around the places of detention. This is, for instance, the case of the Tur-

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kana and Samburu, who lived near the Kowop's detention site and with whom the detainees had amicable relations: "I had one particular Turkana friend called Ashakala, who was a rich and clever man and had once been in the army. His Swahili was excellent" (Kariuki 1963: 49).

Recognition of Kariuki's understanding of the value of Swahili can definitively help in drawing an overall picture of the context in which the Swahili translation of "*Mau Mau*" *Detainee* took shape.

### **Translating into Swahili after Uhuru: *Mau Mau Kizuizini* (1965)**

The translation of "*Mau Mau*" *Detainee* into Swahili was published in 1965 under the title *Mau Mau Kizuizini* ('Mau Mau in Detention') by the East African Publishing House (EAPH). The translation was done by Joel Maina, also author of *A Tourists' Guide to Everyday Swahili* (1970). EAPH was a semi-state company which had been started that very year by a group of academics who constituted the East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs, in association with the British publisher André Deutsch (Chakava 1996: 9). The period after independence was one of change in the domain of Kenyan publishing. With the exception of a few independent publishers, it had been mainly owned by non-indigenous actors, i.e. missionaries and British colonial institutions such as the East African Literature Bureau, in colonial times (Ogechi & Bosire-Ogechi 2002: 170). Besides a number of foreign publishers, such as Longman and Heinemann who set up Kenyan branches in 1965, a number of indigenous companies also emerged in the post-independence years, principally as a result of the new government's interest in education. The Jomo Kenyatta Foundation (JKF) was started in 1964 and several other new publishers, either private (such as Equatorial Publishing, Shungwaya Press and many others), or government-backed like the East African Publishing House, appeared on the scene (Ogechi & Bosire-Ogechi 2002: 171).

EAPH was expected to provide a venue for intellectuals and creative writers who might have been rejected by multinational outlets because of differences in aesthetic taste or ideological interest (Gikandi & Mwangi 2007: 151). The partnership with André Deutsch, though, did not last because of differences arising from publishing policies (Chakava 1996: 9). EAPH had two main related objectives: first, to cater more satisfactorily to the academic and general educational needs of the local communities by emphasising the value of African heritage and historical memories and, secondly, to translate key texts by African authors and a few foreign works into Swahili. Examples of Western writings translated into Swahili in those years are *The Prince*, the 16th century political treatise by the Italian author Niccolò Machiavelli (published in Swahili under the title *Mtawala*, 'The Ruler', 1968), *Animal Farm* (1945), the allegorical novella by George Orwell (*Shamba la Wanyama*, 1967) and *Born Free* (1960) by Joy Adamson (*Simba Kaishi na Wanadamu*, 1966). EAPH also published the Swahili translations of a number of contemporary

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African works. Examples of these are Cyprian Ekwensi's *An African Night Entertainment* (1962), published in Swahili under the title *Tafrija ya Usiku* (1966), and Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* (1960), translated as *Hamkani si Shwari Tena* (1972). Along with *Mau Mau Kizuizini*, the translations of two other memoirs by Kenyan leaders, namely *Facing Mount Kenya* (*Naushangilia Mlima wa Kenya*, 1966) by Jomo Kenyatta, and *Freedom and After* by Tom Mboya (*Uhuru ni Mwanzo*, 1966), are amongst the non-fictional Kenyan works translated into Swahili. With regard to Kenyan creative writing, in the 1970s EAPH published the Swahili translations of two well-known works by Kenyan authors, namely *The River between* (1965) by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (*Njia Panda*, 1974, lit. 'Crossroads') and *The Song of Lawino* (1966) by Okot p'Bitek (*Wimbo wa Lawino*, 1975).

Just like the initiative to publish educational and fictional titles in Swahili and other indigenous languages, the decision to translate foreign language texts into Swahili was meant to make more books accessible to more people in Kenya. In reality, however, in those years this was a minority stand which did not correspond to the prevailing developments in language policies during late colonial and immediately post-independence years. After being widely used in tandem with English and the other indigenous languages (which were only used in the first years) as both a subject and a medium of instruction in primary education up to the 1940s, Swahili was, in fact, progressively abandoned during the 1950s. English was endorsed as the only language of instruction and pupils were even punished for using their mother tongue or the Swahili lingua franca in the school compound (Ngũgĩ 2009: 27).

After independence and following the recommendations expressed in the 1964 Kenya Education Commission Report (the so-called "Ominde Report"), English was again declared the medium of instruction in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Kenya's indigenous languages continued to be confined to domestic communication and neglected in education. Swahili only obtained the status of a 'national language' (and not an equivalent official language) as late as in 1974. No resources were allocated for its effective teaching until the 1980s when it was acknowledged as a compulsory and examinable language (Ngũgĩ 2009: 30-32).

Therefore, in the period after Uhuru, publishing creative writing and translations in Swahili was mostly an ideological option which called for the promotion of a major African language of communication. Notwithstanding its marginalisation in formal areas, primarily due to processes of migration and urbanisation, the use of the Swahili language had nonetheless expanded in Kenya during colonial times. As it was used in the heterogeneous urban communities, it also became the language of workers' movements and had an important role in nationalist mobilisation (Karangwa 2006: 73).

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As shown in the previous section, this understanding of Swahili as an important means of communication and nationalist mobilisation in Kenya also emerges very clearly in the work considered here, Maina's Swahili translation of Kariuki's "*Mau Mau*" *Detainee*.

Apart from entrusting the main text to a translator, the process of publishing a translation also involves making a decision with regard to the 'packaging' or paratext of the book, i.e. preface, dedications, book cover, illustrations, etc. The role of the translator may or may not be crucial in the ultimate choices concerning the verbal parts of the paratext, although these have a central role in gaining readers' attention. As observed by Watts (2005: 19) with regard to francophone literature, the paratextual elements of Western-language post-colonial books carry out another important function beyond those identified by Genette (1997:2), i.e. to attract readers and to function as an explanation or guidance. This additional function can be understood as one of intralingual cultural translation, especially in the case of editions which target mostly metropolitan readerships. Thus, paratext acts as a form of instruction and mediation, sometimes suggesting allegiances, intentions or perceptions regarding sensitive issues which the text may possibly not contain (Watts 2005: 20).

These observations also apply very well to the paratext of "*Mau Mau*" *Detainee*, which helps to convey Kariuki's memory of the collective experience in British detention camps, and, more in general, of the period of Kenyan decolonisation, to a potential metropolitan audience. For instance, the use of the expression Mau Mau between quotation marks in the title may be interpreted as a form of compromise. On the one hand, it conveys the point of view of the British audience and Kenyan settlers who employed this term (more or less as a synonym for terrorist) to refer to anyone who belonged to the movement for land and freedom. On the other hand, by underlining the fact that the term is quoted from Others' discourse, it also expresses the perspective of Kenyan intellectuals who contested this derogatory application of the language.

As hinted at before, Margery Perham's long foreword to the book also clearly shows the intention to "translate" it for non-African readers, by stating the trustworthiness of this memoir and showing sympathy for the cause of Kenyan independence, while at the same time taking a distance from the actions of the guerrilla fighters and leaving space for other people's incredulity (with expressions such as "My personal impression is not enough to authenticate this record. Others will make their own decisions", Perham 1963: xii). The author also attempts to stress her impartiality by providing the readers with a list of further readings, such as government reports, historical surveys by Kenyan authors and foreign academics and two novels about the emergency years by white settlers, namely Elspeth Huxley's *A Thing to Love* (1954) and Robert Ruark's *Something of Value* (1955). Finally, even the cover of the book seems to communicate a sense of 'neutrality', given that it is a stylised representation of white barbed wire over a grey background.

Having referred to these aspects of the paratext of “*Mau Mau*” *Detainee*, it is interesting to see how these elements have been handled in the Swahili version, which mainly targets an African audience. Substantial changes can be observed in the cover to the Swahili edition. The main motif of barbed wire has been maintained, but the rest is different: the background is orange, with a stylised African man’s face stretched over the front and back of the cover. His eyes are formed of suns, which suggest the idea of longing for freedom (an image employed also in the title of Ahmadou Kourouma’s well-known novel, *Les soleils des indépendances* (‘The Suns of Independence’, 1968). On the back cover a picture of the author with a short biography has been added.

With regard to the discursive parts of the paratext, the first thing that captures one’s attention is the absence of quotation marks around the word *Mau Mau*, a sign that it had been assimilated into the ordinary lexicon of Swahili. In this sense, the Swahili title seems to convey a more ‘grass roots’ perspective, i.e. an appropriation of this colonialist term which neutralises its negative implications through everyday communication.

Another variation in the paratextual structure is the fact that, unlike the acknowledgments, the preface of the book has not been translated at all. Not only has Perham’s foreword been dropped, being considered inadequate by the new publishers, as it was essentially conceived for European readers, but it hasn’t been substituted by another preface, thus giving the reader a more immediate access to the main text. In synthesis, whereas the paratextual elements in the source edition act as a mediation or ‘translation’ of the European-language African text towards a potential foreign readership, their transfer into the Swahili version suggests an attempt to ‘re-translate’ the core text so as to localise it within the East African arena.

The central text of *Mau Mau Kizuizini* is the result of a process which could be defined, to use Paul Bandia’s words, as a sort of “double transposition” (Bandia 1993: 8). The critic has used this definition in reference to African literature which is written in a Western language and then translated into other foreign languages. However, the term may also be applied in our case because it emphasises a twofold translation activity: first, the intercultural and multi-lingual work within the source text itself, and then, the interlingual translation into a new text.

Though Bandia’s formula implies two stages of intercultural translation, in our case, where the re-encoding of the foreign-language Kenyan work is carried out into an indigenous language, the interlingual translation does not correspond to a true intercultural transfer, but rather to a socio-cultural shift aimed at promoting readership in a major African language. Consequently, this translation re-articulates the language complexity of “*Mau Mau*” *Detainee*, with Swahili working as the main language of the narration. One of the effects of this process is that the scenes where Swahili plays a central role (and is quoted literally) become more direct in the translated version, such as in the following example:

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The Seychellois first ordered us to say Ma Ma Mba: now these are meaningless syllables in Swahili so we repeated them exactly, although we knew perfectly well he was trying to make us say the Swahili for “Mau Mau is bad” – “Mau Mau mbaya.”(Kariuki 1963: 59)

*Yule Shelisheli kwanza alituambia tuseme “Ma Ma Mba”: sasa haya yalikuwa maneno yasiyokuwa na maana na tuliyarudia kamili ingawa tulijua kuwa alikuwa aki-tuambia tuseme kwa Kiswahili kuwa Mau Mau Mbaya. (Kariuki 1965: 50)*

Here, the moral resistance of the detainees is marked through their language competence as opposed to language ignorance. This means of symbolic self-defence was also performed by the detainees through some plays on language in Swahili which they used in order to turn up-side-down and creatively oppose the language used by the guards and the colonial officers when giving orders and humiliating the prisoners:

We were then told to say “Dedan Kimathi and Stanley Mathenge will be finished in the forest.”[...] Fortunately the Swahili word for “flourish” (*ishi*) is very similar to that for “finish” (*isha*) so by mumbling in deep voices we managed to disguise this one easily enough. (Kariuki 1963: 59-60)

*Baada ya hivyo, tuliambiwa kusema: “Dedan Kimathi na Stanley Mathenge wataishia msituni.” [...] Lakini bahati ni kuwa neno ishi linasikika kama isha, na kwa hivyo tukisema kwa sauti ya chini tuli-wahi kuchanganya maneno hayo mawili. (Kariuki 1965: 51)*

The particular form of interlingual intra-national re-encoding which takes place in the Swahili versions of Anglophone Kenyan works renders the general distinction between translation strategies of “foreignisation” and “domestication” as formulated by L. Venuti (1995: 20) only partially applicable. In his study, indeed, the idea of translation is basically associated with texts which are ‘foreign’ both from the linguistic and geo-cultural point of view.

Hence, the domesticating approach moves the foreign text towards the target language and culture, so that the audience will find it immediately recognisable and familiar, while the foreignising approach is practised by a closer adherence to the source text, thus introducing elements which are unfamiliar to the target readers. The foreignising strategy, in this context, results in making the work of the translator more visible.

When considering the case in point, though, that is, the translation of a text originated in the same multilingual country of the target audience, the foreign source language(s) cannot, in my view, be rightly defined as ‘unfamiliar’. So, even if Joel Maina frequently used in his work a strategy of foreignisation in the sense of preserving many traces of the foreign source languages, i.e. English and Gĩkũyũ, this practice does not really produce an effect of unfamiliarity and strangeness to the target Swahili readers, who are exposed to multilingual communication on a daily basis. In this case, consequently, the technique of foreignisation does not make the Swahili translator more perceptible.

Joel Maina has preserved in the translated text a large number of the Gĩkũyũ expressions employed by the author, especially cultural lexicon and proverbs which, as observed in the previous section, function mainly as cultural identity markers. The Swahili translation, like the source text, is thus interspersed with numerous Gĩkũyũ words, translated into the target language like in the original text, such as *gathii* (*vazi langu la ngozi/goatskin cloak*: 2), *atiiri* (*wachugaji/mentors*: 29), and Muthamaki (*jina linalopewa mtu ambaye amejionyesha kuwa kiongozi wa maumbile na mwenye hekima kwa njia ya misemo yake katika majadiliano ya faraghani/name given to someone who has proved himself a natural leader and a wise man by his contributions to public debates*: 45). Gĩkũyũ proverbs are also generally preserved in the Swahili edition, once again following the translation given in the original text. For instance, the proverb quoted in the above section is translated as follows:

Tunayo Methali ya Kikuyu inayosema: Tutikuhe hiti keeri, ambayo ni kusema "Hatutampa fisi mara mbili". Wakati mtu alipouawa hapo zamani, mwili wake ulipewa fisi. Kumwua yule aliyemwua kwa kuli-piza kisasi hakungemsaidia mtu isipokuwa fisi, na kwa hivyo hatukujilipiza kisasi. (Kariuki 1965: 34)

The Swahili translator has also retained a few English expressions which are well known in common Kenyan speech, such as "native reserves" (Kariuki 1965: 2) or "nubian gin" (Kariuki 1965: 6). In some cases, the translator opts for giving the Swahili translation of the English word, but leaves the original term in parentheses for clarity, for example *Nyanda za Juu za Weupe* (White Highlands; Kariuki 1965: 2), or *Walinzi wa Nyumbani* (Home Guards; Kariuki 1965: 32). These instances show that translating an expression into Swahili does not necessarily make it more familiar to the target readers. In this case, keeping closer to the foreign source text not only does not create an effect of strangeness, but, on the contrary, may help to denote the Swahili phrase in more familiar terms. These English expressions, true linguistic traces of colonialism, are, in fact, painfully well-known to the Swahili-speaking audience of Kenya.

Throughout the translation process, the translator of "*Mau Mau*" *Detainee* into Swahili has negotiated between the above-mentioned strategies of adherence to the foreign language text and some forms of domestication, as is common in translation practice. Joel Maina, indeed, seems to be not that much obsessed with the source text, while he is very much concerned with the target readership and orientated towards expressing what is assumed to be acceptable according to his aesthetic and ideological stand, which, in turn, cannot be totally isolated from the intellectual debates and patronage institutions surrounding him, as it has been observed by Hadjivayanis with regards to Tanzanian translators (2011: 288; 388).

The most significant examples of this attitude on the part of the translator are the frequent omissions in transferring the original text into the target language. Omissions, as remarked upon by Hadjivayanis (2011: 43), have become a regular feature in Swahili translation, either moti-

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vated by a lack of equivalence or by a form of domestication, which often displays the translator's reaction to the original text (2011: 298). In *Mau Mau Kizuizini*, apart from the absence of the preface of the original edition, which has already been remarked upon, some references to the ethnic identity of the author are not translated by Joel Maina, like in the following quotations where the Gĩkũyũ word, *guka*, and the adjective "Kikuyu" have been left out:

"Mugo Wabira, as my grandfather (*guka*) was called, owned at this time nearly four hundred sheep and goat." (Kariuki 1963: 2)

*Mugo Wabira, kama alivyoitwa babu wangu, wakati huu alikuwa na kiasi cha kondoo na mbuzi mia nne* (Kariuki 1965: 2)

"Up till the age of seven I led the normal life of a Kikuyu small boy of those days." (Kariuki 1963: 3)

*Mpaka nilipokuwa na umri wa miaka saba, niliishi maisha ya kawaida ya mtoto wa kiume wa siku hizo* (Kariuki 1965: 3)

Moreover, while in most cases the numerous Gĩkũyũ proverbs of the text are left in the original language, there are also a few examples of a Gĩkũyũ saying being domesticated and substituted with its Swahili translation, as in the following case:

"But we have a saying, *Nyina wa mundu ni ta we Ngoi wa keeri*. 'The mother of a man is like a second God.'" (Kariuki 1963: 138)

*Tunayo methali isemayo kuwa "Mama wa mtu ni kama Mungu wa pili."*(Kariuki 1965: 119)

When it seems to be redundant or replaceable, in sum, less emphasis is placed on Gĩkũyũ affiliation in the text. This appears to be a tool used by the translator to reinforce a conception of nationalism as orientated towards non-tribalism and symbolised through the shift to Swahili, a major African language of communication and a potential national language. On other occasions, the omission of a few words in the Swahili edition can remould, to a certain extent, the implications conveyed in the source text:

"Many Europeans refused to talk to educated Africans in any language but their deplorably bad Swahili." (Kariuki 1963: 21)

*Wazungu wengi walikataa kusema Kiingereza kwa Waafrika walioelimika isipokuwa kwa Kiswahili.* (Kariuki 1965: 19)

By deleting the expression "deplorably bad" in the Swahili translation, the translator has reduced the intensity of the author's criticism towards the language use of European residents in Kenya. Indeed, Kariuki interpreted as a form of racism not only the settlers' habit of refusing to speak English to educated Africans, but also the fact that they were satisfied with expressing themselves in a simplified Swahili, a poor communication tool which, as observed by Johannes Fabian in reference to Katanga, was functional in stressing vertical relationships in a colonial context



(1986: 106-111). In this way, the author sharply underlined the complex interplay between colonial memory and post-Emergency reconciliation which is expressed throughout the memoir. By making Kariuki's observation much milder in the translation of this passage, the translator, for his Swahili-language readers, has achieved the effect of re-configuring this aspect of colonial memory into less problematic and more conciliatory terms, an intervention which seems to be more in tune with Kenyatta's call for national reconciliation 'without bitterness'.

## Conclusion

In the analysis of Kariuki's autobiographical work "*Mau Mau*" *Detainee* and its Swahili translation *Mau Mau Kizuizini*, which has been presented here, the concept of translation is approached from a dual standpoint. On the one hand, translation is understood as the intercultural practice occurring in Kenyan Anglophone writing and, from this standpoint, Kariuki's creative employ of multilingualism has been analysed as a way to express the complexity of communication and identity strategies in Kenyan society.

On the other hand, the paper approaches the interlingual translation aimed at conveying Kariuki's memories of the Mau Mau years to Swahili-language readers. Some of the translation strategies employed by the translator, Joel Maina, have been investigated by problematising the concepts of foreignisation and domestication in relation to the complex socio-linguistic context of Kenya. The analysis has revealed that the foreignising strategy adopted by the Swahili translator, who preserves many traces of the source languages in the target text, does not produce an effect of unfamiliarity and strangeness to the target readers, who are accustomed to multilingual communication. Rather, this practise preserves the language and socio-cultural complexity of the Kenyan context.

The Swahili translator, at the same time, displays a certain domesticating attitude. Through the interplay of paratextual modifications, Swahilisation of Gĩkũyũ expressions and omissions, Joel Maina appears to reach out to the target Swahili-speaking audience. Furthermore, and finally, sometimes the techniques employed by the translator help to re-configure, to some extent, Kariuki's memories of the Mau Mau years, in particular by emphasising the non-tribal dimension of nationalism, and by presenting Kariuki's sharp criticism towards the European's language use in a milder, less problematic form, which appears to mitigate Kariuki's critical understanding of the complex relationship between colonial memory and post-independence nation building in Kenya.

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