

# Homecoming



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Essays on African and Caribbean Literature, Culture and Politics.

Ngugi writes in his introduction -- The present collection of essays is an integral part of the

fictional world of *The River Between*, *Weep Not, Child* and *A Grain of Wheat*. Most of them were

written at about the same time as the novels; they have been products of the same moods and

touch on similar questions and problems. There are differences. In a novel the writer is totally

immersed in a world of imagination which is other than his conscious self. At his most intense

and creative the writer is transfigured, he is possessed, becomes a medium. In the essay the

writer can be more direct, didactic, polemical, or he can merely state his beliefs and faith; his

conscious self is here more at work. Nevertheless, the boundaries of his imagination are limited

by the writer's beliefs, interests, and experiences in life, by where in fact he stands in the world

of social relations. This must be one of the reasons that readers are curious about a writer's

opinion on almost everything under the sun -- from politics and religion to the conservation of

wild life! The writer is thus forced, either by the public or by the needs of his craft, to define his

beliefs, attitudes and outlook in the more argumentative form of the essay.

NGUGI WA THIONG'O is best known for his novel *Weep not, Child* (AWS 7), which in 1964

was one of the first novels to alert the literary world to the fresh and original contribution that

African writers were making to world literature. *The River Between* (AWS 17), *A Grain of Wheat* (AWS 36) and *Petals of Blood* (AWS 188) have confirmed Ngugi's stature as a writer of

great scope and ambition, as have a volume of short stories, *Secret Lives* (AWS 150), and three

plays, The Trial of Dedan Kimathi (AWS 191, written with Micere Mugo), This Time Tomorrow

(in AWS) 78) and The Black Hermit (AWS 51).

Since the publication of Homecoming in 1972, a second collection of Ngugi's essays has been

published under the title Writers in Politics. The second volume testifies to a declared political

commitment that has been elaborated in Ngugi's most recent work, especially in Detained: A

Writer's Prison Diary (AWS 240), a series of reflections inspired by his detention without trial in

Kenya during most of 1978; the play that is believed to be responsible for his detention,

Ngaahika Ndeenda -- I Will Marry When I Want (AWS 246, written with Ngugi wa Mirii), and

his latest novel, Devil on the Cross (AWS 200).

作者介绍:

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