

Mau Mau Women Rise

The Re-assertion of Commoning

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Las auteures assurent qu'il y a resurgence des Mau Mau au Kenya et ce sont les demandes et les actions des femmes « sans terre » qui sont à l'avant-garde. Les voix de ces femmes et de ces hommes dépossédés de leurs terres ont été étouffées en 1950 et encore en 1980 par l'élite qui réclamait de l'espace pour leurs propres récoltes. Cette vaste réclamation des terres arables a mené à un nouveau Mau Mau qui se réclame d'une idéologie féministe.

A new series of battles is being fought at the Jubilee of the anti-colonial Mau Mau war in Kenya. In the period 2000 to 2003, a new social movement has been involved in over 50 land occupations and defences. The struggle for land and freedom now involves the same social forces and many of the same individuals who were engaged in the war which brought Kenya's national independence in 1963. At the fiftieth anniversary of Mau Mau, the "jubilation"¹ participates in the worldwide groundswell which is affirming a life-centred political economy against a profit-centred death economy. The front line protagonists of the new Mau Mau are peasant and landless women. They demand communal land titles, universal, free education, and producer control of trade.

The Mau Mau of the 1950s was a composite of social forces including peasants, the landless, squatters, waged labourers, prostitutes, rural and urban women, hawkers, *ahoi* (tenants with customary land rights), those exiled from the Rift Valley, ex-WWII soldiers, and some ex-chiefs. The multi-class features of the 1950s Mau Mau along with regional distinctions in oaths and organization, indicate that there were in fact "many Mau Maus" with many origins and class aspirations. Similarly, there are many new Mau Maus. The new Mau Mau includes peasants, the landless, squatters, touts, *jua kali* (informal sector) artisans, waged labourers, prostitutes, rural and urban women, traders, refugees from the 1990s land clearances, students, retrenched workers, street children, hawkers, ex-Mau Mau elders, the unemployed, forest dwellers, pastoralists, revolutionary intellectuals, exiles, prisoners, settlement scheme tenants, professionals, hu-

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man rights and faith-based activists, and members of non-governmental organizations. This study focuses especially on the actions of landless women.

We examine resistance to enclosure in Africa using a theoretical framework called "gendered class analysis." Three "moments" in the analysis of gendered class struggle are (1) subsistence: the insurgents' program to foster a life-centred society for the well-being of all (Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies); (2) enclosure: the commodifying impacts on communities of neo-colonial "development"; of corporate globalization through structural adjustment programs; and in the 2000s, of Empire and (3) resistance: through

a fight for fertility. The "fight for fertility" is a struggle in which women contend with their own menfolk and with foreign and local capital for control over land, labour, knowledge, time, and the use of their bodies.

The study is presented in three parts. Part one examines precursors to the emergence a new Mau Mau from the 1940s to the 1990s. Part two analyses the resurgence of Mau Mau in the period 2000 to 2003. Part three addresses counterinsurgency against the new Mau Mau and concludes with a consideration of feminism in the movement.

Part One: Subsistence, Enclosure and Resistance: The 1940s to the 1990s

The British were able to enforce the eviction of over 100,000 squatters from the Rift Valley and impose the privatization of clan land in the reserves during the 1950s (MacKenzie). What African resistance had prevented the colonists from doing in the 1940s, they did at the point of a gun during the state of emergency from October 1952 to January 1960. They virtually obliterated women's customary entitlements to land by giving European title deeds to their African male "loyalist" allies. The British strengthened capitalist relations in the reserves while creating a largely female landless population that could provide cheap labour on the new African export-oriented farms and on the white settler plantations.

Again in Twenty-First Century Kenya

In the 1960s the majority of women were landless because they were married to men who got no land or because they were widows, single mothers, abandoned wives, unmarried or orphans. These women became plantation workers or moved to the forests, crown holdings or cities to squat on public land.

In the 1980s the World Bank imposed structural adjustment, a new set of enclosures (Palast). Ruling party KANU politicians grabbed public land and women who had squatted on public space found their gardens destroyed. The markets, kiosks, and residential sites of the landless were increasingly under attack as corrupt politicians sold off public spaces. In response the landless organized to defend themselves. At the same time, rural coffee wives rejected the failing commodified economy, took back the resources that their husbands sought to direct into coffee, and focused on subsistence production of crops such as bananas, maize, and tomatoes (Brownhill, Kaara and Turner). The World Bank policies of privatization, increased export crop production and "user fees" were weapons against Africans' subsistence alternatives to low waged labour.

The 1990s featured an intensification of the conflict between privatizers and the landless. State functionaries were increasingly violent in their attempts to enclose public land and to grab private land from rural subsistence producers and opponents of the dictatorship. In the 1990s a low-intensity land war directly pitted subsistence women against "male dealers" in league with government land grabbers. Elderly Mau Mau women were at the forefront of the direct action politics which broke the land grabbers' single party hold on the Kenyan state.

At Freedom Corner in a downtown Nairobi park in February 1992 a hunger strike by mothers of political prisoners provided a platform for a cross section of Kenyans to speak out against the Moi dictatorship. Many of the mothers had fought in the Mau Mau war. A brutal police attack on the old women and thousands of supporters in March 1992 set the stage for a much wider, more militant coming together of disparate popular forces. One

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elderly Mau Mau fighter, Ruth Wangari wa Thungu threw off her clothes (Gikuyu = *kutura nguo*), thereby exercising a customary form of women's power to drive off police who were aiming to shoot at the protestors. In the pitched battle she stripped naked and cursed the police and the head of state by exposing her vagina. In a 1996 interview she told us that:

There is some brief history associated with that particular action and there is a story among the Kikuyus about Wangu wa Makeri and there is one time women were being beaten and she was forced to remove her clothes and that is how women stopped being

beaten. So there is such a story among the Kikuyu.

Nonetheless on this material day at Freedom Corner, the war was so intensified that people were going to die. And that was clear, there was no mistake about that. And when I saw the situation as bad as it is, all of a sudden God brought to my attention and to my mind, the only strength that a woman has is her nakedness. And that is the last strength that a woman can use. And in any case, children are born naked and we bear children naked. So that is the focal, or rather the fundamental ground, where a woman's strength lies, and that was very clear to me.... That is how I resulted in removing my clothes....

... There were people with guns. We could not fight people with guns when we do not have guns. And many of the people were helpless.... But I was able to confront the guns with my nakedness. Because the moment I removed my clothes is when that war stopped and even the policemen could not shoot anymore, and everybody ran away....

So, my nakedness is very symbolic. And it is not only my nakedness but a woman's nakedness is symbolic. And it is a symbol of her strength. Because we give birth to children naked, which is life, and people are born naked. So it is with that symbolism that I understand the nakedness of a woman. (First Woman 29 May 1996)

The power of women over fertility was recalled in the most remote peasant households as major newspapers gave photos of this deep customary curse frontpage coverage. After the police attack the women occupied a nearby cathedral to carry on their hunger strike and vigil. The protestors remained there for one year and secured the release of 51 men from jail (First Woman 16 July 1994; 24 April 1997).

The actions of the Freedom Corner women crystallized into a new movement for the defence of the commons. Thousands joined *Mungiki* (Gikuyu = the Multitudes), *Muun-gano wa Wanavijiji* (Kiswahili = Organization of Villagers) and other organizations to resist rural and urban land clearances.² The KANU regime was on the defensive but it continued massive landgrabbing and violent enclosures which it mislabeled as "ethnic clashes." Land defences of the 1990s escalated into outright land occupations in 2000.

The new Mau Mau in Kenya has emerged in four organizational stages. The first underground period, 1975 to 1984, was characterized by the coalescence and dispersion of underground political organizing. This was followed by the democracy struggle of 1985 to 1992. By 1992, Mau Mau women elders and their allies had re-established open politics. This created the preconditions for stage three, 1993 to 1999, in which a proliferation of new organizations arose to both challenge corporate globalization and to institute a subsistence life economy. The land occupation movement of stage four, 2000 to 2003, ousted KANU from power, challenged corporate rule, expanded "commoning," and integrated Kenyan activists more closely into the global movement against capitalism and imperial war.

Part Two: The Mau Mau Resurgence, 2000 to 2003

The land occupation movement reversed enclosures, stopped land grabbing, seized and repossessed land, re-instituted free universal primary education, and curtailed export production which in effect repudiated the debt. Transnational groups within the movement pursued reparations from the British for three types of alleged criminality: death and injury due to army land mines, soldiers' rapes of pastoralist women in the vicinity of Dol Dol in the 1980s (Walter) and atrocities during the 1950s Mau Mau war (McGhie; Mulama).

As the numbers of activist organizations grew, so too did the range of actions they undertook. Organizations began to relate to one another in what became, by 2000, a multi-

centred movement. It extended abroad through a network of refugees, exiles and immigrants, such as Njoki Njoroge Njehu who headed the international 50 Years is Enough campaign in Washington D.C. Massive demonstrations against corporate globalization in the Americas, Europe and worldwide signalled to social movements in Kenya that they were not alone in their dispossession or in their resistance. Kenyans joined demonstrations in Seattle in 1999 against the World Trade Organization, in Genoa in 2001 against the Group of Eight and in South Africa at the United Nations anti-racism and sustainability conferences in 2001 and 2002. "Land for the landless" was the theme that brought Kenyans together with international activists in these fora.

By the December 2002 general election the organizations involved in these actions had gained enough strength to remove the corrupt KANU government from power. In the new coalition government were champions of the resurgent Mau Mau, including Wangari Maathai as assistant minister for the environment. She had since 1977 been organizing with rural women to assert women's customary claim to land through tree planting. Her participation in the 1992 Free-

dom Corner hunger strike was a lightning rod for the international media. Kiraitu Murungi was a lawyer for the political prisoners freed by the Freedom Corner Mau Mau women. He became minister of justice. The National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) of a dozen political parties won the 2002 election by promising justice, punishment of corruption and the return of free, universal primary education. Land invasions escalated even more after NARC's leader Mwai Kibaki took office in 2003.

Kibaki's election was a major victory for the many organizations that had for decades challenged KANU and its policies. The landless had high expectations. It was a double victory for women who had fought for the re-institution of free universal primary education. In January 2003, on the first day of the new school year, thousands of mothers and grandmothers accompanied their children to primary schools and demanded that they too be enrolled. Access to schools was won by a gendered class alliance between women, who have demanded education for girls since the 1930s, and those men who worked to achieve this goal. Second, the school fees imposed by the World Bank were the equivalent of the colonial hut and poll taxes. School fees were women's largest cash expense and the major mechanism forcing them into the commodified market. The demand for free education was analogous to an anti-tax struggle. Women's double repudiation of coffee and school fees

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was a tremendous victory over the World Bank's subversion of subsistence.

The whole of 2003 was dominated by labour rebellion, land take-overs, and opposition to foreign corporate-military intervention. In the mobilization of the multitudes, all exploitations were excoriated. Land take-backs took precedence. How was this resistance organized? Most prominent were direct, autonomous actions by the dispossessed. This self-organization emerged clearly in the April 2000 Taveta Welfare Society occupation of some 12,000 acres of an expansive plantation. Workers and squatters occupied the Greek-owned plantation seized from them by force during the colonial era. The Society's chairperson, Ruth Lelewu said land theft was

a matter of life and death. Depriving thousands of people of their birth-right is not something to play with ... The solution to the matter is for the government to buy the land and settle thousands of Taveta squatters. The community will not allow any other individual to buy the land. ("Row over Criticos land sale")

This autonomous self-organization was more emphatically evident in 2003. On January 20th, 10,000 women workers in the Athi River Export Processing Zone destroyed 16 textile factories, raided Kitengela shopping centre, looted shops, and battled contingents of anti-riot police. The strikers demanded an end to sexual exploitation and harassment, a medical scheme, transport at night, compensation for over-work, remittance of their statutory deductions to the National Social Security Fund and the National Hospital Insurance Fund, sick leave and no termination for illness ("Chaos rocks EPZ firms").

On February 7th, 300 squatters invaded 322 acres of contested land in Kilifi and sub-divided it amongst themselves. Police drove them away. A month later, 5,000 squatters returned to the same land and occupied some 2,700 acres. A spokesperson said the take-over was autonomous, with "no politician behind it." The squatters denied having leaders. They "had a committee since July 2002 to coordinate the land occupation" ("Squatter fury on MPs").

On February 10th, 500 traders stormed the Soko-Huru market in Nyeri and reconstructed their stalls on the spot where two people were shot dead in 2002 during a forced eviction. "The traders sub-divided the plots amongst themselves and prepared to start selling their wares" ("Traders storm disputed Soko-Huru").

The land occupation movement of 2003 was different from the pre-election movement in two ways. First, the

scale of occupations increased dramatically in 2003. While dozens of cases were recorded in the *Daily Nation* in the two years prior to the December 2002 election, in the post-election period there was a virtual "jubilation" of land reappropriations. There were vastly more territories, incidents and people involved. Second, the new Mau Mau moved from defence to offense. There was a qualitative shift on the part of the movement to outright occupation of new terrain. This shift had two facets. From 2000 to

2002 some resisted eviction by land grabbers while others converted from export to subsistence crops. After 2003 the landless began a massive move to expand onto new ground. Complementing this facet was a deeper transformation. The 2000 to 2002 period involved women and their allies defending subsistence social relations in gardening, transport, marketing, collective work and collective savings. The 2003 expansion of the movement impelled the parallel expansion of subsistence relations into larger territories, collectivities and networks.

Between January 21 and July 2, 2003, Kenya's *Daily Nation* reported some 30 instances of land occupation and repossession of property from land-grabbers.³ Occupiers were from

many ethnic groups and were concerned with access to many different kinds of land. Seventeen of the 30 cases were organized by school children, parents and teachers, herders, squatters, neighbourhood watch committees, traders, community groups, landless farmers, women and men, young and old. The remaining 13 cases involved the government revoking title deeds to irregularly allocated land, buildings and houses.

The reported cases encompassed more than 50,000 acres of land. In a single action the government reclaimed 300 irregularly allocated plots. By June 2003 the land occupation movement had re-appropriated the following types of property: playgrounds, settlement schemes, forests, stadiums, urban neighbourhood land, a cemetery, public farm research centres, public utility plots, markets, private ranches, game reserves, dump grounds, bus terminals and road reserves. Under re-appropriation were: school grounds, the National Cereals and Produce Board property, hospital compounds, parking areas, fire stations, council clinics, weather stations, loading zones, open air markets, public gardens, social halls, public toilets, housing estates, open spaces, parks, alms houses for the old and the poor, rivers, lakes, the grounds of courthouses and government houses. The scope of the "liberation" was all-encompassing. The new Mau Mau was taking back the whole of the society, environment and polity.

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In March 2003 the lands and settlement minister Amos Kimunya announced that all land owners were to be issued with new title deeds. He was reported in the press to have said that

second-generation title deeds would be introduced to weed out those which were issued fraudulently. The move is aimed at undoing the damage of fake title deeds which have been blamed for double registration of land.... Well-connected people in the former government, assisted by professionals in the ministry, had also used the fake titles to grab public utility land. The current titles in use were misused by the former government to obtain land fraudulently and can no longer be considered sacrosanct. ("All land owners to get new title deeds")

In Kenya, multiple competing land tenure systems are in force. The land occupation movement justified takeovers with reference to at least three potentially contradictory and overlapping "bundles of land entitlements": British statutory, customary and moral claims (Turner and Brownhill 2001b). A *Daily Nation* editorialist conceded a "fact" that landless Kenyans had long asserted: that the British colonial legal system was an inadequate tool for the resolution of conflict over land.

What about the helter-skelter which our land ownership system has become? It is extraordinary that, legally, the colonial land tenure situation is what still obtains. The post-independence governments have merely misused an already unjust law to allocate land to suit their narrowest political interests. *Almost all public land and property have been grabbed by undeserving individuals.* The web is widespread and intricate. With a myriad of social, political, economic, legal and even cultural strands, how can it be undone by an approach as legalistic as the Njonjo team took? ("Yes, probe land allocations" [emphasis added])⁴

In July 2003 after six months in power, the new government made the remarkable revelation that "[a]lmost all public land and property have been grabbed by undeserving individuals." This grabbing of public property was life-threatening to landless women. By 1985, a hundred thousand people constituted an army of urban gardeners in Nairobi. Two thirds of them were women. Almost all occupied public, open spaces of the city. This autonomous "army" cultivated thousands of gardens which fed

families, supplied markets and contributed to Nairobi's reputation as the "green city in the sun" (Robertson). When politicians and developers grabbed "almost all public land," they evicted the occupants and destroyed their subsistence livelihoods. The Nairobi pattern prevailed nationwide. This explains much of why women initiated and are the majority in the new Mau Mau.

Part Three: Counterinsurgency

The activism of a resurgent Mau Mau forced the government to disband corrupt land boards and land tribunals which for over 20 years had been instrumental in the misappropriation of land.

Corporate globalizers, the imperial U.S. regime and elements within the Kenyan state responded to the multitudes with counterinsurgency. A good cop bad cop routine was played out in Kenya through the velvet glove of "poverty alleviation reforms" and the mailed fist of "anti-terrorist" repression. Factions of the coalition government and civil service in conjunction with corporate rulers scrambled to throw some palliative reforms at the insurgents and to coopt the compliant.⁵ In the meantime, they attempted to retool the relations of global commodification.

Forty years of KANU rule had come to an end, but many "homeguard-loyalists" were still in office. They and their class allies continued to own huge farms, plantations, ranches and city properties. Class factionalism appeared early in the coalition government as male dealers worked to protect their ill-gotten wealth. While some members of parliament such as Murungi and Maathai sought social and environmental justice, others courted the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) as had KANU. These others introduced counter-insurgent strategies in the arenas of property rights, agricultural production, mining and militarism.

As political space opened elderly Mau Mau veterans called for substantive not symbolic recognition and justice. A faction in the government claimed that the demands of the Mau Mau had *already* been met. Presidential aid Dzoro announced that no land would go to the 1950s freedom fighters ("Dzoro rules out land for Mau Mau kin"). Within three months of taking office members of parliament and police warned the landless to halt invasions and allow the government to repossess public land.

The activism of a resurgent Mau Mau forced the government to disband corrupt land boards and land tribunals which for over 20 years had been instrumental in the misappropriation of land. Kibaki set up an official land theft inquiry on June 30, 2003 to ascertain "exactly who has what and where, how he/she acquired it, and whether it can be reclaimed justly" ("Yes, probe land allocations").

This inquiry cannot possibly resolve millions of individual counter-claims especially because it is limited to the British legal system, the very tool used by thieves to steal the commons. Nor is state ownership a solution. The new Mau Mau land occupiers have claimed state land and sought collective titles. Elderly Mau Mau women in *Muungano wa Wanavijiji* [Organization of Villagers] have long fought for specifically communal title deeds for residential and market sites, with equal access and tenure rights for women and men. In 1998 they asserted that any just resolution of the land crisis must take into account the principle that everyone has a right to land. In 1998 Sabina Wanjiku, a *Mungano wana Vijiji* committee member told us that:

We want a title deed, and a communal title deed. For instance if it is Mathare [urban village], we get one title deed. Because normally what happens, when the men get the title deeds, they sometimes sell. So when we get a common title deed, no one will be able to sell it. And when I die, my children will inherit, and if you die, your children will inherit. So that will be one thing, and we will be happy having one thing in common and we will continue that way, living in permanent residences. (First Woman 25 July 1998)

The Lands Ministry countered the call for collective title deeds with a promise to develop a comprehensive slum land tenure policy (“Slum dwellers merit titles”). Will the new policy build on Muungano members’ initiatives at collectivity or will it entrench individualized private property relations?⁶

Kibaki reinstated subsidies and price supports for export agriculture. The refusal by coffee wives to grow the crop was met by a new effort to reimpose commodified agricultural relations.

Despite opposition Kibaki approved “foreign aid,” titanium exploitation and oil exploration. On February 15, 2003 Kenyans took part in the 50 million strong global demonstrations against the U.S. war on Iraq. In mid 2003 the *Daily Nation* reported “rising public protests at what is seen as Washington’s bullying tactics against Kenya” (“Reject U.S. demands, leaders urge Kibaki”).

On an international level in the 2000 to 2003 period, dominant capital shifted its strategy from corporate globalization to imperialism. U.S. oil and military corporations funded a neo-conservative “coup” in Washington D.C. and the Bush regime launched a “world war without end” (White House). Unipolar imperial militarism

trumped multi-polar corporate globalization. U.S. military interventions are a response to failure and factionalism within the World Trade Organization and to the growing international coordination of popular struggles against corporate rule.

U.S. capital responded to challenges to its rule in Kenya with policies that reduce the country to the status of a vassal province in the empire. First, a made-in-the-USA anti-terrorism bill allows United States police full access to

information, persons and physical space in Kenya.⁷ American agents can enter Kenya and arrest anyone at any time for actions as innocuous as using the internet.⁸ The anti-terrorism bill is an attempt to close the openings for direct action and was hotly contested.⁹ Second, the U.S. government pressured its Kenyan counterpart to pledge never to seek prosecution of United States military personnel before the International Criminal Court. Third, the United States announced plans to build at least seven military bases in Africa, including a “forward base” in Kenya. In June 2003 one opponent commented in the *Nation* that “As the official corporate voice, the U.S. government will try to twist our Cabinet’s arm by tying the military pressure

to “aid” resumption by the IMF and the World Bank” (“A U.S. base would be suicidal”). U.S. militarization and a version of the U.S. Patriot Act are direct threats to the implementation of collective land entitlements. A central objective of imperial repression is to undermine and break up the world move towards commoning.

Conclusion: Feminism in the Mau Mau Resurgence

Each of the cycles of struggle in Kenya between 1940 and 2003 contain three approximately decade-long phases: (1) subsistence, (2) enclosure and (3) resistance. The initial cycle examined here extended from the 1940s to the 1960s. First, in the 1940s women elaborated their subsistence activities and relations. Second, when the 1950s Mau Mau war is considered from the point of view of women’s land rights, it can be seen as a period of enclosure (Kershaw). Third, during the 1960s women began a period of resistance expressed in at least three modes. Landless women squatted all kinds of public land; those landless women who could, joined women’s groups or “buying companies” to purchase farms and finally, coffee wives channelled resources into the community and the domestic economy.

By the 1970s a subsequent cycle of struggle had begun, first with women’s elaboration of an integrated subsistence political economy. Markets and transport systems

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united them and forged a closer union with pastoralists still established on the commons. Second, in the 1980s, with structural adjustment, the landless lost access to public space which was enclosed by corrupt politicians. Coffee wives found their food crops sacrificed by husbands who wanted to increase cash crop production. Third, in the 1990s landless women's resistance erupted in the Muruoto, Saba Saba and Freedom Corner insurgencies and continued in a multiplying array of community organizations and political associations.

In 2000 the multitudes moved to occupy land and defend public space from land grabbers thus beginning a third cycle with their assertion of subsistence. In 2003 the Kenyan land occupation movement was nascent, especially compared to, for example, the landless workers' movement in Brazil. Thousands of organizations involving millions of Kenyans demonstrated their intention to end to corporate theft of Kenya's fertile farmland. They did not want to be exploited on plantations or in factories. They wanted their own land for their own production. Their direct actions to take land constituted a radical step that went far beyond declarations and demonstrations with demands written on banners. Kenyans voted with their feet in a march back onto the land.

Solutions to Kenya's social, economic and environmental crises were prefigured in the direct actions taken by the new, feminist Mau Mau in Nairobi, Dol Dol and Kilifi. There, respectively, the multitudes realised in practice collective title deeds to common land, reparations for rape, and autonomous organization of the commons by villagers.

Feminism can be defined as the recognition that women are exploited and a commitment to a fight against that exploitation. In this sense, the Mau Mau resurgence is feminist in at least four ways. First, since the 1940s and before, women have fought for control over fertility. The fight for fertility continued in the 2000 to 2003 period in an expanded set of struggles. Women and men attacked those who had dispossessed them of almost all means of survival. Women's struggle in the new Mau Mau was a life and death struggle between, on the one hand; starvation, HIV/AIDS and illiteracy and on the other hand; good nutrition and health, literacy and community well-being. The Mau Mau resurgence actively engaged in repossessing "values" which especially women produce and on which they depend. These include the common life goods of nature, social services, built space, and time itself.

Second, women never surrendered in the Mau Mau war nor subsequently (Turner and Brownhill 2001a). Their demand for land has not yet been met (Walsh). They were dispossessed of customary land rights in the 1950s. In the 1980s, their subsistence commoning on family land and in public spaces was curtailed by the new enclosures of structural adjustment. The new Mau Mau has arisen in particular to challenge these second enclosures.

Third, women's demands for land *for all*, education and autonomous trade were taken up by the movement as a whole. The momentum of the land occupation movement has forced a recognition that any redistribution must go beyond the narrow legalistic framework of British law. A fundamental resolution of the struggle for "land and freedom" must take into account the moral and customary claims asserted by the subsistence forces within the new Mau Mau. Fourth, women resisted rape, beating and genital mutilation not as individuals but in common and in alliance with men. This resistance was inextricable from the struggle for land. Maasai women were able to collectively prosecute rape by British soldiers because their communities were strengthened by the transnational organizing which won them compensation for the devastation caused by land mines. Women textile workers struck and rioted against sexual exploitation. Their capacity to confront their exploiters was enhanced by land occupations which opened alternatives to waged work.

In the fight for fertility, capitalists make "male deals" with those men who regulate the exploitation of female labour necessary to realize all other aspects of fertility. The new Mau Mau is feminist in the degree to which these relations of exploitation were negated. Women's strike against cash crop production was the negation most costly to capital and its local allies. This, taken together with the four initiatives listed above, constitutes an immense gain for women in the three-way gendered class struggle to control fertility. The women and men of the Mau Mau resurgence broke male deals. Together in gendered class alliances, they began to re-invent the commons and re-assert their autonomy from capital. This is the feminist content in the resurgence of Mau Mau.

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¹The biblical concept of jubilee contains six elements: "First, jubilee happened every fifty years. Second it restored land to its original owners. Third, it canceled debt. Fourth, it freed slaves and bond servants. Fifth, it was a year of fallow. Sixth, it was a year of no work" (Linebaugh and Redicker 290).

²For a gendered critique and comparison of Mungiki and Muungano wa Wanavijiji, see Turner and Brownhill 2001b.

³In the two-year period 2000 to 2002, the *Daily Nation* reported some 20 land occupations and defences. It is estimated that the *Daily Nation* documented, in the first six months of 2003, only from one per cent to 25 per cent of the total number of strikes, uprisings, land defences and invasions. There was a six-fold increase in reported cases from approximately one to six per month.

⁴The Njonjo Commission on Land Law was set up in November 1999 by the Moi government to address matters related to land: registration, documentation, tenure and legislation. "How," the editorialist asked, "could that inquiry be trusted when it was beholden to a Government which had been the primary cause of the problem, one whose other commissions of inquiry have been but a cynical way of avoiding a solution?" ("Yes, probe land allocations").

⁵The cooptation of sections of Mungiki began in 2000. Some "leaders" were reaping private profits from Mungiki's control over *matatu* (minibus) routes. Divisions between "leaders" and ordinary members signified the move of some men into male deals with local capitalists. The involvement in 2001 of several Mungiki in the killing of rivals on *matatu* routes and in the slum community of Kariobangi caused a further division in the organization. When in 2002 Mungiki founders ran for political office on a KANU ticket, many members decamped. Part of the fall out of the cooptation of sections of Mungiki is the growing strength of other organizations to which people turned as an alternative to the discredited Mungiki.

⁶See Table, "Difference between World Bank corporate 'land reform' and popular redistributive land reform" in Turner and Brownhill (2001b).

⁷The full text of the draft anti-terrorism bill introduced to Kenya's Parliament was reprinted in the *Daily Nation* on 3 July 2003 and is available in the *Nation's* on-line edition, www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation.

⁸"The Bill creates a general climate of fear and suspicion in which the State is invested with coercive, intrusive, and intimidating powers. No area of private activity is spared. The Bill makes it criminal, for example, to surf the Internet and collect or transmit by email information that is likely [in the judgement of the U.S. and Kenyan states] to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism" ("Kenyans must reject anti-terrorism bill").

⁹As of mid 2003 U.S. military bases were planned for Kenya, Mali, Ghana, Senegal, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria ("Mystery of U.S. base plea to Kenya"; *The Economist*).

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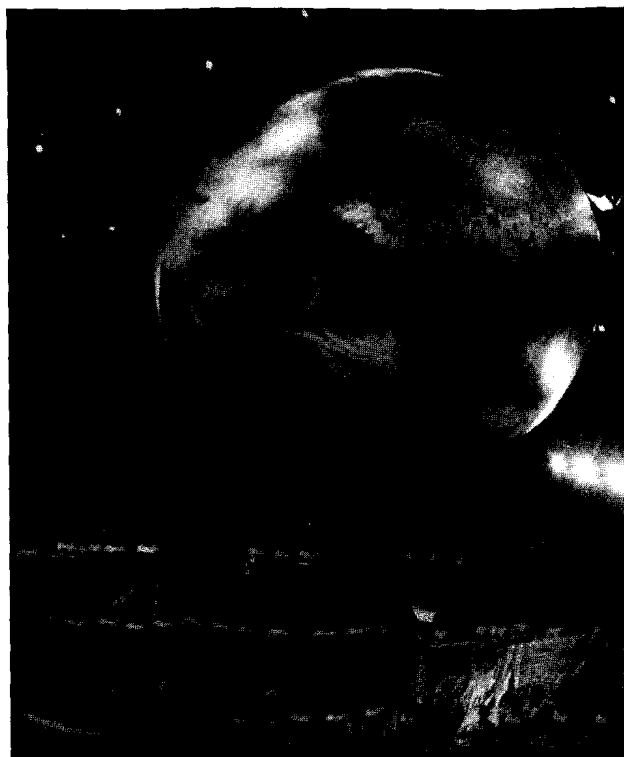
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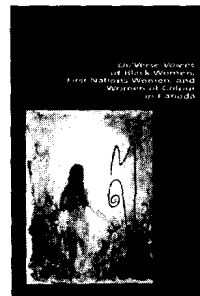
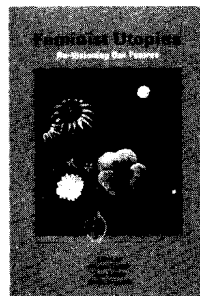
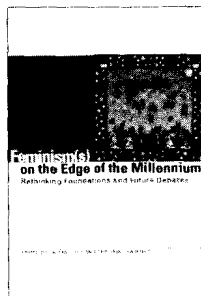
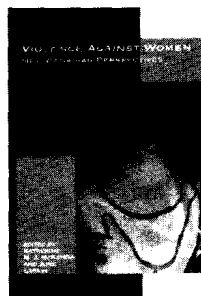
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