

David Gian Maillu (19? October 1939 -)

Books By Henry Indangasi, University of Nairobi

1. Kisalu and His Fruit Garden and Other Stories
(Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972); Nairobi;
~~Reprinted by~~ Heinemann ^{Kenya,} 1989, 1992);
~~in part as Kisalu and His Fruit Garden~~
2. Ki Kyamboi (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1972);
3. Unfit for Human Consumption (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1973);
4. My Dear Bottle (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1973);
5. Troubles (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1974);
6. After 4.30 (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1974);
~~Second Edition~~ Nairobi: Maillu Publishing
House Ltd., 1987);
7. Kujenga na Kubomoa (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1974);
Kiswahili translation of My Dear Bottle
8. Chupa, Mpenzi, (Nairobi: Combo Books, 1975);
9. The Kommon Man, Part I, II and III (Nairobi:
Combo Books, ~~1976~~ 1975-1976);
10. No! (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1976);
11. Dear Monika (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1976);
Dear Daughter (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1976); 8
12. English Punctuation (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1978);
13. English Spelling, ^{and Words Frequently Confused,} (Nairobi: Comb Books, 1978);
(Published under pseudonym, Vigad G. Mulila)
14. Kadosa (Nairobi: ^{David Maillu Publisher,} ~~Comb Books,~~ 1979); Nairobi;
~~Reprinted by~~ Maillu Publishing House, ~~198~~,
1989);
Jese Kristo (Nairobi: National Theatre Company and David Maillu Publishers, 1979);
15. Hit of Love/Wendo Ndikilo (Machakos, Kenya: David Maillu
Publishers, 1980);
16. For Mbatha and Rabeka (London and Basingstoke: ~~Nairobi,~~ Macmillan, 1980);
17. The Equatorial Assignment (London and Basingstoke: ~~Nairobi,~~ Macmillan, 1980);
18. Looking for Mother (Nairobi: Bookwise, 1981);
Kaana Ngy'a (Nairobi: Heinemann Educational Books,
1983);

name of publisher
changes

19. The Ayah (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1986); Kenya,
20. ~~Operation DXT~~ ^{Benni Kamba 009 in Operation DXT} (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1986); Reprinted in 1990.
21. Untouchable (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House Ltd., 1987);
London and Basingstoke;
22. The Thorns of life (Nairobi: Macmillan, 1988);
23. The Poor Child (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1988); Kenya,
24. Our Kind of Polygamy (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1988); Kenya,
25. Pragmatic Leadership: Evaluation of Kenya's Cultural and Political Development, Featuring Daniel Arap Moi (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1988);
26. Principles of Nyayo Philosophy (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1989);
27. My Dear Mariana/Kumya İvu (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1989);
28. Mbengo and the Princess (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, 1989);
29. How to Look for the Right Boyfriend (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1989);
30. The Black Adam and Eve (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1989);
31. P.O. Box I Love You Via My Heart (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1989);
32. Without Kiinua Mgongo (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1989);
33. Kusoma na Kuandika, Part I, II and III (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1989);
34. Anayekukeep (Nairobi: Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1990);
35. Broken Drum (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation & Maillu Publishing House, ~~1988~~, 1991);
36. The Last Hunter (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 1992);
37. Journey into Fairyland (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 1992);

More
[Handwritten scribbles]

More
[Handwritten scribbles]

38. The Lion and the Hare (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 1992);
39. The Orphan and His Goat Friend (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 1993);
40. Princess Kalala & the Ugly Bird (Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, 1993);

The Priceless Gift (Nairobi: East African Publications, 1993).

OTHER

With ^{more than} forty titles [#] to date, to his credit, and with a number forthcoming, David Gian Maillu is not only Kenya's most prolific writer, ^{but} ~~he is~~ also the favourite author of the average reader in the country. Although they did not penetrate the academic and school market ~~for reasons which we shall examine later~~, his Comb Books novels and novelettes were a phenomenal success in the 1970s. The success was ~~of course~~ a source of controversy, with the debates and arguments centering around the effect of these works on the morality of the youth. But there was no doubt that an important ^{popular} writer had arrived on Kenya's literary scene.

Maillu's first work, Kisalu and His Fruit Garden and Other Stories, was published by the East African Publishing House in 1972. Soon after, ^{he} ~~this author~~ established his own publishing company called Comb Books which in the same year released a collection of Kamba poetry called Ki Kyamboi. His success, however, both as writer and publisher, started with his release of his first novelette, Unfit for Human Consumption, in 1973, ^{and his first long narrative poem,} ~~to be followed in the same year by~~ My Dear Bottle. Comb Books ^{publishers} printed five thousand copies of Unfit for Human Consumption ^{and they} ~~which were~~ sold out within eleven months. The next print-run ^{of} ~~which was~~ twenty thousand copies was finished within less than ^{one} year. ^{Except for textbooks prescribed} ~~Other than the Comb Books~~ for ~~our~~ national examinations which had a captive ~~school~~ market, no literary work had done so well from a marketing point of view.

high schools

How does one explain the popularity of Unfit for Human Consumption? It would appear that when it came out, this work found a readership

that was yearning for something "less serious" and "more lively" than the writings of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Okot p'Bitek, Leonard Kibera, and Taban Lo Liyong, the group of writers who were based at the University of Nairobi. The works of these ^{elitist} academics-cum-writers ^{teachers} had dominated literary ^{in Kenya.} discourses which had hitherto appeared exclusive and elitist.

The average secretary or clerical officer in the public and private sectors of the economy who wanted to read for pleasure was ^{going down} ~~going~~ ^{1960s} for Western popular fiction. African literature in the ~~sixties~~ had been associated with cultural and political emancipation from colonialism, and the reader who wanted descriptions of the intimate everyday details of human life had to look elsewhere. Charles Mangua had whetted the appetites of these readers by combining the erotic with adventure in Son of Woman. But as in all such novels, the picaresque form of Mangua's novel raised it to the level of the extraordinary. ^{Native writing was more down-to-earth.} Dealing as he did with the intimate themes of love, romance, ^{and} the physicality of sex, infidelity, and avoiding the "boring" ideological posturings of some of Africa's ^{university} authors, ~~Mangua~~ ^{he} touched the right chord in Kenyan and East African readers.

^{U. of H. for Human Development} The plot of ~~this novelette~~ is simple and melodramatic. The hero, Jonathan Kinama Ndeti, more commonly called Kinama, lives in Nairobi and his wife lives with the children in the countryside in Ukambani. Taking advantage of this circumstance, Kinama does more than his share of drinking, womanizing and fighting. He has ^{not} ~~not~~ "not set" with the girlfriend of Maruka, his room-mate, and on discovering this, Maruka starts a vicious fight with him. Kinama is sent to Kenyatta National Hospital, and on being discharged after two months, he resolves to change his life.

But before he buys a Bible and a hymn-book, he decides to drink and womanize one more time. What happens ^{to} after is a series of coincidences ^{the} the encounter with a prostitute who steals his money, the arrival of his wife from Ukambani, the letter of suspension from the civil service and finally ^{the} the suicide ^{which} which enhance the melodramatic and ~~perhaps~~ didactic character of this work. The excesses ~~that are~~ ^{occasioned} by modern city life are criticised by the author.

One feature of this little novel, which is typical of the Comb Books series, is that the area of psychological motivation remains largely unexplored. We are introduced to Kinama in a bank on payday looking at women lustfully. This for instance is what we are told about his admiration for one of the female strangers:

Kinama's ideal girl for sex satisfaction and romance was a plump girl with shoulders that arched nicely and intoxicating breasts like those ones. He could hardly take his eyes from her. He waded through the crowd till he came to a good position where he could see her face well. "Hi" he thought, then ^{he} sighed. "Man, this one", he thought, "this one is very much fit for human consumption!" He began wondering what man on earth enjoyed her. ~~(P)~~

The second woman who is "thin, nail-hard looking" is presumably "unfit for human consumption"; and in terms of the moral structure of Maillu's theme, the prostitute who steals Kinama's money belongs to this class of women.

Although on the one hand it is a source of humour and on the other it leads to a sad ^{termination} ending of the hero's life, this sexual obsession remains unexplained and unexplored. Equally unaccounted for is the unwholesome relationship between the hero and his family. And although her arrival in Nairobi becomes a turning point in the plot, Kinama's wife remains a shadowy figure.

David Gian Maillu was born ⁱⁿ Kilungu Location, Machakos District, in what is now the Eastern Province of Kenya. being poor and illiterate peasants, His father, Joseph Mulandi, and his mother Esther Kavuli, did not keep a record for their son's date of birth, But from his conversation with them, the author managed in his own words to "fix" his birthday on October 19, 1939. However, during the colonial period, even illiterate people could remember the month and the year in which their child was born. This means that what is not definite is only the day of the month.

In those days, and in accordance with Kamba traditions, a child was not given ^{his} ~~their~~ father's name. "Maillu" was therefore the tribal name, and he was later to be baptised "David". As for his middle name, "Gian," the author himself has said it ^{was} ^{own} his "secret invention."

Before he joined standard one in 1951 at Machakos Technical School, Maillu had already learnt from his older friends how to read and write, having circumvented the twin disadvantage of having illiterate parents and being the first-born in a family of six. The teachers quickly noticed this ability, and before the end of the year they promoted him to standard two.

They had not made a mistake in their assessment: their pupil turned out to be the best in the higher class. In the fourth year he passed a national examination ~~which was~~ called the Competitive Entrance Examination. He went ^{on} to what was then the intermediate section of primary school; and in standard eight he passed what was called the Kenya African Preliminary Examination.

He then studied privately for his ordinary level examination through the British Tutorial College, a correspondence college, and later sat what was called the Cambridge School Certificate. The young man used the same correspondence institute to study for his advanced level examinations. It was during this time that he also studied African philosophy, music and fine art. "I discovered when I was doing these things that I had creative talents," he ~~told this researcher~~ ^{said in} an interview.

"I wanted to join the University College of Nairobi, but they were teaching English literature. I had developed other literary interests." ~~He~~

A

This was
~~We have to remember that we are talking about the period~~

before 1968, the year when the Department of English at the University College of Nairobi became the Department of Literature, and the year when courses on East African, African, and African Diaspora literatures (both written and oral) were launched. ~~At~~

~~The time that Maillu is referring to, the literature syllabus at~~
^{was of university age, university}

~~this institution~~ was unashamedly anglocentric.

Maillu's attitude towards the literature programme might be tinged with the wisdom of hindsight, but he had a more practical reason for not going to university. ~~And~~ ^g this had to do with the poverty of his family and his status as the first-born. Like many Kenyans of his time, he was under intense pressure to find a job and support his family.

In 1964, he joined the newly-formed Voice of Kenya. Because he had taught himself fine art and had passed his ordinary level examination in the subject, he was recruited by the Broadcasting Department as a graphic designer. Maillu felt under-utilized and underpaid, and as early as 1965 he was thinking of quitting and becoming self-employed. But the opportunity did not avail itself until 1974^M that is, after the success of Unfit for Human Consumption.

In 1971, Maillu married Hannelore, a Germany lady who had come to Kenya in 1967 to work for the National Council of Churches of Kenya. The two ~~had~~ ^g met in 1969. On August 31, 1974, Hannelore gave birth to a daughter called Elizabeth Kavuli.

Elizabeth was Maillu's second daughter, ^{The first, Christine} ~~having been born seven years earlier to a woman Maillu~~ Mwende, ~~was born in February 2, 1967, but her parents never~~ got married, ^{did not marry.}

In a recent interview with ~~this researcher~~ ^g, Maillu said, ~~the following:~~ Q

Before publishing Unfit for Human Consumption, I spent two to three years doing research and interviewing people on what they liked reading. I found that the subjects that interested them were marriage, sex, religion, money, politics, drinking, and human relations in general.

I decided that if I was going to be a writer, I had to address those issues and topics. ~~se~~

In his next Comb Books title, My Dear Bottle, Maillu explored the theme of alcohol dependence and the easy sex that goes with it in Nairobi. This work was so popular with readers that in 1975 it was translated into Swahili as Chupa, Mpenzi. In the meantime, in 1974, this author brought out three Comb Books titles, one in Swahili, Kujenga na Kubomoa, and two in English, Troubles and After 4.30.

~~which is~~ his second novella, Troubles is about a young man called Maiko Matolo who has more than his share of sexual adventures and the anxieties that accompany them, and who in the end marries ~~one called~~ Delila, a young, innocent cripple from rural Ukambani whom he had impregnated earlier in the story. Their child is called "Troubles," and their marriage ~~is a~~ ~~coincidence that~~ finally resolves the uncertainties of Matolo's urban life. The rural/urban opposition is suggested, but only tentatively.

My Dear Bottle deals with the decadence of urban life from the viewpoint of a man; but Maillu's best known ~~work~~ ^{narrative poem,} After 4.30, gives us the woman's perspective. Written in ^{unrhymed} verse, and in some cases what appears ^{to be} ~~like~~ truncated prose, this work deals with the relationship between a boss and his secretary, with a special emphasis on what happens after ~~the~~ official working hours.

There are three women characters whose lives, feelings and desires present different, and in some cases parallel facets of the same feminist theme. Emili is a single mother who, in addition to being a prostitute, plays the role of "the other woman," challenging

the legitimacy of her married sisters. The most substantial part of the work is devoted to Lili, a secretary whose innocent relationship with her boyfriend is undermined when she is finally seduced by her boss. The third female character is Agnes, a married woman ~~who is~~ dissatisfied with her husband who comes home drunk and ~~she~~ has affairs with other women. She, for her part, develops a desire for her boss and longs for an extra-marital liaison.

In the following exchange, Maillu captures ~~the~~ ^a conversation ~~between Agnes and her boss,~~ ^{her} in which Agnes asks ~~the~~ boss to employ her sister. The dialogue includes ^{internalized thoughts, silences,} ~~voiced erotic silences~~ and regular interruptions:

Handwritten notes:
Need to change
the dialogue
to be more
natural
and less
stilted
in English

I'm sorry. I made a grammatical error. I made many English error I mispronounce and misspell words, bear with me you're unlike English people who show off ^{with} . . . (My husband will come home totally drunk tonight - again!) with. . .

With what?

I know many English people who've lived here ~~for half~~ for half a century but they know only Jambo and Bwana and takataka and shenzi hapana taka. They can't ask for water in Kiswahili My sister is much better than . . . (You're just as 'illiterate' as my husband)

I'm sorry. I made a grammatical error. I make many English errors. I mispronounce and misspell words, bear with me you're unlike English people who show off with... (My husband will come home totally drunk tonight--again!) with...

Than what?

Let me type this letter please
if you cannot
(understand)
cannot... ~~can~~ employ my sister

Everywhere you go
English
English
English !
even in the street names
traffic signs -
what about the (woman who
is dissatisfied with her husband ?)
er.... what about
the poor man
who has never learnt
a word in English -
and the illiterate?
(Most men are illiterate
in woman's world). (190-1).

In 1987, the Maillu Publishing House Ltd., put out a revised edition of this sensational and popular work. The author, ~~as we shall see later~~ has written and published many other titles since the collapse of the Comb Books company, but most Kenyans since still know him by After 4.30 and My Dear Bottle.

Handwritten scribbles and signatures on the left margin, including the word "Trouble" and an arrow pointing right.

In 1976 alone Comb Books Published ^{four / by} ~~six titles~~ ^{literary works} from Maillu, ^{and English Punctuation, were}
 CH → The two last Comb books, ~~One of these works,~~ English Spelling, ~~was~~ published under a

pseudonym, Vigard G. Mulila. (The author himself in an interview revealed he had simply rearranged the letters in his name.)

~~This As the titles suggests~~ ^{these were} ~~was a school book,~~ ^{not works of literature.} ~~and this was the same~~

~~case with English Punctuation. The remaining four works were~~

~~literary with two of them,~~ ^{which,} Dear Monika and Dear Daughter, ^{were} written

in the form of long letters, the former being correspondence

between a man and his estranged wife and the latter between a

father and his unruly daughter. The ~~last two,~~ ^{novella} No! and The Kommon Man ^{epic narrative from}

were more substantial from the literary point of view.

From the standpoint of the 1970s in African literature, The Kommon Man, published in three ^{volumes,} ~~parts~~ dealt with a trendy theme, the life of the little, average people. No! was his most hauntingly Christian and didactic work. Washington Ndava, the hero, is caught committing adultery. His penis is cut, ^{off,} as a result of which his wife leaves him for another man. In desperation, and after a number of ^{unsuccessful} attempts at suicide, he drives at high speed into a building in Nairobi's Industrial Area, killing himself in the most gruesome manner.

~~The ^{longest} Comb Books title was Kadosa, which came out in 1977, and ~~which~~ ^{was} reprinted by the Maillu Publishing House Ltd. in 1989.~~

→ After these were issued,

in 1974 brought out Rasou, a series of supernatural horror, and

~~The author did not publish anything between 1978 and 1979, and what~~
is more, Comb Books ceased ^{operating} as a publishing company, to be replaced in the late 1980s by the Maillu Publishing House. In between, there was the short-lived David Maillu Publishers which in 1980 released Hit of Love/Wendo Ndikilo, a long love poem presented both in English and Kikamba, the author's mother tongue. ~~The~~ David Maillu Publishers was based in Machakos, Maillu's home town. Another short-lived publishing ^{ing enterprise} ~~was~~ ^{which} Bookwise, ^{brought out his} ~~who~~ in 1981 ~~did~~ Looking for Mother.

Having acquired fame in East Africa through his own publishing ^{company}, ~~Maillu~~ ^S Maillu in 1980 published two very important titles with MacMillan, a ^{British multinational firm.} These were The Equatorial Assignment, a story of espionage and love involving Benni Kamba, a Kenyan spy, ^{who} who is trying to fight imperialist domination of Africa, and For Mbatha and Rabeka, a beautiful love story that is told against the background of the conflict between rural and urban life. In these two works, the author still treats love, his pet theme, but the lurid details and graphic descriptions of the Comb Books ^{ser. have disappeared.} ~~are no more.~~ This is the new Maillu ~~who~~ ^S ~~are going to see~~ in the 1980s and 1990s, spreading ^S out into larger and more varied areas of human experience.

Although it is a spy story, The Equatorial Assignment is indisputably a product of the anti-imperialist tenor in ~~the~~ Africa of the 1970s. ^{In} ~~Regarding~~ For Mbatha and Rabeka, the reader encounters a more daring examination of the effect of urbanization on human relationships. Unfortunately, just after Joseph Mbatha and Rabeka Malonza have "put the final touches to their marriage plans", fate plays them a nasty trick. Rabeka Malonza develops a liver problem which ^{prevents} ~~takes her for~~ treatment in "sinful" Nairobi, and

~~While undergoing treatment under the care of her relative,~~
~~Dr. Tom Mucaw,~~ ^{there she} Rabeka meets Honeycomb Mawa, ^{and a} "a young man of thirty-two,
~~armed with a striking personality to which he added a lot of~~
high-class air." Upon recovery, the hitherto innocent rural
girl is introduced to the irresistible glamour of Nairobi.
Rabeka Malonza is swept off her feet by what she sees, and slowly
but surely she changes her attitude towards her fiancé, ~~Joseph~~
~~Mbatha~~, who is waiting for her in rural Ukambani.

With her newly acquired urban perspective, and before she
breaks ^{off} ~~of~~ the engagement, she tells Mbatha:

How easily one can get rusty in this
bush! Do you think you can live on
the beautiful view of the mountains which
you cherish so much? What is poetic
about a place like this where there is
no water, no electricity, no telephones,
no parks, no theatres, and..... who
can count them? (96)

Devastated by his unrequited love for Rabeka, ~~Malonza~~, Mbatha breaks
down mentally. And although she knows she is the cause of her
lover's madness, she refuses to budge on the question of marriage,
So deep-seated is her new obsession with things urban.

But Honeycomb Mawa, the urbanite, fails to show up at the
wedding which is scheduled to take place in Ukambani. The reason
for the failure is that Mawa ^{did} ~~does~~ not get the money he expected
for this expense, but the embarrassment sends Rabeka Malonza back
into the arms of Joseph Mbatha.

in English, but ^a children's
book in Kikamba, Kaana Agy'a,
that was brought out by Heinemann
Educational Books in 1983.

Between 1982 and 1985, Maillu published nothing. As we
^{typical novellas and narrative poems}
have seen, his ~~books~~ were a great success with the average reader,
but ~~perhaps unjustifiably~~ they received a low rating from ~~the~~
literary academics ~~who were~~ based at the University of Nairobi
and ~~the~~ Kenyatta University College. Chris Wanjala, a leading
researcher on East African literature, for instance, never tired
of ~~dismissing this author.~~⁸ Indeed, Elizabeth Mwangera and Richard
Arden have suggested that this criticism might have been tinged with
an element of hypocrisy.

In the late 1970s when debate on literature
was often heated and emotional, most
University lecturers of literature were
uneasy about racy tales such as My Dear Bottle
and After 4.30, by David Maillu. Some of this
feeling was based on the view that his style was
weak, and his storyline limited, but might it
have not been the case that the stories were
too frank and direct? Ironically, the
same people were apparently happy enough
to accept the bawdy tales and verses
of Okot p'Bitek, who one feels, sought
out those aspects of his oral literature that
would deliberately provoke and shock.⁹

This critical neglect was apparently not lost ^{on} Maillu.
In 1985, he ^{said that} ~~told this researcher that~~ he was revising some of
his Comb Books ^{publications because} publishers. ~~More substantially, however, he~~
made the following observation:

'Some of my readers have said that I write immoral books, and have even gone to the extent of identifying me with the drunks and prostitutes in them. But perhaps you will be surprised to hear that I am a Christian, and that I do not drink My aim in those books is to show that drinking prostitution and loose sex are evil.

← T. a
~~The~~ period of the early 1980s was therefore a period of reassessment ^{for Maillu.} It might have had something to do with ^{his} growing older, but whatever the case, he seems to have felt the need not only to diversify his literary activities but also to cultivate a new image.

From 1986 to the present, Maillu's writing has been phenomenally prolific. Although his very first work, Kisalu, and His Fruit Garden and Other Stories was a children's book, it was not until the latter half of the 1980s that he took this area seriously, ^{adding} ~~and~~ to the wealth of ~~our~~ ^{Kenyan} children's literature ~~he has added~~ such popular titles as The Poor Child, Mbengo and the Princess, The Last Hunter, Journey into Fairyland, The Lion and the Hare, The Orphan and His Goat Friend and Princess Kalala and the Ugly Bird, most of which have been published by the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, the government company that caters for the reading needs of ^{Kenyan} ~~our~~ school children.

Another new area Maillu has moved into since the mid-1980s is the ^{extended} ~~literary~~ essay, which, because of its form, has allowed him to talk more directly to his audience. The concerns in these essays ^{range} ~~vary~~ from the meaning of Christianity to Africans in The Black Adam and Eve, to the question of our cultural values and identity in Our Kind of Polygamy, ~~found~~ to the current political debates in Kenya and Africa in Pragmatic Leadership.

Maillu's strong and impassioned endorsement of President Moi's populist leadership perhaps requires special mention. Pragmatic Leadership was published in 1988, long before Kenya adopted a multi-party political system in response to pressure from Western countries. But the Gorbachevan "wind of change" had already started to blow in the continent of Africa. In this work, ^{Maillu} ~~the author~~ does not ~~however~~ ^{but envisions} reject the notion of plural democracy; ~~what he does is to see~~ President Moi as a symbol of authentic, culturally derived African leadership. ^{It is of course} ~~It is of course~~ a leadership based on ~~African~~ ^{indigenous} traditions of populism and concern for ^{one's} ~~our~~ fellow men and women.

The author also uses this "representative and symbolic leadership" to ^{laurel} ~~conduct~~ a polemic ^{against} ~~with~~ Western apologists ^{for} ~~of~~ racism and neocolonialism, who, according to him, expect nothing positive out of Africa. Owing to their sense of racial superiority, Europeans think they can rule Africans, but the reverse, he observes, would be unthinkable to them.

~~With a characteristic lack of syntactic virtuosity and a delightful~~ spontaneity, Maillu defends African values against racist coverage in the Western press. Part of this racism, we are told, lies in the fact that being a success story, Kenya has been singled out for special criticism. The white man, he argues, wants

to show that the African is inherently inferior, and therefore incapable of running a modern country.

Maillu's major works ^{WIC} however, during this period, ~~have~~ ^{books of} been in the area of fiction. In The Ayah which came out in (1986), ^{he} the author dealt with an important ~~social~~ and feminist theme, ^{in Kenya,} namely the ^Poppression of female domestic servants. ^{in Kenya,} Indeed, ^{was} we can say, he is ~~in fact~~ the first Kenyan writer to ^{treat} accord this subject ^{with} the seriousness it deserves. Beatrice Kavele is ~~typically~~ uprooted from her rural home and brought to the city to work as a maid, an ayah. She is overworked and cruelly treated by the mistress of the house, and as if this ^{WIC} is not enough, she is also sexually abused by the master.

The following year saw the publication of Untouchable in which the author explores an extremely sensitive and ^{potentially} even explosive theme: the love between a Kenyan Indian and a Kenyan African. Because of the historical and cultural barrier between the two communities, ~~the~~ ^{Indians and the Africans,} the subject of love and intermarriage between them is one that ^{could} be heard only in whispers around the country. In ^{dealing forthrightly with} treating such a subject, Maillu ^{was} therefore ^{calling attention} taking the bull by the horns, and he ^{is also} the first to do so ^{in full-length fiction.}

It → In Thorns of Life appeared in (1988), and, in it, ^{Maillu returned} the author went ^{that} back to the theme of the effect ^{was having} urbanization on the lives of individuals. Silvesta Maweu, the only son of Mama Kalunde Mathungu, works as an accountant in Mombasa. His beautiful wife, Swastika Nzivele, lives in the countryside in Kyandumbi. This geographical separation leads to spiritual and emotional estrangement. Typically, Maweu's mother tries very hard to keep son and daughter-in-law married, and

although she fails, the two are reunited at her funeral.

In addition to the works already mentioned, 1989 also saw the publication of Maillu's ^{booklet of} advice to marriageable girls entitled, How to Look for the Right Boyfriend, a children's book ^{on} ~~for~~ reading and writing in ~~Swahili~~ ^{Swahili} called Kusoma na Kuandika, and two works of fiction, P.O. BOX I Love You Via My Heart and Without Kiinua Mgongo.

P.O. Box I Love You Via My Heart, like Untouchable, is about interracial love, but this time between black and white. While doing his studies in Sweden, Philip Ndimu falls in love with Sonya, a white lady. He returns to Kenya to look for a job, and tells Sonya that she will join him after he settles down. Ndimu "had been her first and last boyfriend," and she is understandably devastated ^{at} when he writes back and confesses that he was in fact married. Later, however, he abandons his Kenyan wife and marries Sonya in the United States. For her part, the Kenyan wife, Judith, finds another lover.

Stylistically, ^{Maillu's} ~~the~~ most daring composition was Without Kiinua Mgongo. This is a short work of fiction ^{that} ~~which~~ in the interests of realism experiments with the mixture of Swahili and English which is spoken by some educated people in Kenya. In the same sentence, the same paragraph, we encounter this kind of code-switching. This is how the work begins:

Kwa ten good years, Mwangangi alikuwa
mpishi wao akina Mr. and Mrs. Mbuta.
Na kwa miaka hiyo ten kamili,
Mwangangi alilerve family hiyo
excellently. Mpishi expert zaidi usimchezee
Mwangangi (1)

Finding their own speech habits in print, Kenyan readers were excited about this little work. What was more, it turned out that this new experimental style sustained a very compelling story: the story of Mwangangi who loses his job as a cook because his boss, Mr. Mbuta, has been told that Mwangangi's son impregnated his daughter. The daughter fabricates this lie because her pregnancy is the result of incest.

Because he is a man of means, Mr. Mbuta gives the police ~~kiinua mgonje~~^{mgonje} that is a bribe^M in order for them to torture Mwangangi's son into "confessing to the crime." It is a gripping story of man's inhumanity to man, but the style Maillu uses adds humor^g to it. In fact, ~~one would go so far as to see this as the~~^{may be the} author's most compelling satire on the rich and influential people of Kenya, ~~and Maillu~~^{and Maillu} ~~this~~^{the} stylistic experiment^{is} was repeated in 1990 in Anayekukeep.

Maillu's crowning achievement ~~and~~^{is} his most expansive work, ~~the~~ Broken Drum, ~~which came out in~~ (1991), ~~The longest novel to~~^{have} come out of East Africa, ~~and for~~^{won Maillu} which the author ~~deservedly~~ got the Jomo Kenyatta Prize for Literature in 1992, Broken Drum, ~~through the~~ marriage of Ngewa and Vikirose, explores two hundred years of Kamba history, and by extension, Kenya's history,

~~Through an examination of the Ngewa family, stretching back to the 1770s, and itself the result of a lot of research on the part of the author,~~ This monumental work takes us through the Kamba encounter with the Arabs, the Portuguese and lastly the British, and looks with a sense of irony at the consequences of these interactions. Maillu ^{who never stops writing,} may produce mightier and more profound works ^{the} in future, but for now, Broken Drum is his most significant contribution to literature,