

**IMAGES OF WOMEN IN SELECTED SONGS OF CONTEMPORARY GIKUYU  
SECULAR POPULAR ARTISTS**

**DIANAH WANJIKU WANJOHI**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

**JANUARY 2021**

**DECLARATION**

This research is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

Dianah Wanjiku Wanjohi

C50/CE/22744/2010

Signature .....

Date: .....

**Supervisors**

1. Dr Peter Muhoro Mwangi

Department of Languages and Literature

Mount Kenya University

Signature.....Date.....

2. Dr. Oscar Macharia Maina

Department of Literature, Linguistics and Foreign Languages

Kenyatta University

Signature.....Date.....

## **DEDICATION**

I wish to dedicate this work to my late father, Daniel Murigu, for encouraging me throughout my life and assuring me that I could achieve anything I dreamt of. To my husband Gerald Wanjohi Kanai, and children: Jackson Kanai Wanjohi and Eric Murigu Wanjohi for their moral support.

## **AKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank God, my supervisors Dr. Peter Muhoro Mwangi of Mount Kenya University and Dr. Oscar Macharia Maina of Kenyatta University for their encouragement, keenness and unwavering support in the course of writing this project. Equally, I thank the lecturers who took us through the programme. I am grateful to my classmates who encouraged me to move on even when the going became tough. Special mention goes to Dorcas Warutumo and Grace Gathoni Karimi.

I am greatly indebted to Jane Wangari who typed and printed my work. I thank my family for the overwhelming support they gave me. To all who have played a role to bring this work to a successful conclusion in one way or another, I say thanks a lot.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

**Benga:** This is a musical genre that originated in Nyanza and Western regions of Kenya and it had strong influence from Music from the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In this study the term has been used to refer to popular musical beats employed by three selected Gikuyu popular secular artists of contemporary times.

**Constructionist:** *Constructionist* learning is when learners construct mental models to understand the world around them. *Constructionism* advocates student-centered, discovery learning where students use information they already know to acquire more knowledge.

**Gendered language:** This refers to the language used by both men and women which shows their positions on societal issues. The language use might spell out gender sensitive or gender-insensitive conceptions of individuals or group dynamics. In this study the term is applied to refer to aspects of musical compositions from select popular Gikuyu artists relating to cultural and contemporary practices reflected among members of the Agikuyu community.

**Image:** This is the the forming of mental pictures to express an idea about a conception of a social construct from mainly cultural contexts. In this study the term will be used to stand for the poetic pictorial conceptions relating to pieces and/or compositions that are created from listening to a music-inclined language.

**Popular Artist:** This is an artist whose stock in trade is composing songs within a given tradition and addressing a target audience. In this study the term is used to refer to a brand of Gikuyu secular popular musicians who compose songs on social concerns that address the images of women as featured in contemporary times.

**Social constructionism:** Also known as the social construction of reality (also social concept), it is a theory of knowledge in sociology and communication that examines the development of jointly constructed understandings of the world that form the basis for shared assumptions about reality. The theory centers on the notions that human beings rationalize their experience by creating models of the social world and share and reify these models through language.

**Texts and Time:** In the study of textual relations it is revealed that texts are not part of a static structure of social meanings. By looking at genres of texts we can see the ways in which signs, connotations and myths develop over time. They are influenced by changing cultural beliefs, and they represent such changes to listeners, readers and viewers. Especially in the case of popular, mass media texts, these changes are fed back into wide sectors of the community. In this study the term will be used to refer to song-texts created from the Gikuyu oral artists that focus on the time they were composed and the prevailing situations of the day.

## Table of Contents

DECLARATION .....	ii
DEDICATION .....	iii
AKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS .....	v
ABSTRACT.....	x
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY .....	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM .....	3
1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	4
1.3.1 AIM OF THE STUDY .....	4
1.3.2 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	4
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	4
1.5 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS .....	5
1.6 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY.....	5
1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
1.7.1 DEFINING POPULAR SONGS .....	6
1.7.2 FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM.....	7
1.7.3 STYLE AND THEMATIC CONCERNS IN POPULAR SONGS.....	8
1.7.5 GENESIS OF POETRY AND GENDER SONGS IN KENYA .....	11
1.7.6 ORAL POETRY FROM AFRICA.....	13
1.7.7 THE POPULAR SONGS OF KENYA .....	15
1.7.8 PERFORMANCE OF POPULAR SONGS .....	17
1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	19
1.8.1 FEMINIST LITERARY THEORY .....	19

1.8.2 STYLISTICS AND PERFORMANCE THEORY.....	20
1.9 JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .....	21
1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	22
1.10.1 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	22
1.10.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE.....	23
1.10.3 DATA COLLECTION .....	24
1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	25
1.12 CONCLUSION .....	25
2.0 STYLE IN GIKUYU POPULAR SONGS AND POETRY.....	26
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	26
2.2 STYLE: FORM AND CONTENT IN POPULAR SONG .....	26
2.3 STYLE AND WOMEN ISSUES IN THE COMMUNITY .....	29
2.4 STYLE, SEX AND SEXUALITY .....	32
2.5 COMPARATIVE TECHNIQUE AND FIGURATIVE USAGE .....	35
2.6 DESRIPTIVE TECHNIQUE AND FIGURATIVE USAGE OF LANGUAGE.....	36
2.7 CONCLUSION .....	50
3.0 THEMATIC CONCERNS ON WOMEN AND SOCIETY .....	52
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	52
3.2 WOMAN AS A FIGHTER OF MALE DOMINANCE.....	52
3.3 WOMAN AS A COMPANION AND A BURDEN TO THE MAN .....	54
3.4 MOTHERHOOD AND REARING CHILDREN.....	67
3.5 WIFEHOOD AND HUSBANDHOOD .....	71
3.6 WOMEN AS HEROINES OF A COMMUNITY .....	74
3.7 CONCLUSION .....	76
4.0 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STYLES ADOPTED BY THREE SELECTED ARTISTS	78



4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	78
4.2 RELATIONSHIPS IN VOICING WOMEN’S LIBERATION.....	78
4.3 RELATIONSHIPS IN DRAWING DRAMATIC CONFLICTS .....	81
4.4 RELATIONSHIPS AND SIMILARITIES IN POETICS OF THE VOICE .....	88
4.5 RELATIONSHIPS AND SIMILARITIES IN AESTHETICS OF LANGUAGE .....	92
4.6 RELATIONSHIPS AND SIMILARITIES IN BEATS AND MELODY-MAKING.....	97
4.7 CONCLUSION .....	100
CHAPTER FIVE .....	102
5.0. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	102
5.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS .....	103
5.2 CONCLUSIONS.....	104
5.3 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDY .....	104
WORKS CITED .....	106
APPENDICES .....	112
Appendix I: Discography of Song-texts.....	112

**ABSTRACT**

The study focuses on popular songs that were composed and performed by contemporary Gikuyu secular popular artists. The study examines aspects of style and themes that reveal popular artists' positions as regards the images of women in popular music in Kenya. The study involves the analysis of song-texts selected from popular performing artists who engage the audience on politics of gender and the effects they had on the Kenyan contemporary situation in voicing their concerns on the relationship between men and women in society. This was done through listening to CDs and watching recorded clips video/DVDs produced by four selected Gikuyu popular music artists. The study applies stylistics, feminism and performance theories. Various tenets of feminist and cultural theories were used as interpretive lenses. Transcription, translation and transliteration were done as a means to create poetic data for analysis. This was conceived in fifteen song-texts. The study identified structure and style adopted by the Gikuyu language composers earmarked for this study. Time and space did not allow the researcher to indulge in the analysis of songs by contemporary Gikuyu secular popular artists who performed in the post-independence era. Conclusions were drawn from the analysis and interpretation of data.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The study explored the language applied in the composition, singing and dancing of Gikuyu popular music forms, the lyrics as well as the poetic renditions in their artistry. Popular art in Africa has occupied a special spot in Orature studies in contemporary society. This study is an endeavour that explored components of themes, style and performance that emerge as distinct popular poetry composed by contemporary Gikuyu secular artists in Kenya. The performing oral artists as members of the Gikuyu Kenyan popular music fraternity take their position as observers and compose songs on themes revolving around feminist and gender concerns in contemporary times.

The study noted that there are artists who are the predecessors in the field of popular orature who have featured in the world of music and society. Karega and Kabira observe that:

Oral literature as a dynamic medium of communication and transmission of our culture deserves serious study. Frequent use of oral artists, e.g. Joseph Kamaru, Daudi Kabaka.e.t.c. who communicate important aspects and aspirations of the Kenyan people stand as living testimonies to the importance of this medium. It is impossible for any national philosophy to survive without the support from oral artists. (3)

The current work examines Gikuyu popular oral artists of the young generation who seek to address contemporary issues like the politics of the day and other social concerns emerging from the Kenyan nation-state. The cultural continuity that reflects the thinking and the philosophy of the community are the central concern in this research. While addressing themselves on the issue of “Song as a reflector of people’s Philosophy and aesthetics,” observe:

Behind the seemingly simple songs a people’s philosophy and aesthetics can be directly and indirectly communicated. In the songs that are recorded here in Gikuyu oral Literature such as *Njukia*, *Mugoiyo*, *Muthunguci*, *Nduumo*, *Gitiro*, *Nguru*, *Kibaata*,

*Muthuu*, e.t.c., a people's philosophy and aesthetics can be detected. What they think about themselves can be tapped. It is very clear for example that they are a people very proud of themselves. (20)

In contemporary society, popular forms appear to be offsprings of traditional art forms that thrived in the pre-colonial and colonial times in Kenya. In traditional African settings, songs and dances were performed mainly after harvests or during initiation rites of passage. These performances could also be done during other rites of passage, for instance, child naming, marriage ceremonies and funeral proceedings. The art forms were actually the carrier of the diversity of the African cultural practices since time immemorial.

Among the Agikuyu of Kenya, "*Mwomboko*, *Nduumo* and *Kamweretho*" dance poetry are such genres. They have remained relevant as pillars of connectivity of historical happenings, cultural ties and political realities in the Gikuyu community of Kenya. They link the past, present and future hopes, ambitions and aspirations of the community. They are types of folk poetry that were performed by Gikuyu men and women since time immemorial. However, today they have become popular art forms that are performed by mixed performers. As Peter Mwangi notes: "It is common to hear in Gikuyu FM stations the expressions, *Nduumo ya Kirinyaga*, and *Kamweretho Ka Umuthi* which imply the popular music from Mount Kenya region.(15)

Okot'p' Bitek observes:

If there are two types of rulers in every society, that is, those who use physical force to subdue men, and those that employ beautiful things, sweet songs and funny stories, rhythm, shape and colour to keep individuals and society sane and flourishing, then in my view, it is the artist who is the greater ruler. (40)

While p'Bitek's position appears to reflect more on political realities including social and gender concerns of accumulating power through wooing tactics, it is plausible to also see the view on social concerns of individual's search for space in the wider contemporary societal structures where survival for the fittest is the norm rather than the exception. The artist's voice reaches a wider audience and so his or her view takes prominence in social and poetic discourse in the society.

According to Benstock, Ferris and Woods, Susanne:

The history of women's literature in the nineteenth and twentieth century is inseparable from the development of feminist literary criticism and theory that emerged as a separate form of literary analysis beginning in the 1960s and was influenced by the contemporary women's movement. Literary feminism, broadly conceived as a visible tradition of women's voices asserting a woman's position within the culture, is a product of the printing press. (22)

The Western women's search for a female identity and history appears to have been the motivating factors that led to the clamour for space as print artists. Their concerted effort in debating the position of women became a basis for laying the foundation for our contemporary gender studies. This study explores only images of women in Gikuyu poetry that have emerged in contemporary times in Kenya and ignores the post-independence epoch.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

This study explored the style and social concerns of gender addressed by three selected popular artists: Murimi WaKahalf, Joseph Kariuki wa Kiarutara, and John De Mathew. The study explored the way in which the three selected popular artists engage with feminist discourse and gender issues through their compositions of popular music in Kenya. The study examined

how language is used in a special way by these popular music artists, and the emerging performative aspects staged by the said artists in voicing pertinent women and men's issues in the contemporary Gikuyu community. This study assumed that there is a dearth of knowledge in the field of popular arts that requires examination employing poetic discourse as a vehicle to point out gendered language as a result of good or poor relationships between men and women in the Kenyan contemporary society.

### **1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.3.1 AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study is to examine the feminist meanings expressed in the popular songs composed and performed by three selected Gikuyu artists in Kenya.

#### **1.3.2 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of this study are to:

- a. Interrogate the stylistic features crafted by Gikuyu secular popular music artists in their attempt to stage dialogic forums for addressing feminism and gender concerns in Kenya
- b. Explore the thematic concerns addressed by Gikuyu secular popular artists on feminist and gender concerns in Kenya.
- c. Explicate the relationship between the selection of style and the themes addressed by different Gikuyu secular popular artists in Kenya.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- a) Are there different features of style of renditions that can be interrogated and discussed as they are applied in Gikuyu music art as presented by different contemporary Gikuyu secular popular music artists in Kenya?
- b) What are the central explorable gender concerns in Kenya that are addressed by Gikuyu secular popular music artists?

- c) Is there an artistic relationship between the style and concerns of Gikuyu secular popular music artists in Kenya?

### **1.5 RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS**

The assumptions of this study are:

- a. That there are interrogative features of style employed by Gikuyu secular popular music artists that depict their insights into gender concerns in Kenya.
- b. That there are explorable themes addressed by Gikuyu secular popular music artists that reveal feminist and gender concerns in Kenya.
- c. That different Gikuyu secular popular music artists apply explicable and comparable styles of performance that depict and determine their manner of presentation.

### **1.6 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study looked into three selected Gikuyu secular popular music artists: Murimi wa Kahalf, Joseph Kariuki wa Kiarutara and John De Mathew. These are popular performing music artists from the Agikuyu community that resides in Mount Kenya region in central Kenya and its diaspora: Nairobi, parts of former Rift Valley, Coast and Eastern Provinces of Kenya. Their population is around fifteen million people (2019 census).

The study focused on songs on contemporary societal realities in central Kenya and even beyond. Hence the study did not consider the other brands of popular oral poetry that have no contribution to gender discourse in the song genre produced in different eras in Kenya. For instance, the songs on political affairs are not analyzed, even though they are very popular in contemporary social discourse. A discography of fifteen (15) selected song-texts was used to examine style, themes and aspects of performance in the study area.

## **1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section examined the studies on African Oral Literature on the position of popular poetry as viewed in the song genre that captures images of women in the Kenyan society. This is an attempt to highlight the strength of the studies of my predecessors in the study of oral poetry. Further, the study attempts to define and point out the gaps in the works on African, Kenyan and Gikuyu popular songs.

### **1.7.1 DEFINING POPULAR SONGS**

Popular song is a piece of music written to have an immediate and wide appeal and is usually popular for only a short time, but that sometimes is of a sufficiently high quality to become part of the permanent repertoire of music. (Merriam - webster)

Further defined:

The term popular music is extremely vague, covers a wide field of musical endeavour and ranges over a long period of time; there has been “popular music” ever since man made music for his own pleasure. The difficulty is to draw a distinction between serious or, less accurately, classical music and the other forms in existence, especially as much of the material in the popular field is taken quite seriously by many people. It might be preferable to call this type of music, light music. This term would effectively cover music of a more transient nature, which would not be expected to have a lasting appeal except to the most diehard adherents of a particular style or form. This is not to denigrate such music or to detract from its worth, for it is certainly as valuable in its own way as any other sphere of musical creativity (International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives)



As Mutahi, Karega and Kabira, Wanjiku postulate:

In the process of rendering a narrative, a good artist will automatically dramatize the various roles of his characters. In doing this he will be able to integrate the drama, the tone and the mood of the narrative into an aesthetic whole. The artist will use both verbal and non-verbal language to fully communicate his message. (42).

The current crop of popular Gikuyu oral artists appears to have borrowed a leaf from premiere Kenyan popular oral artists who engaged, through music, with the social issues of the day.

In terms of functions of oral literature, oral narratives and songs reflect the philosophy and the values of the society that produces them. In the Agikuyu society as in any other society, they traditionally served many functions. In this study, the researcher examines the centrality of the song genre in addressing images of women emergent in Gikuyu secular popular songs by the three selected popular artists in the contemporary era.

### **1.7.2 FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM**

Feminist literary criticism is literary criticism informed by feminist theory, or, more broadly, by the politics of feminism. It uses feminist principles and ideology to critique the language of literature. This school of thought seeks to analyze and describe the ways in which literature perpetuates the narrative of male domination by exploring the economic, social, political, and psychological forces embedded within it.

This way of thinking and criticizing works can be said to have changed the way literary texts are viewed and studied, as well as changing and expanding the canon of what is commonly taught. ;

This study is grounded in feminist literary criticism that advocates for the interpretation of language used in literary texts. As Benstock et al. observe: “The history of women’s literature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is inseparable from the development of feminist literary criticism and theory that emerged as a separate form of literary analysis beginning in the 1960s and was influenced by the contemporary women’s movement.” (18)

### **1.7.3 STYLE AND THEMATIC CONCERNS IN POPULAR SONGS**

Artists employ a variety of structural components and techniques in crafting their compositions as a means to capture the imagination of their target audience. According to (Akivaga and Odaga in *Oral Literature for Schools*) the oral artist viewed as a cultural image of a narrator of a given literary genre displays a wealth of knowledge and heritage of his/her community. A patriotic oral artist shows a great deal of attachment to his/her roots, history and identity.

In Kenya, women’s participation in the struggle for independence doubled as a struggle for gender empowerment. In the nation state’s struggle for independence, the land issue emerged as a major concern which formed the core of the clamour for emancipation. As wa Thiong’o, Ngugi and Mugo, Miceere puts it, land was an instrumental factor that “motivated guerrilla fighters in an armed struggle which led to shedding of blood in colonial Kenya. Nationally, there is a continued struggle against economic. Political, religious and other forms of oppression.” (viii)

A great number of Kenya Gikuyu popular songs focus mainly on love, sex and marriage as well as politics of gender of the everyday. This study explores the motivation that acts as the driving force in artists who have shifted their focus on social concerns and opted to interrogate the images of women in Gikuyu popular secular songs. The artists have constructed their song-texts against the background of societal tribulations and politics of gender in the community’s

patriarchal hegimonies emanating from the Gikuyu traditional setting whereby the femal figure was disinfrachised from freedom of expression and decision making.

#### **1.7.4 GIKUYU ORAL POETRY**

The centrality of Oral Poetry in post-independent Kenya appears to have gained centrality the moment Oral Literature was introduced into a subject of study in the national curriculum via the defunct Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) now referred to as Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD). The premiere African scholar at the Univerwsity of East Africa, today's Makerere University who proposed and implemented the teaching of oral literature in secondary schools, colleges and universities lay the ground work for shisting focus from English Literature to Literaturer in English. The moving of the centre of the canon of literature whereby African literature was made a core subject of study boosted the position of oral poetry scholars' pursuance of formal education. Earlier on scholarly studies in ora literature tended to group all artists under a generalized category of performers. The new breed of scholars enabled artists of various artistry orientations to be separated in terms of creation and performermance.

As Wanjiku Kabira in *The Oral Artist* notes:

Scholars of oral narratives have tended to lump all oral artists together as if they were not creations of certain societies in particular periods of historical development, the assumption has always been that these artists have played a uniform role in their society; hence the erroneous conclusion that there is not much to be learned about the individual artist in a particular situation. (1)

This study concurs with Kabira's views as the creation of space in scholarship createws room for new studies this project's perspective demonstrates on secular songs and images of of women. The premiere African writers of oral literature made an attempt

to indicate that there were songs and dances for varied occasions by different genders in the Gikuyu community. While writing on the role of Gikuyu folk songs and dances Jomo Kenyatta, Jomo observes:

Songs rendered by relatives and friends around the foot of the tree generally pertain to sexual knowledge. This is to give initiates an opportunity of acquainting themselves with all the necessary rules and regulations governing the social relationships between men and women. (45)

Kenyatta's views are revamped by the position by the second generation of orature studies. Further Akivaga and Odaga are emphatic on the monumental role played by songs in Kenya. They observe:

Songs and dances are very common in African societies. There is almost no communal activity that is not accompanied by song and dance. There are work songs, war songs, initiation or circumcision songs; marriage, birth, and child-naming songs; sacrificial, burial or funeral songs, praise songs and love songs. Songs and dances form an important part of the lives and thinking of the people. Through songs people learn, laugh, mourn, console each other, inspire one another and at times pass secret messages. (56).

The position taken by these two writers indicates that orate societies an African's life was dominated by song and dance. Their contribution is significant in voicing the importance of teaching oral literature in Kenyan schools, colleges and universities. The present study endeavours to heighten the place of Songs and dances in in bringing to the fore gendered issues in the Gikuyu contemporary community.

### 1.7.5 GENESIS OF POETRY AND GENDER SONGS IN KENYA

The search for independence in Kenya started as early as the 1920s. The social-historical and political conflicts are stored in the song genre and dances composed by traditional oral artists in the erstwhile, British colony, now called Kenya. The crafting of traditional songs bearing the allegory of sex and marriage in terms of composition and rendition of *Muthirigu* poetry appeared to display gender bias and political interrelations. Even in the nuances of the struggle for independence the position of women appears to be negated by oral poets who were involved in political activism as they used images of women to drive home their messages as regards political, social and economic freedom. Poetically, women tend to be used allegorically to be representative of a diversity of conflicts between the White colonizers and their Black subjects.

Further Mutahi Karega and Kabira Wannjiku note:

*Muthirigu*, a song (genre) that was created at the height of cultural nationalism in Kenya in the 1920s... was used as a medium of resistance during the colonial period even after it was legally banned in 1929.

Through this song, which was hundreds of verses, the Agikuyu campaigned against the colonial administration and missionary efforts to distort, erase, and totally change the Agikuyu way of life in order to make them more effective servants of the White people. (23)

A question that arises in the the debate on freedom struggle discourse. What was the response of the Agikuyu people to the white woman's and man's machinations? This is not a simple question that requires a simple answer. It is one that leads to many other questions that are answered in writings about cultural heritage and armed struggle in Kenya.

Wa Kinyatti Maina postulates:

Gikuyu Mau Mau Freedom songs were popular among the masses for they were a source of inspiration in their endeavour to fight the colonial powers from Great Britain.”

This made the song poetry genre to gain prominence as an ethnopoetic tool for protesting against the (mis)rule meted by the foreigners. (43)

The Black people, the men and women alike appear to have been angered by the dismantling of their cultural practices by the white men and women who migrated to Africa and forcefully grabbed especially in the so-called White Highlands. The whites' collaborators the brutal colonial chiefs, made agreements and approved the regimes of misrule in Africa. (Mahugu's 1990) position on protest poetry that emerged in colonial times in Kenya is a motivating factor to the current study in that she deals with Mau Mau Songs of Independence, some of which portray images of women in Gikuyu oral poetry. In her investigation, she says that the melodies of the compositions were adapted from traditional song and dance subgenres and also some corrupted Christian music hymns.

As noted earlier, the notion of protest is echoed in the compositions that appeared in the 1920s under the umbrella of *Muthirigu* dance. This atmosphere was confirmed in the trend of resistance through use of oral poetry as evident in *Mwomboko* dance that emerged in the 1940s, a genre that also uses images of women in relaying sensitive societal issues.

Mwangi Peter in *Fabula* opines:

The Gikuyu are an ethnic community which lives mainly in the Central Province of Kenya and the Gikuyu diaspora (the Rift Valley, for example). The oral history of this community is recounted poetically in the songs known as the Gikuyu *Muthirigu* and *Mwomboko*. These lyrical genres recapitulate the myth of origin of the the people. The *Muthirigu* is a song genre that emerged due to political upheavals in Kenya.

It was an expression of protest against the colonial power's suppression of African traditional values and practices. The oral poets use images of women to satirise colonial iniquities and forces of imperialism. (102)

In pursuing the images of women in popular songs, among others, it is Kabira Wanjiku 1987, 1993 works on Gikuyu gender literature emergent in the traditional and modern song poetry that have proved to be quintessential in addressing the debates addressed in this current study.

### **1.7.6 ORAL POETRY FROM AFRICA**

This study explores the centrality of oral poetry as a societal weapon for addressing sensitive issues, challenges, and problems or conflicts afflicting women and men in the African continent but narrowing down to images of women in Gikuyu popular song in Kenya. African oral poetry has a commonality in that the challenges faced by women from Western, Central and Southern Africa are experienced by their counterparts in Eastern Africa. In most ancient African societies, composition of folkloristic materials was done by anonymous composers. The introduction of formal education in Africa mainly after European powerful nations partitioned Africa saw the emergence of the popular modern song genre in Africa.

Historically, the shift from informal to formal education appears to have eclipsed the role of traditional teachers of African values as eschewed in oral literary genres. Nevertheless, the role of an artist remained central in rural communities as the artist was still the mouthpiece of his or her own community. Achebe Chinua believes that an artist is the teacher of his or her society and as such even with the coming of formal education, Africa's oral art remained relevant to the African community.

According to Isidore Okpewho African oral poetry performance continues to occupy a very central position in the social concerns revolving around sex, love and marriage as well as gender domains of the African's life experience.

Jonathan Culler states:

Poetry lies at the centre of literary experience because it is the form that most clearly asserts the specificity of literature, its difference from ordinary discourse by an empirical individual about the world. (162)

The current study examines how images of women and gender concerns are portrayed by selected popular artists who serve as mouthpieces of the Gikuyu community.

In Southern Africa, popular song is used widely to reflect the relationship between men and men in contemporary society. For instance, Brenda Fassie, a popular artist addresses gender issues in her African music. In addition, she got involved in the struggle for liberation of women through composing of freedom songs that show the treatment of the disadvantaged black women and the general populace.

Yvonne Chaka Chaka in her songs on social concerns addresses gender interrelations as voiced in her number: "Last Night a DJ Saved My Life." The DJ in the song is a male counterpart in the music industry. There is a pronounced interconnectivity between written poetry and oral poetry emergent in the South African song and dance genre.

As Thapelo Selepe notes:

The genesis and development of modern African literature in indigenous languages in South Africa cannot be satisfactorily handled without linking them to the historical developments in South Africa...The intensification of liberation struggle from mid 20<sup>th</sup> century saw literature becoming another area of resistance politics in South Africa. African writers began to write in English. The birth of Black Consciousness Movement



in the late sixties gave further impetus to these developments with the emergence of black protest literature. (Selepe, Thapelo, Joshua 1)

This Southern Africa protest literature emerged as an archetypal black people's movement in the nineteenth century and it carried the spirit of the struggle for independence in many colonized African countries of Africa.

### **1.7.7 THE POPULAR SONGS OF KENYA**

The Kenyan literary landscape shows that the study of the popular song has attracted various scholars in cultural studies. The popular artists of Kenya tend to lean on the Benga beat which originated from Nyanza and Western regions of Kenya. There is a common identifiable beat that captures the imagination of the listeners of Kenyan secular popular artists in the entire country.

From another perspective Ngugi wa Thiong'o states that culture embodies moral, ethical and aesthetic values that people identify themselves with, and is a basis of people's identity to their sense of particularity.

Nkonge M.K. Department of literature, Kenyatta University in an unpublished paper postulates the centrality of Joseph Kamaru's music in drawing links between the old ways and new ways of life. He describes Kamaru as an artist who was created by the music performance gap that emerged in post-independent times whereby the introduction of modern musical instruments changed the style of rendition of emergent popular art forms in the new Kenyan nation-state.

Mutahi Karega and Kabira Wanjiku note that "struggle for independence was reinforced by anonymous oral artists who applied images of women as they composed songs of freedom to spearhead the Mau Mau movement and the mobilization of the masses mainly in

Mount Kenya region, Nairobi County, parts of the former Rift Valley Province and generally the rest of the nation-state.” (23)

Gakuo K. observes how modern song borrows from the African traditional song. He demonstrates how technical devices like proverbs are central in Joseph Kamaru’s popular music. He advances the view that proverbs in orature used in modern songs are borrowed from the traditional songs and that “they concretize the issues that the artist addresses himself to. They not only demonstrate his skill and prowess in the manipulation of language but also the indebtedness to the Gikuyu oral literary tradition.” This view is shared by other scholars in the field of cultural and literary studies. (16)

Peter Mwangi observes that “the popular artist’s role in social concerns is of prime importance in creating a verbal forum for educating the masses on the unfolding phenomenon that concerns the citizenry as it grapples with realities of life as members of a nation-state.” (18)

Michael Wainaina 1998 opines that “Artistes in the popular music scene re-appropriate texts from orature in their compositions and also appropriate styles and techniques from orature.” (21). It appears Wainaina is voicing the standpoints of his predecessors in that popular artistes apply the same language used in the traditional settings and only add a few inventions to suit the target audiences of their contemporary times.

Mungai Mutonya 2007 notes the centrality of the popular art song and dance as a vehicle for addressing social concerns and gender disparities in the Gikuyu contemporary society is the basis for addressing the community’s experience as an exploited people of the African continent.

Historically, the Agikuyu of Kenya were engaged in not only political activism to seek Kenya's political and economic independence but also in an insurmountable armed struggle with British colonial powers. The Gikuyu oral artists used images of women as evident in *Mugoiyo*, *Muthirigu* and *Mwomboko* songs to satirise the colonial hegemony in Kenya. The life and spirit of a people is best expressed and summarized by the oral communication spelt out through the oral artists as the voice of the societal concerns of a given time. The spatial and temporal moments in a performance keeps being reenacted from generation to another albeit in a different and varied style.

### **1.7.8 PERFORMANCE OF POPULAR SONGS**

The role of the target audience is just as important as that of the performing oral artist. Artists cannot afford to perform in a vacuum as there would be no motivating power to pursue their musical careers. It is in this light that the uses of para-linguistic features of style become a pertinent component of promoting performance.

Ruth Finnegan notes:

It is true audiences play a more directly influential part in the creation of oral literature than is common with written literature and the process of variability in oral poetry and the influence of traditional conventions from which a poet selects means that in one sense many poets play a part in the composition of poetry and not just one original composer on the model of written literature. (201)

In this study we note that the popular secular songs artists perform for both active and passive audience. \in night clubs and hotels the clientele normally joins in singing and dancing. At home, listeners enjoy their lyrics and they perform their chores at their work place.

Okumba Miruka contends that “Populism in poetic performance may be the case of transferring the romantic picture of ancient Africa as mass of egalitarianism where the individual was secondary to the community.” (91)

In this study the songs that raise the gender issues in the community are of greater importance than the singers themselves in spite of their being the architects of romanticism and emergent conflicts relayed in song-texts.

Peter Mwangi observes:

The gestures and body movements enhance the implied meaning in songs and also direct dancers to change from one dance movement to another. From this angle, we advance that the dynamics of performance and the performer: gestures, facial expression, teasing, antics and body movements constitute the dramatic elements of Mwomboko poetry. (116)

The meaning in the performed songs and dances gains more credit when revelers and the listeners whether at home or performance joints in general react to the lyrics. Popular artists in contemporary society perform mainly in hotels, motels, nightclubs and also in socio-political functions in open grounds or in big social halls or in makeshift structures like tents.

Maina Mutonya 2007’s contribution on the popular song poetry focuses on the centrality of performance in urban settings where the alienated masses are seeking identity and historical links as members of a modern society.

Equally, this study acknowledges that the messages communicated by each respective secular music oral artist becomes meaningful due to reception of the messages by the target audience.

## 1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1.8.1 FEMINIST LITERARY THEORY

This study mainly deals with the stylistic, feminist, thematic and performative creative aspects of popular music of three selected popular performing artists. It focuses on the diversity of socio-political meanings that are emergent and espoused in song-texts by three selected popular artists. One of the guiding lights in examining the phenomena therein is liberal feminism.

Tong Rosemarie claims that “Liberal feminism emerges as an appropriate strand of feminism that has guided...the offshoot of African feminism. Liberal feminism, the school of political thought from which liberal feminism has evolved, is in the process of reconceptualizing, reconsidering, and restricting itself, which makes it difficult to determine the status of liberal feminist thought.” There are varied views on what motivates the growth of gender roles in any given society. Every society has its own informed reasons for appreciating or not the social construction of gender. Vansina Jan 1994 advances the argument that:

Social construction of gender is an end result of the process of socialization—a process through which the values, norms, beliefs, wisdom, philosophy, customs, skills and practices of the community and the society—are learned, accepted and internalized. (16).

There is a kind of revelation of aspects of social constructionist tenets in the interpretation of the data evident in song-texts. In this study, a major focus of social constructionism is geared towards uncovering the ways in which individuals and groups participate in the construction of their perceived social reality. Through the eyes of the secular songs artists, the approach involves looking at the ways social phenomena are developed, institutionalized, known, and made into tradition by the human web.

Among the three strands of feminism: Liberal, Socialist/Marxist and Radical, the study applies liberal feminism with a bias on African feminism. In this light the study uses some of the standpoints advanced by Davies, Carole and Graves Anne in *Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature*. Though the study does not incorporate interviews and/or meetings with the artists to collect data, it borrows some insights hinging on applied and cognitive aspects of ethnography as a paradigm for exploring various aspects of knowledge of an indigenous community as seen in ethnopoems by select music artists presupposed to be expressing a cultural phenomenon in contemporary society.

### **1.8.2 STYLISTICS AND PERFORMANCE THEORY**

Secondly, the study uses points of analysis hinging on the strand of performance theory embraced in the works of Elizabeth Fine, as reflected in, *From Performance to Print*. The two theoretical orientations are a point of departure in the researcher's endeavour to interpret and analyze data formulated from the recorded CDs of the selected music artists.

Further, the researcher examines the linguistic stylistic elements that touch on the changing gender discourse that concerns voices of contemporary popular Gikuyu artists in Kenya. As such, the study borrows ideas of performance theories (Elizabeth Fine, 1984) in language and attempts to relate to how it connects with performative elements within the domain of socio-linguistic parameters of language use as evident in works featuring cultural and popular performances.

For example, Richard Bauman, in his study of popular art forms and relevance on performance approach usage observes:

Performance involves on the part of the performer an assumption of accountability to an audience in the way in which communication is carried out, above and beyond its referential content. From the point of view of

audience, the act of expression on the part of the performer is thus marked as subject to evaluation in the way it is done, in the relative skill and effectiveness of the performer's display of competence. (290)

Richard Bauman appears to focus on the monumental outcome of a performative text which is determined by the part played by a gifted performer working in partnership with an informed active audience. In discussing "Verbal Art as Performance" he centers his concern on the communicative elements that are realized in a performance of a given genre, for instance, the experience manifested in the popular art form.

Further, the study applies stylistics insights by Richard Bradford as a means to capture aspects of history and stylistics in the literary song-texts. In his Chapter on "Gender and Genre" he points out:

Carved along with this pattern are images of sexual pleasure, freedom and command: Women are 'Cyphers', childbearers who increase the dynastic 'numbers', and they are also the source of more straightforward sexual 'delights', an adverb surrounded by the Phallic double entendres of 'increase', 'swell' and 'amount.'(177)

As Barton Angela puts it, at times it is essential to use theory and also movement in the direction of culture, history, politics, society and institutions as the social contexts of the production of texts. This view allows the researcher to situate analysis of the selected song-texts within their social, economic, political and cultural network, interpreting them as a form of signification and discourse within the entire totality of forces operative in society.

## **1.9 JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study is inspired by the lacuna left by our predecessors in the study of popular secular art and gender concerns not only among the Agikuyu but also among other Kenya

communities. The current engagement examines whether popular poetry helps in empowering or disempowering terms of gender performing popular secular artists to participate in the national dialogue and thus create space in gender relations not only in one community but a host of societies in the Kenyan nation-state.

This is a nation-state that is formed out of 42 ethnic states or communities of Kenya. Recently, two other communities the Makonde and Asians have been included as people of Kenya. The study considered it significant to carry out a study of a genre of Gikuyu popular music artists of present times as an avenue for addressing sensitive issues in the society like images of women in the Kenyan contemporary society. In this research the researcher uses stylistics, feminism and performance theoretical orientations to explore gender concerns in the selected texts. The position of oral poetry has continued to be significant and pronounced as a vehicle of voicing gender in post-independent Kenya-. The participation of performing oral artists in advancing and re-appropriating the art form is a significant element in raising the importance of oral literature in addressing social issues in contemporary society.

The study sought to complement what other scholars have contributed in the field of literary studies, for example, (Nkonge 1987), (Kabira and Mutahi 1988), (Mahugu 1990), (Kabira 1993), (Kabira and Wanjira 1994), (Gakuo 1994), (Mwangi 1997), (Wainaina 1998), (Mamdani 2001), (Mwangi 2002), (Wekesa 2002), (Kahora 2007), (Drewett and Cloonan, 2006), (Njogu and Maupeu 2007), and (Mbugua 2007) and (Njogu and Olunya 2007).

## **1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.10.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This component illustrates the secular artists who have been studied, what is explored in their song-texts, what has been interrogated in terms of gender studies and how the data was gathered. The design is structured in an ethnography frame which hinges on feminist approaches to the study of literature.



The design is reinforced by the use of a textual approach as embedded in qualitative research undertakings as advocated in gender studies. Feminists have always been vocal in pointing out that the centrality of studying popular literary materials is through conducting of research in all types of genres whether written or orally relayed. This study is inspired mainly by African feminism as advanced by Carol Davies and Ann Graves on the collection and analysis of literary material from popular arts and entertainment.

Communication is crucial in rendering popular art form materials. The use of a communicative approach revamps the reception of the popular artists' intended messages to their target audience. The researcher highlights the effectiveness or lack of it on the part of oral artists in their attempt to raise feminist concerns on gender standpoints as regards contemporary issues involving men and women in Kenya.

This study involved the collection of primary data from select popular songs from the popular artists earmarked for the study. The time of collection of data was determined by the dates that the researcher got the selected songs from music stores in Nyeri, Thika and Nairobi and analyzed them within the research schedule. The three towns have music stores selling popular songs produced by the three selected Gikuyu secular popular artists. The data was crucial in the analysis of song-texts from the discography.

### **1.10.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

There are about two hundred popular secular Gikuyu music artists in central Kenya and its diaspora. This study examined the works of three popular music artists. They were selected through use of purposive sampling procedure to arrive at a desired number. This method was instrumental in collecting an estimated fifteen popular songs from the three selected Gikuyu secular popular artists. The researcher focused on the three selected Gikuyu popular artists, a number deemed to be manageable in terms of time limit and financial constraints.

The popular artists were selected on the basis of the type of thematic concerns that hinge on images of women in Kenya. The researcher listened to 50 songs, and ensured that she selected only the ones that are not repetitive thematically in reflecting images of women. Eventually, these songs were scaled down to fifteen (15) workable song-texts which address the major feminist and gender issues in the Gikuyu community of Kenya.

### **1.10.3 DATA COLLECTION**

The data for this study was collected from primary and secondary sources.

#### **1.10.3.1 Primary sources**

This was carried out through the assistance of a technician who works in Nyeri Music store. This involved audio listening and video viewing. The technician was also an essential resource person in not only collecting data from music stores on songs composed by the three selected performing artists but also on how to access CDs from other music production operators in Nyeri town.

#### **1.10.3.2 Secondary sources**

This was done in libraries to reflect the theoretical perspectives and other works which have a bearing on the study. The institutions that were visited for sourcing information include: Kenyatta University, University of Nairobi, Dedan Kimathi University and the Kenya National Library Services, Nyeri.

### **1.10.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

After the collection of data from the field, that is, from music stores, the researcher embarked on listening to the recorded oral materials on CDs. Transcription of song-texts from CDs to paper was conducted by using free translation. Text-making was another challenging exercise as writing Gikuyu language and the application of translation as a means to make

accessible oral literary text to non-Gikuyu readers requires expertise and keenness. The researcher had a brief refresher course from an expert of Gikuyu language and orthography.

### **1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Initially, the researcher had planned to obtain a research working permit from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation as the law requires but eventually settled to solely library research as the study ended up being textual. The researcher ensured that privacy rights of the popular artists were observed, thus safeguarding their social self-esteem. Hopefully, by engaging in the exploration of gender issues through features of style, thematic concerns and performative aspects engrained in the three selected popular artists' work, the research yielded positive and reliable data.

### **1.12 CONCLUSION**

The study examines the existing literature so as to draw a link between my predecessors in research and my research on popular songs performed by a well-known group of selected popular secular artists who use the Gikuyu language to debate gender and feminist concerns as their media to reach their target audience.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 STYLE IN GIKUYU POPULAR SONGS AND POETRY

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Chapter captures various aspects of style that feature in popular songs from three selected secular popular artists. The Chapter also looks into aspects of feminist critical thought as advanced by various thinkers in the first wave, the second wave, the third wave and the contemporary wave of feminism.

#### 2.2 STYLE: FORM AND CONTENT IN POPULAR SONG

According to Leech Geoffrey and Short Michael:

Style in literature is the literary element that describes the ways that the author uses words-the author's word choice, sentence structure, figurative language, and sentence arrangements all work together to establish mood, images, and meaning in the text. The style in writing can further be defined as the way a writer writes and it is the technique which an individual author uses in his writing. (28)

In the song poetry from the Kenyan experience one notes that the Gikuyu secular popular music artists have a distinct style that they build their melody and beat on. From the early 1970s the Benga genre has been a dominant beat in the popular music made in Kenya. The Gikuyu popular secular artists who have been used in this study have also followed the same trend. Through time, different crops of Benga performers who embrace innovation in this contemporary style have emerged. There are those that have survived and those that have disappeared. Daniel Kamau Mwai, Joseph Rugwiti, James Wahome wa Maingi, Mwalimu James Mbugua as well as Christopher David Kiratu were among the first Gikuyu Benga artists who rose in the early 1970s and continued their act upto the mid 1980s.

In the mid-1980s upto early 2000s a new crop of artists who included: John Ndichu, Joseph Wamumbe, Timona Mburu, Simon Kihara, Joseph Kariuki, Queen Jane Nyambura, Kinyua wa Thingira, Makibi James, Karanja David, John Ndemethiu, Sam Muraya, Ndece Kama-Danger, Wa Gatambia, Joe wa Mathina, Robert Githogori and Sammy Kirigi (Wa-Jane) were the main actors in this particular era. So, what is Benga beat?

According Tabu Osusa in *Shades of Benga: The Story of Popular Music in Kenya: 1946-2016*:

Benga is a genre of Kenyan popular music. It evolved between the late 1940s and late 1960s, in Kenya's capital city of Nairobi. In the 1940s, the African Broadcasting Service in Nairobi aired a steady stream of soukous, South African kwela, Zairean finger-style guitar and various kinds of Cuban dance music that heavily influenced the emergence of benga. There were also popular folk songs of Kenya's Luo peoples that formed the base for the emergence of benga. (93)

The time when Benga originated is normally contested and so the above view is no exception. In the 1940s the Gikuyu secular artists played the mwomboko traditional cum modern dance. In the 1950s and early 1960s well up to late 1960s, the Gikuyu composers played *Erithi* and *Nyangweso* beats. At the turn of the Millennium, Mike Murimi, Murimi WaKa-half, George wa Njaro, Kuruga wa Wanjiku among others appeared in the Gikuyu Music industry. Creative artistry has always been flourishing and it continues to flourish in all generations. As Leach Maria and Fried Jerome put it “the creative process is not begun and finished by a single individual; it is spread over many generations, and it never comes to an end as long as people are alive. It is important to note that a kind of continuum in the style of creative arts is envisaged in that contemporary artists tend to borrow heavily from the language used by ancient anonymous composers of folk songs from their communities. (1034)

As such, what we perceive as new music styles and thoughts are part of the folklore of our ancestors. The difference appears only to be in the style adopted by a particular popular artist of a given genre. Contemporary artists are influenced by the kind of musical compliments used at times in form of protest and search for empowerment, for instance, of the womenfolk.

Betty Wang in Dundes Alan notes:

If the folkloristic protest is permitted, it is perhaps because the blame for its composition usually cannot be affixed to any given person. It is collective, not an individual expression and consequently the singer of a song of protest is not to be blamed for the content of his song. He is only reporting what the folk say. (305)

The emerging folklore in any given community is dictated by the target audience and its participation in the growth and development of the genre in question. As observed in Gikuyu folk wisdom: *Njohi ni iri arugirwo*, that is, beer is brewed for earmarked partakers especially friends and in-laws. This implies that creative art has no meaning if there are no consumers of the created pieces of composition(s). The current study explores the effects of the treatment of women and men in the compositions of the selected secular artists. This brings to the fore the positions taken by proponents of gender studies in the contemporary debates leaning on gender relations in society. The contemporary popular artists appear to have continued the narrative that spells out the images of women in Gikuyu myths and legends as creatures who perpetuate mischief and conflict for no apparent reason.

Kabira Wanjiku in Bukenya Autin et al in her article, “Gender and Politics of control: An Overview of Images of Women in Gikuyu Oral Narratives” asserts:

The Gikuyu have a myth explaining why men are the rulers in their community. The myth says that a long time ago, women were the rulers in Gikuyu land. They ruled with an iron hand. They were cruel, merciless and unjust. They made men do everything.

Men cultivated, planted, harvested, prepared the food, baby sat and on top of this, they did their hunting and protected the people. Women did nothing but order the men around and impose all kinds of punishments. (34)

Though Kabira appears to focus on the negativities reflected in traditional Gikuyu folklore, it is notable that women too in the Gikuyu social discourse participate in the perpetuation of the status quo. In other instances, women are seen as mothers of the nation rather than trouble makers. It is important to explore both the negative and positive positions of the societal structure in order to come out with a balanced picture especially where the grassroots women are involved moreso in the rural areas of Kenya. In literary studies the meanings that emerge from literary texts have a great bearing on the philosophy of life of a given community.

According to Deborah Cameron:

The production of meaning designates the processes which speakers mean something by what they say or writers by what they write and through which hearers or readers interpret what is said or written. The reproduction of meaning refers to our dependence, in producing meanings, on previous meanings or interpretations, to our dependence in particular on one another's experience with the linguistic forms being used. (46)

The current study shares similar views in that it uses song-texts by performing oral artists to demonstrate the emergent meaning that focuses on the treatment of men and women in the given community.

### **2.3 STYLE AND WOMEN ISSUES IN THE COMMUNITY**

In capturing the treatment of women and men in the songs of Murimi Wakahalf, Joseph Kariuki and John De-Mathew it is necessary that we highlight aspects of style that influence the creative artists among the Agikuyu of Kenya. In addition, we need to draw a link that ties

feminism and gender language structures and/or statements in the analysis of song-texts so created from the repertoire of compositions available in the market. Gender is a social construction as it is members of a given community/society who determine the roles/chores/assignments or activities to be performed by the female and male members. Through the socialization process the distinction of members of a society through their gender is highlighted by voicing the connections and disconnections emergent in gender interrelationships.

There are varied views on what motivates the growth of gender roles in any given society. Every society has its own informed reasons for appreciating the social construction of gender. As Rebeca Njau in Ndungo Catherine observes:

Social construction of gender is an end result of the process of gender which is an end result of the process of socialization - a process through which the values, norms, beliefs, wisdom, philosophy, customs, skills, and practices of the community and the society are learned, accepted and internalized. (61)

What performing secular artists focus on is not divorced from the views expressed in Njau's perception. Feminist critical thought is essential in the study of images of women in oral poetry and song genres. From time immemorial, many African societies have emerged as patriarchal hegemonies. This is a position that has been acceptable not only among the menfolk but womenfolk as well. Nevertheless, emerging trends in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century changed the status quo. Feminist and gender criticism has continued to be indebted to the writings of Virginia Woolf, Simon De Beauvoire and Wallstonecraft among others. Woolf for instance, indicates that in the Western culture, the female is disadvantaged as a result of the shadow of the male ego. Feminists have over the years endeavoured to deconstruct the status quo and the image of the woman has changed drastically. In "*A Room of One's Own*" Margaret Woolf pinpoints how



the woman can excel in art if given privacy and economic freedom so as to march forward elegantly and gallantly charting her well-being without male intervention.

Further Tong Rosemarie notes:

Some feminist theorists worry that an overemphasis on difference may lead to the intellectual and political disintegration. If feminism is to be without any standpoint whatsoever, it becomes difficult to ground what is good for women. It is a major challenge to contemporary feminism to reconcile the pressures of diversity and difference with those for integration and commonality. We need a home in which every one has a room of her own, but one in which the walls are thin enough to permit a conversation, a community of friends in virtue, and partners in action. (75)

The differences between genders tend to gravitate on one's sex and the type of societal background one hails from. In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir spells out the conflicts that arise in the society due to the patriarchal culture, favours male folk. She observes that women in Western society are marginalized in societal issues and also in their development in the art world. She argues that the ideal of sexual patterns is a process which begins when one is born. Therefore, from birth to death we are sexual relationship. Our deepest feelings for other people, our fantasies, our feelings about our bodies and sexual pleasures are all part of our personalities and our sexualities.

The question that arises is: Is the society's world-view based against female folk so that they are taken to be the "second sex" after creation of the "first sex", the man? This is a debatable issue that needs reflections from a particular society's beliefs, norms and values that govern a variety of cultural standpoints gravitating on love, sex and sexualities engrained in contemporary times.

## 2.4 STYLE, SEX AND SEXUALITY

Tong Roemarie reflects on the centrality of having a balance in addressing sex and sexuality matters in our contemporary society. When it comes to the state of intervention in the private sphere (family and domestic society), liberals agree that the less we see of Big Brother in our bedrooms, kitchens, recreation rooms, and nurseries, the better. We all need places where we can, among family and friends, shed our public personae and become our “real” selves.

Sex is a very important term in any study focusing on humankind. In the Bible, man and woman are distinguished due to their sex. (Genesis) As the woman Eve was created from the rib of man, Adam. This draws a heated debate from feminist and gender activists and scholars. The issue of the weaker sex has its origin in the Bible. In contemporary debates about equity and equality these biblical beliefs are contested by scholars. Sex being an ambiguous term that also means having sexual intercourse, Gikuyu popular artists tend to exploit this ambiguity to paint women as sex objects.

The Song-text, *Alice*, by Joseph Kariuki, describes the sexual performance in ways that paint women as sexual objects in his immediate community. The persona laments about his lover’s charisma which has disarmed him and left him as a vagabond of sorts. The persona regrets being in bad company that has led him to pain and suffering more so when Alice abandons him.

Some carefree people have influenced the persona’s life and more so his marital status. There is express use of idiomatic expression as captured in the words *Aria matoi ruki hacika*, that is, those people who do not know the state of a bent sword.

In Gikuyu folklore a man used a sword to go for hunting expedition as a means to fetch wealth that was measured in the form of cattle, goats and sheep. This points to the dominance of men not only over women but also weaker men who were vulnerable to attacks, for instance,

during cattle-rustling escapades. On a successful expedition the young warriors, whose work also included protecting their community, slaughtered an animal and ate meat slashed using a sword. It is noticeable that the idiomatic expression refers to the woodcutter who cuts wood till his panga and/or sword bends.

In the present song-text, the underlying meaning centers on sexual performance. When a male lover is engaged in an intense sexual intercourse, dominance or lack of it is displayed. A strong lover in love making; thus does not feel his sword “go bending” as it is hard enough and has “teeth power to cut the cake of love.”

In the same song-text *Alice*, the image of a woman as a piece of wood that is cut by a woodcutter (read man) emerges. The image of a woman’s love being hard and stable as a log of wood is revisited by the persona. The womenfolk are seen as stable figures that surround the environment.

The question of *mbura matu* that is, dump people who hear but act in a naughty way is presented. The *Mbura matu cia* Nairobi “Those dump-people, refers to the brutes and/or promiscuous people of Nairobi. For instance the patrons of Konange street “sex market.” This is a group of multiple sex practitioners who have been alienated from their African cultural practices which espouse decent ways of sexual behavior and abhor perverse sexual practices.

Further Tong Roemarie observes:

Sexuality also plays a crucial role in psychoanalytic feminist theory, but in a markedly different way. Whereas for radical feminists, the centrality of sexuality emerges “from feminist practice on diverse issues, including abortion, birth control, sterilization abuse, domestic battery, rape, incest, lesbianism, sexual harassment, prostitution, female sexual slavery, and pornography, for psychoanalytic feminists, the centrality of

sexuality arises out of the Freudian theory and such theoretical concepts as the pre-Oedipal stage and the Oedipus complex.(75)

The brutes are further compared to rodents in the persona's society, for instance rats that inhabited Gikuyu concentration camps. The idiomatic expression is questioned in the statement *Matirumaga Makahuha*. 'They bite but fail to sooth and lessen pain on the victims' toes.' In Kenya's history, the State of Emergency era was marked by human suffering, torture and subjection to many acts of indignity. While living in unhygienic conditions, the colonized indigenous Kenyan people lived with many rodents for instance, rats.

In the song-text *Alice*, the persona regrets having parted ways with his lover and eventually landed in the wrong company. He says: *Ngioyana na neema kuhia*. (I got involved in the company of those who are dubbed as "meat that never gets roasted or cook-able" in readiness for eating.)

The image of food and love trope augurs well with the spirit of satisfaction or lack of it. "Love" is equated to eating "meat" a delicacy that was very common in the Gikuyu traditional society. The persona paints a woman as a great companion as opposed to a naughty woman who goes to the extent of poking his eyes to provoke him for a domestic encounter. He says: *Urinjikagia ciara maitho*, (A bad companion who dips her fingers in my eyes.).

The persona continues to apply idiomatic expressions as seen in another lover's nasty encounter, *ungi wa kuhaka mbaka rangi*. That is, a companion whose love is comparable to that of brushing a cat with polish/paint which it shakes off from its fur which implies an unrequited love encounter. So, the beauty intended flops as the paint falls off, so all these results in a useless venture/non-rewarding experience.

Further, the speaker in the song broaches the idea of the analogy of a cow and the tethering rope. The latter may be unappealing but once one loves the cow, there is no option of

hating the tethering rope. This comparison emanates from the Gikuyu proverb echoed in Barra in *One Thousand Kikuyu Proverbs, Kumena Ngombe ni kumena kamukwa*, “once you hate a cow, you also hate its tethering rope.” Ordinarily the proverb was used to imply that if a man hated a woman with a child born out of wedlock, equally he disliked the child. It was common for a man especially an elderly one to marry a younger woman with a child born out of wedlock as the Gikuyu traditional practices permitted polygamy.

In the same song, *Alice*, the persona is named Kariuki, which is a name given to a child born after another one who has passed away. Essentially, this replacement is meant to create a spirit of continuity. Kariuki also means incantation or resurrection of the dead. The persona says: *Kariuki ndi njira ngiuka mwendwa tuirukie wendo uyu wiitu*. “I Kariuki, I am on the way so that we can resuscitate and/or resurrect our love perceived to be dead. At this level there is use of personification as a literary device to spice the idiomatic expression.

In brief the storyline is that the persona in the song narrates about his failed marriage. His lover abandoned him because of his wayward ways. He’s thriving in bad company on the streets of Nairobi. Since Alice, the estranged dutiful wife abandoned him he has married three wives who are now estranged. Now he is appealing to Alice to give him a chance to resurrect and/or revive or renew their relationship as a husband and a wife. The reunion is viewed as a panacea for the paranoia and so the image of a woman as a unifier and reconciliator emerges.

## **2.5 COMPARATIVE TECHNIQUE AND FIGURATIVE USAGE**

In literary studies figurative language is an essential device used in the interpretation and judgment of creative artistry moreso by drawing images from the compared entities from physical objects, physical features or the immediate environment.

Figurative language is used in both literature and poetry to create layers of meaning which the reader accesses through the senses, symbolism, and sound devices. Figurative

language brings the reader deeper into theme of the work, without the author having to explicitly lay out the theme for the reader. It is a way for the reader to enter the words with their minds and emotions, rather than simply comprehending a story or poem. Figurative language encourages the reader to make connections with the characters, the plot, and the deeper message of a work which creates a more memorable experience for the reader.web.

The persona in the song-text *Alice* takes a positive stance as he appreciated her caring disposition. She satisfies the persona in matters of the heart. This is a lover who is supportive to her spouse and only deserts him because of his promiscuous wayward ways. The spirit captured in the song-text is that of a woman as a good wife- a wife who is perceived as dutiful and rational and only turns the tables due to her irate husband's unbecoming behaviour.

There is the application of comparative technique as the dutiful wife Alice is pitted against a reckless, destructive and uncaring spouse, one named Jane as well as many naughty, proud showy and extravagant as well as lazy ones like Jane. Through this contrastive technique, the Janes of this world are shown to be destroyers of family life.

There is also the use of animal metaphor that emerges as a means to highlight human suffering and untold pain. The persona says: *Ndikayaga itari nume*, that is, an animal never screams unless it is bitten and/or hurt by another. This metaphor from animals in the jungle is also applied in the song-text, by Murimi wa Kahalf, to express a lover's/husband's distress in an unreciprocated love relationship.

## **2.6 DESRIPTIVE TECHNIQUE AND FIGURATIVE USAGE OF LANGUAGE**

It is common to hear speakers in social discourse using coded language or applying it connotatively to construct new meanings in a situation or experience which is out of the interest of the speech community. Chris Baldick defines it thus: "A metaphor is the most important and

widespread figure of speech, in which one thing, idea, or action is referred to by a word or expression normally denoting another thing, idea, or action, so as to suggest some common quality shared by the two.”(15)

In metaphor, this resemblance is assumed as an imaginary identity rather than directly stated as a comparison to a perceived animate or non-animate object.”

In a song-text by Murimi, the persona uses the vehicle metaphor to capture the imagination of the reader as regards drawing material from the immediate environment and the daily occurrences in a given area. In situating the images of women in the community wavelength the performing secular artist finds space to address gender issues in the contemporary society. As Terence Hawkes in Leech Geoffrey 1981’s work says, “Metaphor . . . is not fanciful embroidery of the facts. It is a way of experiencing the facts.” (16) Poetic metaphor denies us a literal sense, and so induces us to make sense, i.e., to find interpretations beyond the true functional meaning captured by paraphrase.

Hence stylistic monism finds its strongest ground in poetry, where through such devices as metaphor, irony and ambiguity, meaning becomes multivalued, and sense loses its primacy. Monism, with its rejection of the form-meaning dichotomy, was a tenet of the New Critics, who rejected the idea that a poem conveys a message, preferring to see it as an autonomous verbal artifact. (33)

In Kenya, the transport industry is dominated by the type of vehicle referred to as *matatu*. This is normally a van or pickup built to facilitate transportation of travellers from one destination to another. The *matatu* also comes in the form of bigger mini buses that carry 40 passengers on average. Murimi wa Kehalf in a song-text, *Ino Ni Momo*, “This is a Giantess,” employs the vehicle metaphor to capture the imagination of his listeners and/or fans. In the

storyline the person narrates his familial domestic problems that are perpetuated by a giantess of a wife.

This is a wife whom he compares to a fuel guzzler on the road that consumes hundreds of Kenya shillings while on the road. In addition, it is a giantess that takes the image of a tractor in terms of fuel consumption. The Momo “roars like a devil that has taken, *Kairaci*” an illicit brew in Kenya. The use of a simile extends the metaphorical use a notch higher to add diversity to the language use. The image of a woman as a limitless consumer emerges in the light of the expensive fuel prices globally that determine trends in the world economy.

The persona intertwines the vehicle metaphor with imagery and metonymical language structures. This is captured in drawing the picture of his spouse who is a big woman, the size of a giantess. She is described as a big machine or vehicle that is a fuel guzzler. Once he engages the ignition key, (read his object of dispensing conjugal rights) it consumes hundreds of Kenya shillings. From this end, the image of Momo, the giantess appears to be a reincarnation of the ogres and ogresses narrated in the Gikuyu folklore. The contemporary narratology in popular Gikuyu songs draws a kind of mythological reminiscences and flashbacks of the story telling world that was a medium of communication in the pre-colonial era Kenya. A case in point is a famous monster-narrative entitled: “The Girl and the Ogre.” The ogre eats the girl he meets plucking fruits in its sacred tree. It appears the persona in the song-text deconstructs the said story and now it is a kind of “A Man and the Ogress” rendition. The redefinition of the ferocious behavior is captured in this story of a weak husband (male) in a society under the stewardship of a giantess (wife/female).

According to Kabira Wanjiku notes, story-telling was a common practice that tied the children, the adolescents and adults together. The place of performance was central in rendering a rich portrayal of Gikuyu traditional practices.



The oral artist was a key educator in the informal structures of the education needed to make the community cohesive. Bukenya and Kabira further note:

In the Gikuyu oral narratives wives are generally portrayed among other things as: unreliable, disobedient, irresponsible, disloyal, disagreeable, adulterous, cunning, senseless, easily cheated, forgetful, not dependable, evil, tricksters, lazy, etc. There is hardly any story among the Agikuyu that describes wives positively. As co-wives, they are ogres, cruel and malicious. (36)

The catalogue of the negative traits enumerated by Kabira makes the debate on the images of women to create the academic conflicts between feminist writers and moderate literary scholars who approach the gender relations issues with a balanced argument. The debate tends to have landed in the Gikuyu secular popular artists domain triggered through compositions by contemporary artists. The popular Gikuyu artist appears to have taken over the role of the community educators of contemporary times. In cultural linguistics the use of figures of speech is appraised as a means of tying up ideas that portray sensitive matters of the contemporary societies of the world. Chinua Achebe in *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, observes the centrality of an artist as a teacher of his or her own society. The artist is the mouth piece of the philosophy that guides the life struggles, foibles, success, failure and challenges within a given community. (25)

In the song-text, "This is a Giantess," the persona appears to be addressing the gender question in his contemporary society. The sorry state of men living in fear of Momo-type of damsels is a socio-cultural stigma that afflicts men, particularly those in urban areas, who are living in a materialistic world. He sings, "Once you engage the ignition key the monstrous Momo consumes hundreds of Kenya shillings." What emerges is psychoanalytic and social constructionist structures in meaning-making as viewed through the rendition of the

relationship between the culprit, the irate wife and the victim, Momo's weak husband. The ignition key in the vehicle metaphor appears to represent, man's phallic symbol of consummating marriage and the attendant conjugal rights. After an affair with a Momo, a victim is left bankrupt due to the high level of consuming fuel (Read consuming money and bodily sexual energy.) This is a revelation of a lover's pursuance of unreciprocated love in vain. (Read consumption of male energy during sexual intercourse.)

Still, through use of comparative technique the persona continues to draw parallels of the Momo, a tractor which is deemed to be ugly and is not as appealing as a Toyota Vitz car. A tractor is drawn as a heavy commercial machine that is unappealing rather than attractive. The Toyota Vitz image captures the caricature of a young and innocent girl while the heavy commercial vehicle is the image of an old and big-sized woman. At this level the image of a woman is not only propped up as a consumer but a sexual object to be appreciated or resented, and one whose very description is humorous and derogatory.

The shift from metaphor to other literary devices is visible in the proverb *Itari thahu iriaga ikoro ria njira*. That is, "an animal that is not cursed or tied to taboos eats to its full satisfaction the peelings on the road side and manages to beat hunger."

In Gikuyu history the most famous famine was dubbed: *ngaragu ya mianga*. That is, "The hunger of cassava" and *Ngaragu ya Kimotho*, "The Hunger of Kimotho." The type of hunger alluded to in this song-text, is "hunger" for love and stable marriage. The matters of gender interrelationship are broached in a negative light. The Momo companion does not reciprocate nor complement the efforts made by the weak spouse who appears to be whining for sympathy from his listeners.

The food metaphor is a recurrent technique for airing sensitive societal issues like hunger for conjugal rights. While handling gender imbalances in the contemporary realities oral artists tend to blame unfulfilled conjugal rights on the lifestyles adopted by "people of the

city.” There is an element of superstition in that Momo’s husband believes he has been jinxed by the state of unrequited love. Yet, there are men without a jinx who fall in the hands of good spouses for “an animal that is not cursed is satisfied in feeding on peelings left on the roadside,” while the cursed one lives in perpetual struggles in servitude due to exploitation of the Momos of this world.

In this song-text, the persona uses imagery to emphasize the state of slavery in marriage. At this point, he reveals his tribulations in a life controlled by a slave-driver, Momo, the giantess. He notes: *Gwetha Kibarua ii itikumenya ngutwiika ngombo ya Momo*, that is, on seeking casual labour in town, I never knew I would be driven into slavery/servitude perpetrated by a giantess in the city.

The gender issue emerges still in a negative perspective when the image of a woman as a slave- driver is pronounced. The Momo is the ultimate destroyer of a man’s handsomeness as captured in the following words: *Ngeita nyoko*, that is, I refer to myself as a handsome man in my self-counsel, something that renders me misguided in the marriage institution.

The food metaphor re-appears in the same song-text in the words: “Mashing up foolishness in the laps of Momo.” The Agikuyu people are known to be eaters of traditional *mukimo*, mashed maize, beans, potatoes and greens, presently referred to as *kienyeji* in restaurants in town and cities. It appears the food metaphor in the song-text draws reflections of the famous Gikuyu proverb *Muria ngime ni ari murugiri*, that is, “One who eats mashed up food has one who does the mashing.

The connotation applied here revolves around sexual intercourse. That is, a person who seeks sexual pleasure must have in mind a lover to satisfy his conjugal rights in a family setting.

An injured animal is rendered useless and unfit for human consumption, The Momo emerges as a torturer of a husband who is forced to run for his survival yet he has a painful thorn in his foot and so swears: *Ndigitengera ringi na muigwa kuguru*, that is, “I will not run again with a thorn in my leg.” This appears to be a painful experience and the thorn imagery signals the victim’s desperation in seeking redress with his estranged overbearing lover. What next? The victim reflects on his past when he first met the hypocritical Momo who appeared to be honest and innocent. The issue of chasteness and virginity is broached though in a negative light. The Momo had cunningly proclaimed to be pure yet he found out that the giantess was merely “a ramshackle that had degenerated on the road.”

Painfully, the jinxed spouse finds out that Momo is an estranged run away ex-wife of an unnamed spouse. She has three children all sired by three different fathers. He ponders: *Ndinamba ciigana?* That is, “What is my position among other ex-husbands of Momo?”

The image of women as carefree beings is drawn in Momo’s character. One recalls that in the Biblical Book of Proverbs, the writer proclaims that during the Day of Judgment, seven women will cling to one man as their husband in the eyes of their maker.

The persona further uses a simile to portray Momo, the giantess as a gluttonous spouse when he asserts: *kuria iriaga ta buriciani irakamuo*: The Momo eats like a Friesian breed of cow that is reared for milk production purposes. Likening Momo to a cow broaches the idea of a cow as one of the most adorable domestic animals as seen in the simile: “As useful as a cow,” yet the spouse in question appears to be an unappealing creature of love and hatred conjoined like siamese twins.

The meat metaphor, employing a delicious and likeable type of food, is brought forth in a negative way that describes a sour love encounter. He quips: *Rwambo in nyama* that is, stale meat that is eaten at night. The “night” is presented as a time of “disguise” and “mishaps.”

This meat metaphor echoes the Gikuyu proverb, *Gatuma Kainagia murigwa*, which means at night, one may dance with a strange partner who may spell doom and misfortune. Still the centrality of the meat metaphor throws light to another proverb that says: *Gitiro kia muka wene gitikagio kiarara*. (Dancing with and having the promise of love of a married wife's *Gitiro* dance only comes to light the following day during morning hours.) The partner could have been enjoying stale love only to discover that "the meat belongs to another respectable spouse."

This prompts the person to reveal: *Nyama ciariruo tene ni ehitukiri*: The meat was eaten a long time ago by passers-by, that is, other "lovers" engaged in "a hit and run" multiple sex relationship. Today, there are many instances, of children born out of wedlock due to shortlived romantic encounters between males and females who meet at night to eat and feast, ending up with the eating of the "the meat of love." This experience is what has led Momo to be a mother of three children sired by three different men, which is an undefined marital relationship, perhaps a kind of bigamy with stray passers-by of the city.

The meat metaphor was quite common in traditional songs and dances in Gikuyu folklore, especially in the carnivores that involved performance of circumcision songs and dances. The singer would challenge listeners, viewers and spectators thus:

*Matiri ngemi, matiri ngemi*, (They have no ululations or compliments.)

*Ngemi ciao no makiria nyama*, (Their ululations come only when they are eating meat)

*Makiria nyama, makiria nyama*, (While eating meat while eating meat)

*Merananga, nyita ngutinirie huui wainaga-*, (They yap: hold for me I will cut you a piece of meat).

It appears contemporary Gikuyu popular artistes keep on revising the metaphors that were used by anonymous composers of traditional pieces. The above lines in the Gikuyu dance

capture element of psychoanalytic tenets bordering on sexual overtures. Love, sex and marriage were major concerns in the socio-cultural life of the Gikuyu people.

Further, the persona uses the rail metaphor. He says: *Nindahingicathinirie reri*, that is, I mismatched the rails of a train of love. The image of an estranged husband as a derailed train driven by a drunken Momo that causes an accident adds muscle to the image of women as “derailers” of marriages. The persona equates himself to a derailed train that lands into a ditch spelling disaster and the end of the road for a fruitful marriage.

However, the persona consoles himself with a common proverb: *Kuhoha ti kuuma*: To wither is not to dry-up. He is pessimistic in facing his challenges as he endeavours to contain his tribulations schemed by his estranged spouse. There is hope for tomorrow for he willingly cohabited with a Momo in the City. He recalls the Gikuyu proverb: *Mwitemengeri ndoragia ingighoha*, that is, one who cuts sugarcane in preparation for stuff for brewing *muratina* does not worry even if they wither.” The sugarcane stuff will still be used to brew the traditional *muratina* drink that was a requirement during marriage negotiations.

From another perspective, the persona uses the law sentence metaphor to emphasize his status in an estranged relationship. The persona has been subjected to a life sentence of tribulations by his torturer, the giantess Momo. He emerges as a love jailbird; he is compared to a love bird in strange waters swimming in unknown depths of the safe and unsafe waters of wild intimacy in the neighbourhoods of a great unidentified African city. This leads him to a life of uncertainty whereby he tires and retires in pursuance of an unreciprocated love affair. The image of a woman as a jailer is fronted to heighten the intensity of the ultimate hopelessness of the unfortunate spouse. A life sentence is seen as an everlasting continuum of human suffering when there is no glimpse of hope for a better tomorrow anywhere in the rendition of the song-text.

The hunter metaphor is also applied in the same song-text, whereby the irate jilted husband laments having wasted his hunting arrows in pursuance of Momo's ill-fated love and marriage. This image of a woman as the hunted being who is still the being that is a perpetrator of evil comes out through the words of the persona: *Miaka itandatu-ngiite migwi na ngima*. (For six years I wasted my hunting arrows shooting at a monkey.) In Gikuyu wooing lines of the post-independence era, young men equated pursuing a lady's love to a hunting encounter. Then, there appears to have been a shortage of young ladies ready to start homes as wives due to the *Ngahika Ndeenda* phenomenon that was sweeping across villages as young marriageable women opted for a soft and promiscuous life in the city.

In social discourse of the post-independence era, young ladies who grew up in concentration camps in Gikuyu reserve areas had experienced hard times. This was orchestrated by home guards and colonial administrators who led young ladies to forced marriages or pre-marital sex practices. As this was against the customs of Gikuyu who lived in pre-colonial and colonial times, the girls were seen to have crossed the rail in matters of love, sex and marriage.

So, when their parents and aunts asked them why they were getting late in acquiring partners in life, they yapped: *Ngahika Ndeenda*: "I will marry when I want," which implied that they had gone against the norms and conventions of Gikuyu traditional practices, which expected girls to marry and settle down in family life.

Daniel Kamau (DK) a famous Gikuyu musician of the late 1960s to the early 1980s composed a song entitled: *Ngahika Ndeenda*, (I Will Marry When I Want.) This popular *Erithi* cum Rumba song narrates the reasons a girl in the post-independence era preferred to remain single after tasting pre-marital sex with multiple partners. This practice made young men to struggle "hunting for partners" who usually eloped with Casanovas to "Kiamatawa", The Place with Bright-Lights, that is, the city. This phenomenon of a kind of struggle of pursuing a lover

is echoed in song-text when the persona uses a wind metaphor to capture his failed mission as a weak husband. He says: *Na gutengeria ruhuho rutenyitika*, that is, “And chasing the wind without catching it.” This echoes the words of a wise King in the book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament. The persona’s mission is complicated by the fact that he is a tenant, who is equally chased by an overbearing landlady for failing to pay house rent. The landlady is said to be chasing the weak husband “like the *miraa* carrier service vehicle hitting the road from Meru around Mount Kenya region to Nairobi City County. *Miraa*, or *khat* is a drug that is chewed by people who want to fight sleepiness to while away time mostly while idling in the towns and cities. The image of a woman as a predator of innocent male tenants is propelled as a means to show the problems perpetuated by women of wealth or in power.

The person caps this idea of sleepiness by using a simile: *Ingihitania (Mathani) thiagata ngondu nditu*, that is, if I break the (ten) commandments I would find myself moving like a sheep in its gestation (pregnant) period.

This simile draws a negative image of the female figure; that of the difficult pregnancy period where the image of women is revealed negatively as creatures that live in a sorry and desperate state.

According to Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* the difference between male and female is purely in the biological anatomical being of the two beings in “binary opposition.” The author highlights the conflicts that arise in society due to the fallacies perpetrated by patriarchal hegemonies which tend to favour the male folk, as she notes:

The ideal of sexual patterns is a process, which begins when one is born. From birth to death we are sexual beings, whether or not we are engaged in a sexual relationship. Our deepest feelings for other people, our fantasies, our feelings about our bodies and our sexual pleasures are all part of our personalities and our sexualities. (49)



In feminism critical thought the politics of gender focus on societal beliefs and attitudes in the treatment of the female figure pitied against the male one. The society's world view tends to be biased against female folk so that they are taken to be the "second sex" after the creation of the "first sex," the male as in Adam's creation story.

In another song-text, *Wendo Mwega uri Murio*, "Sweet Love is Tasty", *Njata Yakwa*, "My Star," by John De Mathew, the persona narrates the story of sweet love with his chosen one. He says:

*We niwe njaata yakwa*- You are my star

*Rubaru rwa Ndemathiu*- The rib of Ndemethiu

*Acio angi ni muingi wa Gathagu*- The rest are the multitude of Gathagu

*Murata wakwa nowe wiki* -My friend my lover you are the only one.

This is a rare occasion when a popular musical artiste decides to praise the lover whom he loves most in a "the multitude of Gathagu" group of lovers. The star metaphor is used to underline the value of his dutiful spouse. This is a spouse who can be picked from the "multitude of Gathagu," that is, a cult of the feather-carrying religious fundamentalists who preach water and take wine. The star metaphor paints a jolly state of affairs just like a special star in a constellation that stands out in the crowded unclear sky.

It is ironical that, the persona acknowledges that he has a multitude of lovers, who he likens to the crowd of Gathagu, feather-carrier fundamentalists. The idea of multiple partners in the era of Hiv-Aids pandemic shows the persona's ignorance and loose morals as a musician of repute. He remains a condemned being in the eyes of fans. In the song-text *Kwanyu Ndigacoka*, "I'll Never Come Back to Your Home" a female voice responds to a male singer's negative pronouncements about the status of her home and her relatives, moreso her father and mother.

*Mwendwa ugiite*  
*Gwitu ndugacoka ii*  
*Twanirinia ukinga*  
*Ugoka juma*  
*Ka mwendwa utaninire*  
*Marakara ngoroini*  
*Tondu uguka*  
*Ukaregera thome x2*  
*Ndukae gwika uguo*  
*Mwendwa wakwa,*  
*Kuu ni gukiima*  
*Athuri gitio*  
*Ni gugika njono*  
*Ukira athuri*  
*Maingine nawe*  
*Ukaregera kihingo-ini x2*  
  
*Horeria ngoro i*

My lover you said  
 you will never come back to our home  
 when we discussed you said  
 you will come on Saturday  
 my lover, didn't you  
 clear the anger in your heart  
 for you've come and  
 remained by the gate.  
 Do not do that  
 My lover,  
 That's to disrespect  
 The elders.  
 It's a shame  
 For you to tell elders  
 To get in and then  
 You stay by the gate  
  
 Calm your heart

The narrator in the song-text describes her shortcomings in her love encounters with a male counterpart who loathed the treatment he was subjected to by her irate parents who attempted to disfigure him with pangas and axes. The in-laws had threatened to finish the prospective son-in-law for failing to honour dowry demands. The female lover woos her male counterpart to accept his mistakes and show respect to elders.

*Baba witu uiya*  
*Niomire thi*  
*Maitu nake akiuga*  
*Ithanwa rigature ngu*  
*Hiti ndingikiria mwana x2*  
*Kiumiririe ukinye ta muthuri na ugikinye ta*  
*muthuri na ugikinye*  
*Ta mundu wanaruona*  
*Utaiguite ndararia, mwendwa wakwa*  
*ndukamake hania ugukaira,*  
*Nii ngukaira ho x2*

Our father  
 Passed on  
 My mother then said,  
 Let the axe split firewood  
 The hyena cannot eat its own  
 Take courage, behave like  
 a man and behave like  
 one who has seen a lot  
 If you've not heard me desert you my dear  
 do not be worried where you die,  
 I will die there

The use of descriptive technique features prominently in this song-text. The female voice in the song-text urges the male counterpart to be man enough and let bygones be bygones. The image of a woman as a shrewd wooer emerges as she draws the hyena metaphor that says that "a hyena does not eat its child" in spite of its gluttonous nature. The image of a woman as a weak creature that requires the care and protection from a man features. As Bukonya and Kabira (1994) observe: "Women are irresponsible" "stupid" and "senseless." They need to be controlled because they are incapable of running their families because they are disloyal and easily cheated. (81). This view leaves a lot to be desired in gender interrelations.

*Nindamaiguithirie uria waugite*

*Uiguthanio mbere*

*Mburi thutha*

*No magikinjira nugu igitunyo*

*Mwana Iikagirio mungu*

*Ihingwo maitho x2*

*Mangihitia moige ndiri waku I ingitua*

*mikwa na njuke gwaku akorwo ni njera*

*kana gucurio itara manjurie no mamenye*

*ndi waku*

*Kariuki ona akorwo muri ereri thoguo*

*ndangiaga kinya kia njohi*

*Ngunyitire mutwe nawe umiririe iteke*

*tuthare mahinda maitu nawe x2*

I made them understand what you had said

Agreeing first

Goats later,

But they told me for one to snatch a child from a monkey you first throw a gourd to blinden it

If they make a mistake and say am not yours I'd disobey and come to your home if its prison or being hang on the rack they hang me but know I am yours.

Kariuki even if you are poor, your father cannot lack a gourd of beer

I get hold of the head and you endure the kicks we make haste of our time together.

The image of a woman as an object to be bought in the market for sale by any prospective buyer emerges in the song-text. Perhaps, this borders on the oldest profession, today referred to as a sex-worker. The proverb: “*Nugu igitunyo mwana iikagirio mungu*, that is, “For one to snatch a child from a monkey, one has first to throw a gourd creeper to blinden it,” indicates the position of women in friendship times in the contemporary society.

As Jenniffer Coates in (Terry & Hoare 2007) says: “Friendship...involves some or all of the following components: taking part in shared activities, developing a sense of trust and mutual support; being able to relax and ‘be yourself.’ But friendship varies from group to group, and seems to be gendered. (245). It is interesting to note that in wooing her male counterpart, the female emerges as desperate to the level of disobeying her parents will. “I will disobey and come to your home,” she says.

The case of a contemporary would-be bride disobeying her parents signals aspects of liberalism in an increasingly rebellious generation where curses are not feared yet in many instances there is a call for respect of elders and traditional practices even when they (elders)

are wrong. A girl in the traditional African society had always to accept to be married off to a bridegroom of her parents' choice.

There are instances when African oral literature is adopted to heighten the images of women in the Kenyan society. There is a visible connection between the views taken by anonymous composers of traditional songs and the contemporary breed of secular popular artists.

Chesaina in Bukenya and Kabira's work asserts:

Women have no freedom in taking charge of their destiny. In the Maasai narrative, *The Girl Who Married a Crow* (p.59-61), the girl's father enters into negotiations with the crow while the girl is a mere child and is too innocent to scrutinize her intended husband, even though she would not have a choice in the matter. When she grows up she observes that the creature is actually a crow. It is pathetic that when she pleads with her parents not to marry her off to the crow, both mother and father curse her saying "may he eat you." (60). Having no freedom in choosing her husband the mother has no alternative but to support the status quo. (51-61)

This implies that the woman's position in the said society is compromised in that the patriarchal society does not offer her an opportunity to determine her destiny as a human being. Thus she appears to be dehumanized in the face of parental tyranny.

## **2.7 CONCLUSION**

The Chapter examined women issues in the community as they are viewed through the eyes of the popular secular artists. In addition, stylistic features bordering on sex and sexuality have been addressed. There is also the application of comparative technique and figures of speech. Equally, descriptive technique was viable in the analysis of style. This augured well in my research on popular songs performed by a well-known group of selected popular artists

who use the Gikuyu language to debate gender and feminist concerns as their media to reach their target audience.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 THEMATIC CONCERNS ON WOMEN AND SOCIETY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Chapter looks into the themes emergent in the varieties of debates addressed by the selected performing Gikuyu secular artists. There is the concern about women and their relationships with their male spouses. Women are seen at times as perpetrators of female chauvinistic tendencies in destruction of families while at other times they emerge as mothers who are caring as well as caretakers of their children. This contradiction serves to raise the question of individual difference in familial ties in the societal set-up. The empowerment and disempowerment of the womenfolk is a major concern in the social discourse emergent in the song-texts that are used as data for this study. The portrayal of women in Gikuyu popular secular songs as a cohort of contradictions of the meeting point of women and men is crucial in unraveling societal in aspects of domestic strife is telling as it takes two to tangle. The strife from lover to lover, woman and man alike features recurrently in this Chapter.

#### **3.2 WOMAN AS A FIGHTER OF MALE DOMINANCE**

The woman in contemporary society has emerged as a fighter and achiever of sorts who focuses on life goals ahead of her male counterpart. The male fighters who endeavor to continue with patriarchal hegemony inherent in traditional society structure have found the going very rough if the different waves of feminism that have emerged over the years are anything to go by. This scenario emerges in the debates floated by Gikuyu popular secular artist who serve as mouthpieces of the voice of the masses in their community. The said artists borrow the structure of language and linguistics renditions of the past composers of songs and language use embedded in Gikuyu folklore.

This mutual relationship between the new generation of musical composers and the older generations has a bearing on the tenets of philology as voiced by Campbell Lyle in *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*. Philology has to do with the use of written attestations of earlier stages of languages and with how information from written forms of a language can be used to determine aspects of a language history. The Gikuyu orthography spells out the various levels of meaning emanating from various artistic renditions in the popular song genre. As Campbell observes, “philological investigation of older written attestation can contribute by documenting sound changes distinguishing aspects inherited from borrowed material documenting sound changes helping understand development in the writing systems and orthographic convention.” (150). Feminism has taken the centre stage in spearheading the needs of women in our contemporary society.

Globally, the second wave of feminism that took place in the 1970s tended to gravitate around the ideas of sexual politics as seen in Kates’ works, *Sexual Politics*, on the position of women in societies of the world. In 1965, the international year of women was held in Mexico City in Mexico. The meeting focused on the empowerment and creating awareness in the manner gender interrelationships thrived in societies. In the 1975 meeting that took place in Copenhagen City in Norway the outcome saw many women’s liberation movements spring up in Africa as a way of spearheading the gender question in the continent and world stage in general.

The third wave of feminism took root in the mid 1980s upto the mid 1990s. The climax was in 1985, during the second decade that was used to mark the international year of women’s conference held in Nairobi, Kenya. By bringing the conference to Africa for the first time; the international community demonstrated its commitment to advance African feminism as a way of fostering awareness of gender equality.

The Nairobi Meeting gravitated in the three pillars of gender issues; political power, economic resources and sexuality. These concerns went on to be addressed in international women's year that was held in Beijing, China in 1995. This is the conference which came up with clear-cut issues that women wanted implemented in their respective countries.

The fourth or contemporary wave is associated with the new millennium 2000. It is apparent that no country was ready to host the 2005 Chapter, the anticipated international year of women due to sharp contradictions and cultural contrasts pitting the American and European group of women who advanced radical feminism trends and the African and Asian women who appeared to be moderate and in a way favoured liberal feminism.

### **3.3 WOMAN AS A COMPANION AND A BURDEN TO THE MAN**

In the Gikuyu secular popular artist the woman figure spells doom as she is more of an image of a lifetime burden in the cultures emanating from gender ideologies and stereotyping of females in our contemporary society. Badejo Diedre in "Gender, Ideology, Global Africa, and the Challenges for Pan-African Studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century," in endeavouring to address the issue of legacy culture distinguishes earlier patterns of cultural evolution occurring within traditional environments. It marks these natural occurrences from their progeny cultures on the continent and in the Diaspora. Further, he notes:

The term "legacy cultures" unlocks the potential application of Africa's cultural heritages to new modalities and protocols for development in the twenty-first century. It allows us to embrace the breadth and depth of our global experiences, customary and pluralistic, in a more liberated discourse on the continent and in the Diaspora. The concept of legacy cultures allows us to address the institutional and infrastructural needs of Africa's global humanity and our place in the world generally. (102)



Globally, the position of legacy cultures is an emerging issue in the contemporally world. The gender question has emerged as a central concern in the Republic of Kenya. This is articulated in politics formulated by experts working within the Ministry of Gender and Youth Development. In the African traditional setting patriarchal structures favoured the male gender. This imbalance has been perpetuated from one generation to another.

Molara Ogundipe interviewed by Desire Lewis in “Feminist Africa on Interface of Politics, Culture and Education” expresses her experience as a young girl:

Gender hierarchies as having been sharp in her community and this led her to wonder on the position of marriage more so because “many folktales and other forms of informal “education modes” were used to prepare women on “accepting male dominance in marriage.” [www.feministafrica.org.web](http://www.feministafrica.org.web). Retrieved 15 June 2018.

In the traditional setting, societies had set clear roles that were assigned to either male or female because of their sex and gender orientation. Today, the mental worlds of gender are a conscious process that is learnt through socialization of different forms. The family, the school, peer groups and media instruments like television and radio are agents of socialization. This appears to provide fresh fertile ground for gender, sex and sexuality paradigms which influence an individual’s life. In a song-text, *Wendo Mwega uri Murio* “Sweet Love is Tasty” the performing secular artist portrays his spouse in a positive way in that she illuminates his life in a state of a crowded field of a bevy of lovers. The persona appears to be a cassanova who promotes socialization of lovers on love, sex and marriage in a modern liberal dispensation. In a way he is voicing the centrality of sharing worldly happiness and chores that enable love affairs to thrive and lead to life happiness.

Njogu 2007 defines feminism as a theory that safeguards the rights of women in the male dominated world. They assert that the theory behind it was that of social discrimination against women as a result of their genders. They cite the free and social feminism divides of feminism. The free feminism advocates for capitalism and equality of all at all social levels. It encourages all divides of gender, and especially male, to cooperate and participate in social roles which have hitherto been perceived as preserves for women. Social feminism explores the validity of the traditional virtues of socialism which enact gender inequalities in the way role-plays are given to gender divides. It tries to establish the legality of social parameters which determine the suitability of particular gender specific roles. African feminism emphasises the female autonomy and co-operation; nature over culture; the centrality of children, multiple mothering, and kinship (Steady, 1981). Steady understands that African feminism is an idea where there is an all-inclusive concept for men, women, and children. This view promotes co-existence between women and men in society.

In a contradictory stance Murimi WaKahalf a secular artist perceives his spouse as a life burden, a situation ordained by his origins. In his song *Kamunguna* the persona laments his tribulations that emanate from having married a diminutive lover. The song applies a lot of humour in the rendition that captures several anecdotes of several episodes after discovering Kamunguna as a desperate young lass on the streets of an identified town. The artist says:

<i>Gukuhiha nota nyeki</i>	she is as short as a jerk
<i>No Koyaga tiba</i>	But she lifts tippers (lorries)
<i>Gationekaga</i>	She is not visible

Wakahalf's narrative centers on endless challenges and problems attributed to engaging in "come-we-stay" marital relationships. From his ex-lover Momo, the giantess, he lands on a diminutive Kamunguna, a young woman who is as "short as a jerk" as compared to Momo. The physique of Momo in another song-text contradicts in contrast technique as she (Momo) filled extra space as the big intimidating wife in his house, while Kamunguna was invisible in the house. The use of comparative technique enriches the storyline in the song. Humorously, even as the persona's neighbours paid him a courtesy call the host feels incapacitated by the dwarf lover as an inadequate "Ka-wife" in the homestead.

<i>Njiguaga mukubirie</i>	I hear her footsteps
<i>Kanyumagirira</i>	she comforts me
<i>Gukuhiha ti gutinio</i>	Shortness is not being cut
<i>Minimumba makwa mahura hodi</i>	when my neighbor
<i>Muthenya ucio</i>	that day
<i>ngakarutra indo kabati</i>	remove utensils from cupboard
<i>Kwanika nguo no</i>	To spread clothes, she
<i>Gakinyire giti x2</i>	had to step on a chair

"Love is blind" as an English saying captures Kamunguna's relationship with the irate persona who claims to have encountered the dwarf on the streets of an unnamed town as a degraded lady. She was not only desperate after having had a nasty experience with muggers who attacked her at night but equally she is lonely and directionless.

The persona laments:

<i>Maitu anegenaga</i>	My mother grumbles
<i>Akiuragia koimire naku</i>	Asking where she came from
<i>Nakoimire kaitio</i>	I found her when she had
<i>Kibeti kia mikora</i>	Been robbed of her purse
<i>Ngikaiguira tha muno</i>	I pitied her too much
<i>Tondu kwari utuku</i>	because it was at night
<i>Ndakinya nyumba</i>	when I arrived at home
<i>Ngikora ti uria</i>	I realized it was not
<i>Ndeciragia x2</i>	The bargain I thought of

The persona acts like an evil Good Samaritan who helps a victim of muggers and then rewards himself by taking her to his home to marry her for a short time. It appears as if he takes advantage of the innocent diminutive young lady from the streets, possibly of Nairobi City. The image of a woman as a creature living in a sorry state as a survivor on the streets emerges in the song-text. That a young woman can be frisked by street boys at any time and then move into a marriage is not only amazing but a worrying trend. In this era of HIV-Aids the persona presents himself as an ignorant spouse who takes risks in life and so emerges as a man courting disaster and eventual death in broad daylight.

Even after marrying the diminutive lady, the persona continues to show how useless Kamunguna is in his life. To him she is a predator that preys on an innocent male partner who has a decent mother who equally complains about Kamunguna's situation.

His comment appears to be echoing his mother's dissatisfaction as captured in the following words/lines.

<i>Wakamau</i>	Wakamau
<i>Nako ni Kamunguna</i>	She is kamunguna
<i>Ti mugunda koimire</i>	She cannot cultivate
<i>Kara gatue kahua</i>	Or pick coffee (berries)
<i>Ti gatuire ngombe</i>	She cannot fetch fodder for cows
<i>Mahuti niundu wa ime</i>	Because of dew
<i>Kahura nguo</i>	When she washes clothes
<i>Kwanika no getanire</i>	To hang she has to seek assistance

These lines capture the image of a woman as a household domestic worker who fails in her feminine job and marital contract. Kamunguna is disadvantaged as her stature does not match the expectations of the normal village life where a woman has to work in the *shamba*.

According to the voice of the persona a woman should work perfectly in the *shamba* to assert her status as a creator of wealth. The secular artist's position reveals that his concerns hinge on the socio-economic well-being of the family setup. The construction of a woman as a creator of wealth is echoed in the above lines where "cultivation in the *shamba*" and "picking coffee" are taken by the community to be noble chores that are performed by a dutiful African wife.

The socio-economic constructs of a woman as the poorer partner to a fairly hardworking man satirically draws a line of contradiction in the song-text. The Kenya Government's endeavour to fight or eradicate poverty through policies that focus on women and the youth, especially in the rural areas appears not to have born any fruits in the persona's locality.

From another perspective, the image of a woman as a quarrelsome creature emerges in Kamunguna, where the persona laments:

<i>Tungihitania gacomokaga</i>	When we quarrel, she runs
<i>Ihenya utuku</i>	swifly at night
<i>Niimba moragie, murimi</i>	Neighbours ask, Murimi,
<i>Nikii uroria mwana</i>	What are you asking the child?

It is quite humorous that in the ensuing domestic strife, neighbours view Kamunguna, the diminutive wife as a victim of her physique (smallness). The persona pities her even when she wrongs him: He says, “I fail to understand where (on her body) to hit her.” Surely, this is a miniature wife who appears to be retarded and thus requires empathy rather than sympathy. He explains.

<i>Ukuhi wa kamunguna</i>	Kamuguna’s shortness
<i>Ni unogoraga</i>	Makes me proud
<i>Gakirwo</i>	When she is being told
<i>Undu</i>	Something
<i>Konaga ta karairirwo</i>	She feels like she is being despised because
<i>Kiuga</i>	Of her size
<i>Kangirakara kanegenaga</i>	When she is annoyed, she complains
<i>Gutatuka</i>	until dusk
<i>Ni karuru ta kabiribiri</i>	She is as bad as the bitter pepper
<i>Ga kanuguu x2</i>	Like a baby monkey

In spite of the shortcomings of Kamunguna that appear to be natural, the persona still prides in her as a wife. It is laughable that despite her drawbacks the persona finds delight in her sexual prowess. The image of a woman as a sex object irrespective of size is broached in this song-text, *Kamunguna*.

The persona says: “*Nikanogoraga.... ukuhi wa Kamunguma-Ni unogoraga*, that is, I feel satisfaction-Kamunguna’s shortness makes me proud and sexually relieved.” The manner in which these words are used denotes sexual satisfaction. The two words *Kunoga* and *Kunogoka*, that is, “to be tired” and “to be at rest” create the image of sexual contentment. *Nikanogoraga*, which means, “She makes me feel at rest” is euphemically an image of sex.

The persona delights in her company as a sexual object that should be displayed to the populace. This echoes the popular Gikuyu idiomatic expression: *Gutiri ngima nene gukira numero*, (There is no chunk of *ugali* deemed to be bigger than the throat opening once the eater decides to chew it.) This idiomatic expression is an example of sexual innuendo that thrills the populace. It is as if he wants to show that his sex object is just like any other whether a Momo, the giantess or Kamunguna, the dwarf lover:

<i>Tutwaranite nako nii</i>	When we walk together
<i>Njiguaga ndikuo</i>	I feel delighted
<i>Nao andu no mwihugoro</i>	People keep on turning back,
<i>No indi kaguru kuingana</i>	Well her foot is like the
<i>Iruungo ria kigwa</i>	Piece a sugar cane
<i>Makaga tondu kwi</i>	I am surprised because
<i>Hindi twiiganaga x2</i>	There are times our heights are equal

The persona appears to be in a showing off mood in that he finds fun when people turn to see the day time drama of a dwarf lover and a pervert proud husband. The image of a woman as a good companion is invoked at this level. The matters of the heart are purely personal and “one man’s meat is another’s poison.” The image of a woman as an entertainer of man is emphasized in the song-text.

The entertainment bait is punctuated in *Kirigo*, another song-text whereby the persona recalls King David’s dance for his Lord, in which his wives danced for him.

The use of biblical allusion to heighten the position of women as companions of men may point to a sober atmosphere that captures the family that is at peace. In the creation story, Adam was created first, and animals of the jungle next. God saw that Adam was not happy and so he created Eve, the woman who made Adam happy. Adam uttered: “woman of the rib of my rib..... The flesh of my flesh.” The person is delighted in praising Kirigo and equating her to the gorgeous wives of David of the Old Testament.

In gender studies the stories of the Bible tend not to augur well with the pro-gender debates on the position of women in our contemporary society. The question of the first sex, the man and the second sex, the woman raises more questions than answers on matters of equity and equality of genders. In the New Testament St. Paul addresses issues pertaining to the relationship of men (husbands) and women (wives) and advises. “Husbands love your wives, and wives be submissive to your husbands.”

These Biblical verses are very sweet to the ears of men but to women they are lines that should be deconstructed to satiate the gender and feminism debates of contemporary times. There are many studies carried out on the images of women in various forms of literatures.

Esther Y. Smith in Davies and Graves while writing about “images of women in African literature: some examples of inequality in the colonial period” notes:

Studies of inequality in colonial Africa rarely focus on the colonial period and when they do tend to show either strong mother figures in the traditional society or rootless young women pursuing individualistic and materialistic goals in modern society.

Reductionist reflections of monolithic or dualistic images of women in African literature, however, shatter to pieces with the press of data from the vast (Date of a diverse body of African literature) (88)



As Smith advances, the image of women in written African literature does not bring out majority of the realities of grassroots women's experience. The colonial experience appears to have permeated the post independence era with the post-colonial experience. African writers of post- independence era presented their works with the aim of responding to the works written by white missionary scholars, white colonial administrators, white colonial linguistics, cultural anthropologists as well as colonial teachers. Most importantly, they incorporated oral traditional art forms to highlight the centrality of African traditional practices as a fulcrum of history, identity, dignity and African heritage.

The position of women in traditional African settings was liquidated by social stigma emanating from African folklore. In Gikuyu folklore, for instance, the recurring image of the evil step mother who was torturous, greedy, callous and divisive features in a number of oral narratives. Such ideas from oral material impacts negatively the works produced by Gikuyu popular secular artistes. As seen in song texts *Kirigo* and *Kamunguna*, the mother figure shows up as a complainant of the son's failure to marry a satisfactory wife to serve her interests in the extended family.

Further Esther Smith in Davies & Graves observes:

The image of the mother in *The African Child* by Camara Laye is reminiscent in a number of ways of that earlier Malinke mother, Sogolon, the mother of Sundiata; strong in her devotion to duty, and possessed of extra-ordinary powers in the protection of her son. (88)

In a song-text entitled: *Uyu Ni Mugogo*, (This is Excess Baggage,) the persona says:

<i>Acio muthiaga thiritu nao</i>	Those you are in friendship with
<i>Acio muriaga mwi hamwe</i>	Those you dine together
<i>Niomegutuma wendo</i>	They are the ones who will
<i>Ugituike ii</i>	Make our love end,
<i>Tondu ndihota gukiriria</i>	Because I cannot tolerate
<i>Uyu ni mugogo wanjigiriire</i>	This is a log on you placed on me
<i>Riria uguthie ndunyu kana nduka</i>	When you to the market or shop
<i>Ndigagwo ngigwetha</i>	I am left looking for you
<i>Ta mburi njii</i>	Like a notorious sheep
<i>Mwendwa ii na ndikiriwo mbugi</i>	My dear and it cannot be belled
<i>Kana gichuhi</i>	Or a ring

The persona in the song-text gives an anecdote of his human experience as a disgruntled husband. He gives the example of his wife's wayward mannerism reflects her in negative light in the eyes of members of his community moreso her character likened to a stray gluttonous goat that perpetuates an image that reveals the troubles of a herdsboy.

<i>Nima wandorire</i>	Surely you looked at me
<i>Ukinjagira bata</i>	And found me useless
<i>Na ngingo niui</i>	And you know the neck
<i>Ndiri yakira mutwe</i>	Has never been above the head
<i>Kai ukamenya niwakihikire</i>	Will you know, you are married
<i>Watumirwo itega</i>	When you'll be sent a delegation
<i>Tondu wahiuhire ii ta thathi wa mworio</i>	Because you become hot like soup
<i>Ndireciritie nguhure</i>	I had thought of beating you
<i>Ngumunye igeo niguo</i>	I remove a tooth so that
<i>Wage magego ma guthekia arume</i>	You have no teeth to smile at men
<i>Ndirerwo ni aciari akwa</i>	My parents told me
<i>The persona continues to lament about his nightmare perpepuated by a belligerent wife.</i>	To just watch you Even when the moon is outside
<i>Ngwirorere ona maitho</i>	It is watched
<i>Ona mweri uri nja</i>	
<i>niwaroragirwo</i>	

<i>Nduire na cati imwe</i>	I have had one shirt
<i>Ta ithagu ria nguku</i>	Like a hen's wing
<i>Ndimiite raha</i>	I curtailed my luxuries
<i>Ndukararire</i>	So that you do not sleep hungry
<i>Ndakuhaka maguta</i>	I smeared you with oil
<i>Ukihaka muhu</i>	You smeared me with ashes
<i>Mwendwa ii na ui</i>	My dear you and you know
<i>Murimi ndaunagwo guoko</i>	A farmer's hand is never broken
<i>Mucii uri na muthuri</i>	A home where there is a man
<i>Umenyagwo na inoro</i>	Is known by a grindstone
<i>No kanoro gakwa</i>	But my grindstone
<i>Waikirie ngiri ini</i>	You threw into the bush
<i>Ukinjira ngire</i>	You told me to go for
<i>Mburi iria ndaraciite</i>	the goats I had paid dowry with
<i>Na cianina mwaka</i>	And if a year goes by
<i>Ni njura na ago</i>	It will be a closed chapter

The artist uses a variety of technical devices to spell out his shortcomings as a weak husband who unfortunately has failed to control and contain his wife's wayward ways that a "mother of children" is not expected to display in the society.

In comparison to images drawn from written African literature, the image of a strong mother in *The African Child* punctuates with the strong mother in African orature. This creates a meeting point between African written literature and the oral one. These assertions are echoed by Emile Synder, in his essay on "Modern African Literature" which heightens the role of the mother as a symbol of family existence:

The image of the African mother is central to an understanding of Camara Laye's novel. *Enfont Noir*...it is she who keeps the family traditions together because she respects them, while dispensing them. it is she who raises her son along the path of the ancestors ways, so that even

later, while a student in Paris, the son sees in the recalled image of his mother a reflection of the dignity of African life.

In the contemporary epoch of African literature, African popular music is used to punctuate the ideas written in their works in the event of development of thematic concerns and characters in prosaic work. In *The River and the Source*, by Margaret Ogola, “Akoko appears as a very strong mother who captures the imagination of the reader as the source of life in her family line.” She signifies the continuum of life and flourishing of extended family in the African setting. The novel written in 1994, captures the ideas of the third wave of feminism studies in Africa. In a way *The River and Source*, is form of deconstruction as well as a literary allusion of Ngugi wa Thiongo’s *The River Between* where the mother’s position is rarely brought to the fore as she is rarely heard.

Waiyaki’s mother is mentioned in passing just to fill the gap of a mother. Miriam, Joshua’s wife is a dutiful wife who suffers the loss of her daughter Muthoni, after undergoing a rite of passage, that is, circumcision that lacked the blessings of parents yet she (Miriam) could not voice her concerns due to her religious fundamentalist and overbearing husband.

In *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, the mother’s figure is supreme but comes out negatively when Okonkwo is banished from Umuofia his “fatherland” to exile for seven years in Mbanta, his motherland, after committing an abomination of killing his clansman. The use of song in written literature shows the kinship between oral literature and African literature.

Ikemefuna sings a song when he is being taken to the evil forest to be sacrificed by elders of Umuofia as atonement to a crime committed by his villagemates in Abame.

### 3.4 MOTHERHOOD AND REARING CHILDREN

In the African traditional setting the image of a mother as a protector of all children in her community was given a very high esteem. This happened as the structure of community cultural practices was strictly followed to the letter by all and sundry. Today, gender activists have tilted the position and roles of mothers in contemporary societies as more forums for gender empowerment call for politicizing feminism ideologies.

Nnaemeka Obioma asserts:

Motherhood is dangerous to women because it continues the structure within which females must be women and mothers and, conversely, because it denies to females the creation of subjectivity and the world that is open and free. An active rejection of motherhood entails the development and enactment of a philosophy of evacuation. Identification and analysis of the multiple aspects of motherhood not only show what is wrong with motherhood but also the way out. (67)

For instance, the Gikuyu community has undergone changes in the manner the mother figure is viewed in the contemporary setting. In most homes both in the rural and urban dwellings, a mother takes charge of the family. The mother figure looms in every modern home in that the needs and hopes of survival rests in her.

For example, the Agikuyu placed the community as the first one in importance, the family in the second and the individual occupied a distant third. In the song-text, *Sophia*, by Murimi wa Kahalf, the image of a contemporary mother as a gluttonous being in the society is pronounced. The artist denounces Sophia's wayward ways especially in espousing a life of "shortcuts" only envisaged in the character of a mad woman or a prostitute. The persona asserts: "She did not like ready-mades" as "She preferred going to a tailor."

*Nii Ndahikitie muguruki  
wa kuuma kathozeni  
aya ni aria murengo  
mbari ya gatua ng'ongo.  
Wari mukuhi mui ru mutungu  
Saisi nene  
atendaga ready-made  
no athire kwa bundi*

I had married a crazy woman  
from Kathozeni.  
Yes, these are those used to short cuts.  
The clan of adventurers.  
She was short black and plump.  
Her size was unique.  
She did not like ready-mades.  
She preferred going to a tailor.

The domestic strife perpetuated by Sophia is unpardonable according to the persona's views relayed in the song. She is presented as the ultimate image of a *matatu* that never keeps traffic rules but prefers to terminate its journey/trip before reaching the *matatu terminus*. The image of a *matatu* adventurer heightens the artist's position of women in contemporary society. The domestic strife perpetuated by Sophia is unpardonable according to the persona's views relayed in the song. She is presented as the ultimate image of a *matatu* that never keeps traffic rules but prefers to terminate its journey/trip before reaching the *matatu terminus*. The image of a woman as a *matatu* adventurer heightens the artist's position of women in contemporary society. It appears the persona is pointing out at multiple sex partnership euphemically referred to as *mpango wa kando* in contemporary Kenyan socio discourse that features among the merchants of promiscuity in the *matatu* industry a trend that permeates to the rest of mainstream societal structures be they high or

Chorus  
Sophia coka kwanyu.  
Maya mothe nditoria  
nindiuka na athuri twarie nawe  
na thoguo.  
Sophia coka kwanyu.  
Wakahalf ndiitoria  
thabari ni nditu ino.  
Reke njoke kwi maitu  
o kuria Kirinyaga

Chorus  
Sophia go back to your home.  
All these I cannot put up with.  
I'll come with the elders we discuss with  
you and your father.  
Sophia go back to your home.  
I Wakahalf won't make it.  
This journey is tough.  
Let me go back to my mother  
At Kirinyaga.

Wakahalf opts to return to Kirinyaga where his mother dwells. Like Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*, when a man gets disgraced he returns to his mother who should carry another burden of a grown man whom he carried for nine months.

Ndirona saisi yake  
athunguthite gwakwa nja  
Ererwo ni ciana

I can see her size  
She gyrated outside the door step  
Being watched by children

akimeraga ni mumau	Telling them she is a Mau-mau
akoya kuguru uguo	She lifted her foot like this
Kuria kungi rienaini	And she other one in the air
Agoka na ribathi akiugaga	Reversing saying she could
Ni ara firu	feel me

According to Wakahalf, this is an astonishing woman who intimidates children in the persona's neighbourhood when "feels" like fighting for her conjugal rights from her inadequate husband. Further, she threatens his hens which loathe her presence as evident in the following lines.

Chorus	Chorus
Angiuka e muriu nguku	When she comes drunk
Ciakwa ci muigwe	When my hens hear her
Cianjagia gukengeta	they start quacking
Ota ici ciona rwigu	like they have seen a hawk
Ta maka mugunda gwakwa	Imagine in my shamba
Mieu na nduma	Arrow root stems and arrow roots
Arite ciothe	she has eaten all
Nguku ingerekia itumbi	If a hen lays an egg
Ameragia ta giiko	She swallows like a gecko

This wife's level of greed is laughable and irritating too. A wife who times for a hen to lay an egg and grabs and "swallows it like gecko" is indeed a rare species of a wife in contemporary times.

Chorus	Chorus
Iinyinyia andeng'eretie	Oh! She has chased me
Murimi ngonja tawa	Murimi, I signal
Wa maguta na wiino	Displaying petrol and oil
Na ndaranginyithia thi	She does not allow me to rest
Ni mundu utangira undu	She is one you cannot tell anything
Ni muthamaki aterwo	She is a king who cannot be told
Uuyu ahana ota nding'oring'o	This one is like beetle
Njara itangioya kindu	Hands which cannot pick anything

The image of a woman as a Ngingoingo, a black beetle that lives in excreta of a cow presents the predator and pest syndrome manifest in women of the Sophia type.

Chorus  
Giki ni gitumumu

Gitongoretie

*Ona ciana ndangihe cai*

*No inyuire kwa maitu*

*Anginyota ni cai*

*Handu ha aingire riko*

*Ndimwonaga gicegu anyitite*

*Mburi akionga*

Chorus

*Angingora na athuri*

*Tukirung'a cia itura*

*Atemanagia kiugo*

*Akahanagia giuthi*

*Na hinya njitwo Kiama*

*Na athuni niundu wake*

*Mburi ciakwa ndutite*

*Igituika ciurire thi*

Chorus

*Andu aitu na athuri othe*

*Ona cifu niaremetwo*

Chorus  
This one is blind

Leading

She cannot even give children tea

They have to get it from my mother

If she is thirsty of tea

Instead of going to the kitchen

I see her in the goat shed, holding

a goat suckling

Chorus

If she finds me with elders

Discussing village matters

She talks ill

and spoils everything

Its difficult for me to be invited

by elders in their talks because of her

Goats I had paid dowry

Went to waste

Chorus

Our kin and all the elders

Sophia is a belligerent goddess in the persona's neighbourhoods who has beaten all systems in the land. Right from the local Chief, village elders as "Nobody can talk because of the weight...of this Mammoth lady in the community. She emerges as an ogress figure that has incarnated in modern times as used to happen in ancient Gikuyu folklore. untouchable, First and prudent wife" who scare all members of the persona's community.

*Gutiri ungikiaria na uritu*

*Wa ngatha ino*

*Handu njikare na uyu*

*Kaba ndiithie gategwa*

*Kana ndeithie broiler*

*Ciegana*

Even the chief is unable

Nobody can talk because of the weight

Of this untouchable

Instead of staying with this one

I'd rather rear a bull

Or I rear broilers



*Ndware Ndung'u*

When they are grown

I take them to the market

### 3.5 WIFEHOOD AND HUSBANDHOOD

It appears motherhood; wifehood and husbandhood are not compatible in the persona's worldview. The lamentations of the artist in the song-text, *Niwaturukirie*, (You Vanished) state that a great love dream is never realizable as "Surely the devil was, To distract me from, Your goodness" as the trials and tribulations of his jittery lover are immeasurable. The following song-text, *Ni Waturukirie*, (You Vanished,) reveals the artist's view of an irate wife of an equally irate and weak husband.

Wendo munene uinyia  
Ndukinyanagiria ii

A lot of love truly  
Is never realized

*Igithi ngoma niakanduta*  
*Wega ini waku*

Surely the devil was  
To distract me from  
Your goodness

*Ngeragia mungo*  
*Ngiririria tucokanwo*  
*No niwaturukirie*  
*Ona tutingionana*

I try hard  
I long for us to be back together  
But you vanished  
We cannot even see each other

#### **Chorus**

*Ngeragia kuria irio*  
*Ngaigua iri macatha*  
*Ndageria kwonio*  
*Wendo, ni ungi*  
*Ukarema ii*  
*Ona angigeria kuhe kiss*  
*Ndingimiigua*  
*No imajinire ati niwe*  
*Niguo ngene*  
*Ngeragia kurugirwo*  
*Ni ungi, gukarema i*

#### **Chorus**

I try to eat food  
I feel its bitter  
When another tries to show me  
love,  
it's impossible  
Even when she tries to kiss me  
I can't feel it  
Unless I imagine it's you  
So that I be happy  
I try to be cooked for  
By another, it's not possible

*The image of a wife as a cook is captured in this song-text where his wife gives a husband food without salt. The social construction of gender in the persona's community ordains the woman to cook and serve her husband. So for a wife going against the grain it is seen as a liberal attitude from architects of radical feminism.*

<i>Maita maingi njiguaga</i>	Many times I feel the food
<i>Akiruria cumbi</i>	Very salty
<i>Kana ngaruma ngaigua</i>	Or I taste and feel
<i>Itari maguta ii</i>	It doesn't have cooking fat
<i>Tugakorobana, ngamwira</i>	We quarrel, I tell her
<i>Ni kaba Mumbi</i>	I prefer Mumbi
<i>Huragirwo nguo</i>	My clothes are washed
<i>Gukarema</i>	It's not appealing for me
<i>Tondu nyonaga hindi ciothe</i>	Because I always
<i>Ta iragaca ii</i>	Find them dirty
<i>Ngamuruma muno</i>	I abuse her a lot
<i>Ngamwira kaba Mumbi</i>	I tell her I prefer Mumbi
<i>Agakunja kibari</i>	She packs up
<i>Ucio agacoka kwao</i>	That one goes back to her home

<i>Chorus</i>	Chorus
<i>Mami na baba manjiraga</i>	Mother and father tell me
<i>Ni kaba Mumbi</i>	Its better its Mumbi
<i>Ati ngucarie biu nginya</i>	That I look for you until
<i>tucokanwo</i>	We get back together

The persona in this song appears to be a very unstable man who marries many wives who keep on abandoning him at will. The listener would wonder if he is not a participant in letting the many lovers to vanish. In one instance, he regrets having parted ways with Mumbi as echoed by his parents: “Mami na baba manjiraga, Ni kaba Mumbi, (Mother and father tell me, better Mumbi,) a stance he assents to.

In the following song-text, *Njohera My Lover*, the storyline centres on the image of a woman as the wronged party. The persona seeks forgiveness to save his relationship.

<i>Ona kinyi mwendwa ni ugikinyukagio I</i>	Even steps my lover at times are ignored
<i>mwendwa I gukindira ndeto muno</i>	My lover stressing on matters too much
<i>ti kuo bata</i>	Is not what is important
<i>Angikorwo mwendwa</i>	If my lover
<i>No undige</i>	You can leave me

*Niundu wa ndeto*  
*Mwendwa itangiiyura*  
*Mukuha*  
*Micii mwendwa*  
*Wamiona ni ndogo i*  
*Ningi ituragio ni*  
*Gukiraniriria*  
*No wee itumbi riakua,*  
*no gwa ciifu*  
*Kinya, kingigua thi*  
*Ukanjitira athuri*

*Chorus*

*Njohera my lover Njohera my dear x2*

*Ui micii irutagio*

*Ni gukiraniriria*

*Wendo ugikua niuthingithagia ngoro-ini*

*Kuhana ta gikuu kia*

*Mwendwa wa mundu*

*Angikorwo ati niniii*

*Ngukira ngaita maithori*

*Kanyiri ka mwene*

*Niko kamwinagia*

*Chorus*

*Korwo ninii ngurio*

*Twacokania ndundui*

*Kugitira ni kwegu*

*Kuri kuhania*

*Niui miario ya andu*

*Ndihinyaga*

*Ona ingitua ndiriini ndigi hinya*

*Chorus*

Because of matters  
 my lover without  
 substance  
 Homes my lover  
 When you see them, its smoke  
 And they last because of  
 tolerance  
 But you when an egg breaks  
 You run to the chief  
 When a ground falls down  
 You summon the elders

Chorus

Forgive me my lover, Forgive me my dear x2

Homes last because

of forgiveness

When love is dying there is tremor in the heart

It's like the death of

Someone's lover

If am the one

Keeping quiet and shedding tears

One's burden

Is what makes one restless

Chorus

If I were the one being asked

We'd reason together

Prevention is better

Than cure

You know people's talks

Will never be conclusive

No matter how long it takes

Chorus

<i>Wehitire ukiuga</i>	You swore and said
<i>Ati ndukandiga ii</i>	That you will never forsake me
<i>Na hindi ya murinduko</i>	And in terrible times
<i>Ukiimiriria</i>	You persevered
<i>Kai mwendwa utooi</i>	My lover don't you know
<i>Ng'aragu ihaga</i>	Hunger is at its worst
<i>Ikumwo</i>	When its ending
<i>Mambura mahitanaga Magithira</i>	Occasions go wrong When they are ending

The assertion that his separation with his lover is instigated by his friends and enemies appears to be far-fetched. This seems to be a cover-up to his weakness as a husband in a liberal world.

This is an emerging trend in Gikuyu social discourse where men are figureheads in homes.

<i>Ungiigua mundu</i>	When you hear one
<i>Akihera mwohere</i>	Apologise, forgive him/her
<i>I kiundu kiuru no</i>	What is bad
<i>Ihitia ria ruturiko</i>	Is only careless mistakes
<i>Onawe no ukahitia</i>	Even you, will make mistakes
<i>Na woherwo</i>	And be forgiven
<i>Thi ino ni ndaya</i>	This world is large
<i>Na ndingiaga ithioro x2</i>	It can never lack bends

In this song-text, the artist makes a call for forgiveness. He advances reconciliation in all the parties involved in the marital strife. He notes that to err is human and each human seeks pardon. To him the world is large and is full of ironies love triangles. What emerges is the image of a woman as a unifier of the family features out in this song-text.

### 3.6 WOMEN AS HEROINES OF A COMMUNITY

In Ngugi wa Thiongo's work, *Maitu Njugira*, he endeavours to address the importance of mother in the struggle of liberation from a suppressive regime.

While both the official and the outlaw narrations figure motherhood as a metonymic for the nation, *Maitu Njugira* intends “motherhood” in a different sense than that intended by the government and its supporters. One of the songs banned by the British in colonial times because it was sung by workers in preparation for rebellion, *Maitu Njugira* inscribes within the very title the potential productive, military, political, and cultural proliferation that the Kenyan government would check. Literally translated as “Mother, trill *ngemi* for me,” the song brings joy because the trilling of *ngemi* means welcome. (34)

The *Maitu Njugira* narrative tends to bring together the efforts of African men and women fighting the colonial yoke as voiced in tenets of African feminism espoused by (Davies and Graves). In post-independence Kenya, women have fought against the grain in their war against discrimination. The position of woman in fighting for her rights is viewed in some assertions of male chauvinists’ world as a fight often of a rebellious nature against the male constructed images as seen in song-texts by Murimi wa Kahalf, as exemplified in the song, *Momo*. This approach is also present in song, poetry and dance by Joseph Kariuki and John Demathew. In fighting for space to eke out a living in a competitive world, a kind of struggle for independence, elements of a national cultural revolution come on board.

Frantz Fanon, quoted by Dickinson Margaret observes that “To fight for national culture means in the first place to fight for the liberation, that material key stone which makes the building of a culture possible.” Dickinson further postulates that: “There can be no national literature until there are citizens of the nation to read or hear it.” (9) In her anthology entitled: *When Bullets Begin to Flower*, she looks at the theme of struggle in the poem, “Letter from a Contract Worker” in which the aspects of feminism and gender are featured as a means to express personal freedom and liberty as a foundation of the national culture. (9) A number of

poems that address the issue of love and especially through use of stylistic features drawn from the environment reflect the images of women as heroes of their lovers. The case of contract worker feeling nostalgic when he recalls his love, his illiterate girlfriend from his village who is his heroine in love and marriage matters is a parallel of the song-text, *Wendo Mweka Uri Murio*, “Sweet Love is Tasty,” where a male partner extols the beauty, hope and trust the persona has in having an excellent life partner.

In Kenya’s history, the heroines of a community are normally linked with the struggle for independence and also the Second Liberation.

In the following song-text, *Wendo Mweka Uri Murio*, (Sweet/True Love is Tasty,) the artist opts to praise his spouse as a heroine of love. This deviation in style makes the artist to capture the emerging socio-cultural heroines and heroes in contemporary society.

The images of woman as an angel of hope are raised in the song-text as the persona sees no iota of bad behavior in the heroine of love brewed in a contemporary era full of “heartaches” and “heartbreaks” emanating from a modern lifestyle. Like in the poem, “A Letter from a Contract Worker,” (21) by Antonio Jacinto, the persona makes his heroine in marriage a heroine in his community that attends his colourful wedding. The images of women as guides and supporters of their male counterparts is propped up as a way of showing trust in the fruits of womanhood and manhood combined in a stable relationship.

### **3.7 CONCLUSION**

The Chapter looks into the effort made by a modern woman to fight for her space in a male dominated world. In African traditional settings, patriarchy emerged as the ultimate voice of familial decisions. The woman was mainly seen as an asset for creating wealth rather than a voice of the community. Further the chapter highlights the revelation of a woman’s place as both a companion and a burden to the male folk’s existence. In a point of contradiction, the

woman at times emerges as a central figure; a pillar in motherhood and in rearing children. In the same light the Chapter focuses on the position of a woman as a wife who either supports or disorients her husband's place in the community. There are instances when the woman is portrayed as a heroine in the community's wellbeing and future directions as regards the gender prospects of her people.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.0 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STYLES ADOPTED BY THREE SELECTED ARTISTS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Chapter looks into the styles employed by the three selected artists featuring similarities and differences. There is a common ground where the three Gikuyu secular popular artists meet as composers of popular songs as captured in the *Benga*, *Rhumba* and *Mugiithi* beats embedded in their popular songs. The position of women and their concerted effort in struggling to get a balanced share of societal space in the contemporary society is revealed in the song-texts. Women's voice as highlighted in revealing women's liberation is addressed by the works of the three artists. This textual study relies heavily on the song-texts from the CDs of the three artists and it emerges as a catalogue of the images of women drawn from the local surroundings as experienced by the male popular secular artists.

#### 4.2 RELATIONSHIPS IN VOICING WOMEN'S LIBERATION

The three popular secular artists have emerged to be united in their approach in handling lovers' problems. Their artistry centres on highlighting the shortcomings that stifle good family values as a result of both the female and male weaknesses. Kenyan women problems and struggle for personal, group and national liberation features in the artists' renditions.

Continental, African women have been crusaders of the cause of familial, political and economic freedom in the contemporary times. The colonisers from the super powers in Europe emerged in Africa as supremacists that were out to exploit the continent's natural resources to the detriment of a stable future Black man's land. This called for African men and women to work together to liberate themselves.

Further Davies and Graves observe:



Inevitably, the question of national reconstruction along more egalitarian lines enters and has to be hinged to women's lives in African nations...A genuine African feminism...recognizes a common struggle with African men for the removal of the yokes of foreign domination and European/American exploitation. It is not antagonistic to African men but it challenges them to be aware of certain salient aspects of women's subjugations which differ from the generalized oppression of all African peoples. (84)

Historically, Kenyan women have been known to have worked hand in hand with Kenyan men in the struggle for independence. In the 1920s one famous Gikuyu heroine, named Muthoni Nyanjiru led a resistance against the colonial powers outside the present day Norfolk Hotel to agitate for the release of a premiere political activist whose name was Harry Thuku. Muthoni Nyanjiru and her defenseless womenfolk paid the ultimate price of being shot dead by colonial forces.

Notwithstanding, she herself and her fellow women followers died proud heroines of not only the Gikuyu Community but also other communities that cherish total liberation of the human race. From this end, she is likened to Me Kitilili wa Menza of the coastal Giriama community who equally stood out as an astute fighter of human rights in colonial Kenya. Aesthetically, women have emerged as central pillars in the socio-economic wellbeing of their communities. They emerge as symbols of the spirit of life and humanness not only in the past but also the present one. As home managers women have displayed a great deal of commitment in building their families shelters and tendering the homestead to maintain dignity and aesthetic status of their lives.

As Nama argues in Davis and Graves:

The symbolic completion of a Gikuyu homestead underscores the artistic provinces of Gikuyu women in enhancing the "beauty" of Gikuyu art form in home coming (1972)

Writers and politics (1981) and detained (1981), Ngugi argues that the unequivocal liberation of Africans lies not in Westernization but in the (resurrection) resuscitation of traditional cultural value that have been an intrinsic part of the people's lives from ancient times. In detained, he noted the special contribution of Kenyan Women in the liberation struggle against British imperialism remarking that: “.the most remarkable of them all was the Kitilili, the leader of the Girima people's resistance to the British occupation of their county, she was already an old woman when she organized Giriama youth into a fighting force that took the British machine three years to subdue. Old as she was, she was very clearly the political character of the armed struggle. (84)

In the contemporary society women have been struggling to get space in various fields of social-economic structures in the nation state. In the third world, oppression of women also means the oppression of men as the issue of racism is rampant just like cases of nepotism, sectarianism and individualism. As Davies and Graves observe;

The observable connection between African and Western feminism is that both identify gender-specific issues and recognize women's position internationally as one of second class status and “otherness” and seek to correct that. An international feminism to which various regional perspectives are contribution seems acceptable to African woman while the European /American model is not. The failure of western feminists to deal with issues directly affect black women and their tendency to sensationalize that while woman are often partners in the oppression of both African woman (South Africa as the most example).

The term feminism often was to be qualified when used by most African and other Third world women. The race, class and cultural allegiances that are brought to its consideration causes the most conflict yet, although, the concept may not be either the daily existence of the average woman and although much of what she understands as

feminism is filtered through media that is made dominated and male oriented. African woman recognized the inequities and especially with the context of struggles for national liberation, are challenging entrenched male dominance. (84)

The centrality of communication in popular music is crucial in the foregrounding of pertinent issues gravitating around performances and target audiences. The three secular popular artists in the study happen to be performers in night clubs, hotels and motels. In their single and group performances they comment on sensitive issues in society.

Dell Hymes asserts that through the patterns and organizations of a communicative event the experience of a particular group is foregrounded. Hymes claims that ‘only by reference to the state of participants, does it seem possible to introduce a natural way the various types of functions which communicative events may serve for them’ (34). A communicative event implies consideration of both communicative purposes and the cultural life of participants involved in the artists’ arena. As viewed in compositions delivered by the three select secular popular artists the communicative event will show transmission of roles, skills and interaction with personal satisfactions as a foundation for performative arts.

#### **4.3 RELATIONSHIPS IN DRAWING DRAMATIC CONFLICTS**

In the works of the three secular popular artists, the conflict between the male and female figures is a recurring motif born out of the sour love, infidelity, betrayal, intrigues hinging on love triangles and outright hatred bordering on cheating habits in the marriage institution in a kind of ethnodrama. There are many aspects of the dramatic mode in the full sense of the word.

Theatre and art is heightened in singing and dancing in the appointed arena-nightclubs and motels. The dramatic exposee encompasses elements of a beginning, a middle and an ending with identifiable plot, setting, characters, spectacle, multi-actions of enactment of the

true lived experiences of the dramatic personae. Further it is seen through actors who reveal persons and events in the shaky and uncertain town life. Dramatic modes reinforce message(s) emergent in the songs that target women in our contemporary society. It leads one to envisage the socio-cultural family values as they are unfolded, fulfilled, reinforced or disoriented in the ‘real’ contexts. In a way drama is used to exemplify the situation in which the value morality concerns are revealed through the heritage conceived in song and dance genre. In the same light women are seen to be fighting for identities in an emerging competitive world where class struggle is the order of the day.

As Molaria Ogundipe-Ogundipe-Leslie observes:

Women of African heritage know they must discover and affirm healthy and genuine versions of their various identities. They must discover class roles which will contribute to the positive development of women locally and globally. They must give voice to the historically harassed black women of African descent and empower them to subvert their self-crippling silence. (49)

Ogundipe-Leslie exemplifies the case of women in the African diaspora in their struggle to get equal treatment with their male counterparts. Irrespective of colour of lover, class or race, the domestic strife witnessed among couples is a replica of the civil strife in the larger family units and society at large. In one of the song-text, the persona declares his resentment in being misused by his partner. He claims.

*Muhothi uyu nduiri hothagira wendo*

*ndoiga umuthi undekie na unjigane akorwo ni*

*githitu wanguriire.*

*Niguo ndure muhuko*

*Ta mengotore ni ndarega , kariuki*

*Nindarega I gukuiruo hakiri ndi munini x2*

(The offering I have lived offering for long

I have said today, enough is enough if its sorcery, you've been practicing so that

I remain in your pocket.

Like a cent I have refused. Kariuki

To be cheated when I am young.)

The person laments about his poor socio-economic status and the manner his spouse takes advantage of his weakness as a lame duck husband. He says:

You tell me, you have none other, in your heart

You also tell me, church is about offering

Our love cannot be like a mill, to mill

My money recklessly. I be educating children

Whom I have not sired- If my mother gets

Weird, she would cry herself out.

*Unjiraga nduri ungi uigite ngoro*

*No-kanjira ati kanitha ni ihotha*

*Wendo witu ndungituika ta githii, gia guthia*

*Mbeca ciakwa kimungunyo thomithagie ciana*

Itaciarite maitu angiigua

Angirira mathire x2

It appears the persona's main concern is to highlight the plight of estranged partners in marriage. In our contemporary society family stability appears to have been dissipating by the

day. The mechanisms of an emerging materialistic world have dismantled the traditional African set-up whereby familial solutions were solved amicably without much ado. Nowadays, what is called a money economy has eclipsed norms, values and dignity of communities. In one song-text the persona complains about the pain of being a poor husband. The artist uses Biblical allusion to liken offering of tithe to offering of familial financial support. The situation is made worse in that he is forced to pay school fees for children he never sired. He reveals that if his “mother gets a wind she would cry till there are no more tears in her head.” This reference to the persona’s mother highlight, the power of extended family in an individual’s life. The image of a woman as a domineering mother over the son is seen in the song-text. As he continues to speak about his lover Monica, he yaps:

*Mbia ciakwa niwe ugaga Monica*

*Bengi yakwa ni wetu mwendwa Monica gutiri*

*Biacara itekaguo ithabu ndoiga umuthi twike*

*Ithabu ninginuka*

*Ndumiririe maitu oroiga nyinuke*

*Ngahikania*

*Gitaraita na Nduumo x2*

*Ndumiriri itanaita ngionoria*

(Monica, you are the one who shares out

Any money

You are my bank my lover Monica there is no

Business without stocktaking, I have said today

We do calculations I will go home the message

My mother says I go home

To get married

Before it is too late)

The message, “lest I spill when pouring in” reflects on the image of a woman as a husband’s bank that emerges with a light touch. Materialism appears to be a major theme in the popular secular songs by the selected Gikuyu popular secular artists. It recurs in a majority of the song-texts used in data analysis for this study. Coincidentally, in majority of these song-texts the image of a woman as an exploiter and extortionist of man features prominently.

From another perspective the oral popular artists present life with a woman positively in *Wendo Mweha Uri Murio*, (Sweet Love has a Taste) where the woman’s image is a symbol of hope and stability in a young family. This is especially in bringing up children. The image of a woman as a rearer is heightened in the lines whereby parent’s role is appraised.

*Aciari aya akwa ii*

*Nio Kihuma giitu twoimire mithirimo-ini yao*

*Tukamahe gitio*

*Ciana ici citu naawe i*

*Nicio mahua maitu*

*Tuciige wega wa Ngai*

*Imetametage ndari*

*Igatunyita mitwe.*

(These your parents and mine

Are our foundation, we descended from their sheens

We respect them

These our Children, with you  
Are our flowers  
We maintain them well  
Lets them shine dear  
They will hold our heads)

The image of a woman as a rearer and protector of children comes out clearly in the above lines. The person notes that children descended from the sheens of their parents. Therefore, the spirit of continuity should thrive in the family set-up.

In contrast in the song-text, *Uyu ni Mugogo*, (This is A Log/Baggage) the persona warns his lover that being in bad company has created immense burdens and/or baggage in his life as captured in the following lines:

*Acio muthiaga thiritu nao*  
*Acio muriaga mwi hamwe*  
*Nio megutuma Wendo*  
*Ugituike*  
*Tondu ndihota gukiriria*  
*Uyu ni mugogo wanjigiriire*  
*Riira uguthii ndunyu kana nduka*  
*Ndiga guo ugigwetha*  
*Ta mbururi njii*  
*Mwedwa ii na ndiikirwo mbugi*  
*Kana gichuhi*  
(Those who are in your friendship



Those whom you dire together

They are the ones who will

Make our love end

Because I cannot tolerate

This is a log you placed on me

When you go to the market or shops

I am left looking for you

Like a notorious and gluttonous goal

My dear and it cannot be belled

Or donned a ring.)

The image of a woman as a notorious thieving and gluttonous creature heightens the tension between two lovers. The male persona is viewed as an innocent victim of a crazy wife. He laments about the heavy log of friendship laid on his life by his wife. This is perpetuated by peer pressure that has consumed the female partner's life. She is easily controlled by loiterers and idlers. The end result is animist separation between the two estranged love birds.

Michael Wainaina 1998 contends that the principle aim of popular music (songs) is 'entertainment and in this function popular music (songs) comes with its fair share of drama' (280). Drama is an invaluable technique as it offers the ways in which contemporary Gikuyu society is viewed against the backdrop of the social concerns and cultural values in the songs. It displays the values making the secular popular songs complete in their rendition. Still, drama propels the songs in pinpointing the events that are emergent in real settings of the contemporary community.

#### 4.4 RELATIONSHIPS AND SIMILARITIES IN POETICS OF THE VOICE

The three selected secular popular artists rely heavily on their voices to reach out to their target audience. The commercial bait that motivates the Gikuyu popular secular artist is viewed in the rivalry between them. The artist with a melodious and appealing voice like John Demathew has always been ahead of the pack of Gikuyu artists. This artistic rivalry has been triggered by the money one generates in CD sales and live performances. The secular popular artists have come up with back-up singers and dancers to flavor their images as artists. This is noticeable in Joseph Kariuki's composition, *Kwanyu Ndigacoka*, (I Will Never Return to Your Home) which is recorded using a female voice. The female's alto voice resuscitates the disappearing male baritone voice commonly used by Gikuyu musicians especially of the emergent *Mugiithi* genre. The collaboration between male singers and female ones appears to have shattered the barriers of intellectual capabilities as the experience propels woman secular artists to great heights.

Showalter Eleanor observes:

While literary criticism and the philosophical branch, literary theory, have always been zealously guarded bastions of male intellectual endeavour, the success of feminist criticism has opened a space for the authority of the woman critic that extends beyond the study of women's writing to the re-appraisal of the whole of the whole body of texts that make up our literary heritage. (3)

The observation by Showalter touches on the realities of black women's endeavour to break even the ground for sharing space with their male counterparts and fellow women as well. In the Gikuyu secular music scene the late Queen Jane Nyambura emerged as a user of the poetics of the voice to challenge and condemn male dominance and recurrent ridiculous behavior. Currently, one Wangari wa Kabera is emerging as an astute female singer who uses

the poetics of the voice to counter male dominance in the Gikuyu secular music industry. There is also Wangari wa Gioche a.k.a. Kare B, who has shown her talent in music by singing *Tuirio Twega*, “Delicious Food” a collaboration with one, Jose Gatutura, a.k.a. Mashette the King. Re-appropriation done by the three secular popular artists in picking the poetics emanating from biblical teachings is a common style applied by the three secular popular artists in this study.

The following song-text, *Kirigo*, exemplifies the artist’s deliberate reference to bible teaching to enlighten his listeners on matters of secular life relayed through contradictory religious bias.

*Kirigo*  
*Daudi ainiire Ngai*

*Nguo ikiohoka*

*Muthamaki wari mugi*

*Solomoni ainagirwo ni*

*Atumia akeagakena*

*Kwoguo ti uru, kwiinira*

*Ndari yakwa kirigo x2*

*Ngoroini yakwa Kirigo*

*Wi wa mumwe*

*Wi njata imwe muturireini wakwa*

*Na biu wendo wakwa nindakuneire*

*Wa mundu ni umwe*

*Giki kingi ni kirindi Kirigo x2*

*Ndigiri ya wendo*

*Ni ndagwikira*

*Thumbi ya uhotani*

*Kirigo*  
David danced for God

Until his clothes fell down

A king who was wise

Solomon’s was danced for by

his wives and he was happy

Therefore its not bad to sing

For my darling kirigo x2

In my heart Kirigo

You are the only one

You are the one star in my life

And truly I have given you my love

One’s lover is one

The rest is a crowd Kirigo x2

Love’s degree

I have bestowed on you

The crown of victory

<i>Unjiarire kana</i>	You bear a child for me
<i>Kana ga kairitu</i>	A baby girl
<i>Turagatua maitu</i>	We named her after my mother
<i>Mumera mwega</i>	A good plant
<i>Umunyekaga na maciara x2</i>	Is known by its fruits x2

The three selected artists have emerged as the mouthpieces of their community's philosophy of life on matters of love, sex and marriage as paradigms for measuring the magnitude of success and failure in spouses' endeavours as family members. From motherhood to parenthood that binds one to a father, here called husband, the familial duties determine the direction that family members take in the co-existence business as human beings. Through poetry recreated in popular secular songs members of the populace learn how to live in tolerance of each other's weakness and follies of human nature.

Dennis Tedlock perspective of poetry is that 'what we hear is a re-enactment of how the story came into being, how it came to be lying where it lies' (xii). In borrowing this scholar's view, the implication of his perspective augurs very well with the Gikuyu social concerns, norms and values being 're-enacted' in the three selected artists' songs. (67)

Further, like Wainaina's study spells out, this study seeks to show how popular songs have a role in the continuity of culture and learning of various values. Wainaina asserts that orature is incorporated in popular songs. Wainaina's conclusion is useful to the present study as it seeks to not only investigate the representation of women in Gikuyu secular popular songs but also the emergent social and cultural concerns that raise issues bordering on images of women in Murimi's, Kariuki's and Demathew's songs. The trio most of the time address the social concerns going on on the Kenyan transport system especially in the infamous matatu motif as seen in wa Mungai's work.

Mbugua Wa-Mungai 2013 gives a detailed study of *Matatu* sub-culture and treats songs as one of the forms of youth identity in urban areas (160-85). His study looks at the fluid identities in the urban area. Gikuyu cultural values have been acculturated by other cultures due to intermarriages and movement to Gikuyu diaspora's in Kenya. In the long run Gikuyu cultural values are entrenched in defining Gikuyu people. Secular popular songs become one of the ways through which cultural values of a people can be advanced. Still, the study contends that in the culture of any community, at some level the community looks up for its cultural values and hereby reveal the gender relations in a contemporary community. Secular performing artists, as members of the community, play a crucial role in passing of sensitive issues like those revolving around gender. (Wa-Mungai's 2013) study focuses on the new identities in the urban areas that Nairobi youth form in creating social space for themselves more so through songs. The three popular artists live and work in Nairobi entertainment spots and nightclubs.

From another perspective, Aggrey Wetaba examines *Kenyan Hip-Hop as a Site of Negotiating Urban Youth Identities*. In his study, Wetaba argues that hip hop music can be used in understanding the youth as revealed in the manner of 'dressing, song texts used and other trendy styles of performance' (96). Wetaba asserts that hip hop music is a place where youth form their self awareness. Popular songs can be used to understand Wanga socio-cultural family values. Wetaba investigates how the youth in the urban centre, Nairobi; negotiate several identities through mode of dressing and trendy styles in the performance of hip hop music.

Hip-hop music is a sub-genre within popular songs in comparison to those of Murimi, Kariuki and Demathew's songs. The three popular Gikuyu secular artists are related in that they use leading first voices in their respective music bands. They also have not ventured in

singing in Kiswahili, the national language of Kenya which also happens to be the eastern African Lingua Franca in Five African countries.

#### **4.5 RELATIONSHIPS AND SIMILARITIES IN AESTHETICS OF LANGUAGE**

Aesthetics is a central field of concern in the creative arts' world. A language becomes meaningful to its users not only due to its communicative elements but also the aesthetics revealed in its usage. In popular songs the artists deal with poetic discourse that appeals to their listeners and look upon them to respond through appreciation. In literary appreciation, the link between a literary text and its composer is viewed as a communicative element that passes message(s) from one level of consumption to another. In drawing images of women in literary texts the gender interrelationships are the fulcrums of revelations in the language media available to the communicator. As Hung-Chun Wang notes:

Gender is generally treated as a social construct that signals 'the psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females' (Giddens, 1989: 158). Because 'gender is marked in communication', stereotypes of genders are thus formed (Murachver and Janssen, 2007). In gender research, a great number of works have demonstrated how differently females and/or males are portrayed in media texts, particularly in TV and magazine advertisements. For instance, advertisements constantly convey 'overt and covert messages about the importance of and expectations for each sex' (Greve Spees and Zimmerman, 2002).

The emerging trends in language applicable in the needs of the modern world signal that aesthetics has remained as a centre piece for promoting creativity in literary communication. The creative artist achieves these elements by borrowing his subject matter from happenings in contemporary realities. The reference to God in song-text, Kione! Kione!

(Watch Out! Watch Out!) creates an atmosphere of beauty even in domestic strife. The image of a woman as a tormentor of an innocent man is painted in the words: “You said that I’d live in poverty... You dug a deep pit for me... You wanted me to fall on stone.” The persona continues to lament: “You made me fetch firewood... while there was no meat... And when meat was found... You bid me goodbye.” These lines demonstrate how contemporary composers re-appropriate the words sang in Gikuyu folklore to capture contemporary thematic concerns. These words are found in a traditional song entitled: *Nyumba ya Mwari Witu*, which loosely interpreted means, “Our Daughter’s House.” The aesthetics of Gikuyu oral poetry re-appropriated in contemporary popular song poetry indicates a kind of cyclic relationship between the past anonymous artists and the well known composers of today. The image of womanhood in the form of a house shows the comfort a man gets once he is married and lives happily with his partner. There are sexual connotations in the words: “You made me fetch firewood... while there was no meat.” In Gikuyu folklore eating meat is equated to having sexual intercourse. In contemporary usage, this would still mean a female partner who gives a date to a male friend while she is not ready for sex. In using a style and context that connects consumers and language as a media of communication in musical performance, the secular artists relay societal sensitive information using light moments. As such, the composers depict the image of a woman as a sexual object as fronted in the song-text in question.

Hooks Bell claims that the language, style and content of news are often shaped and determined by audience design. As a reflection of what the audience wants, media can 'reflect "reality" . . . "co-orchestrate" dominant beliefs . . . [and] create "reality"(21). It is necessary to explore to what extent the stereotypes embedded in *Muguacia tucao* reflect generally held beliefs about female and male artists in society.

*Kione!! Kione!!*

Watch!! Watch!!

*Chorus*

Chorus

*Kione I kione I uria*

Watch, watch, how

*Uranyamarika*

You are suffering

*i mwiiro wa ngoro ii*

Because of heart's assumption

The image of a woman as a irate mistress of self-counselship is brought up in the song text. One who counsels himself or herself never achieves their goal in life. One ends up as a lotering animal in the Savannah lands of Africa.

*o uria utakinyaga x2*

*The persona regrets having treated his lover*

Which is never fulfilled

*as a deity of love and so knelt down before*

*her only to be abandoned.*

*Ndaguturiire ndu i mwendwa*

I knelt down for you lover

*Ta wi Mwathani*

As if you were God

*Ngithuthira ndari*

I cuddled you darling

*Ta mwana wa itumbi*

Like a delicate infant

*Ndaturaga ndiraga*

I cried continuously

*Ngirwara na ngihona*

I became sick and got healed

*Tondu wendi wa Ngai i*

Because God's wish

*Ti wa mundu*

Is not human beings' wish

*Wathii wanjambirie kwanyu*

When you went, you spoilt my reputation

*Nginunga ta mborera*

I stunk like a dumping site

*Weiraga ndikona kairitu*

You thought I'd never find a girl

*Ga kuhikia*

to marry



The image of a woman as a proud as a slander who tarnishes the name of her ex-friend is heightened in the words: When you went, you spoilt my reputation.

<i>Kariuki wa Wairimu</i>	Kariuki son of Wairimu
<i>Ona ndikiri nyongi</i>	I even if I am an ugly man
<i>ngiona munyendi i</i>	I got a lover
<i>Gicagi ni kinene</i>	The village is large
Chorus	Chorus
<i>Acio magikwirire undige</i>	Those who told you to leave me
<i>Muhanane</i>	So that you are the same
<i>riu maratheka</i>	Are now laughing
<i>Makonwo ria gituri</i>	Exposing their farthest teeth

The image of a woman as a laughing stock of society is revealed in the song-text as the joke goes as far as Kitui a county far away from central Kenya lands where the artists

<i>Matingigukua tha i</i>	They cannot pity you
<i>Ciana igikuririra</i>	When your children cry
<i>Tondu gutiri witemaga</i>	Because none cuts himself
<i>Agitemera ungi</i>	Cutting for another
<i>Ndaturaga kwanyu</i>	I camped at your home
<i>I utuku na muthenya</i>	Day and night
<i>Ngigeria twariririe</i>	Trying that we don't sort it out
<i>Ukiuga karothea</i>	You said never
<i>Ukiuga wendo witu</i>	You said our love
<i>Urio ni memenyi</i>	Be eaten by spoilers
<i>Thoguo agita athuri</i>	Your father called elders

*Ii tugitigithukanio*

Yes and we were separated

*Chorus*

Chorus

As Hooks Bell 1997 highlights,

Language constitutes social reality as well as reflecting it'. Also, Perkins (1979) states that thoughts selected as stereotypes usually have 'particular ideological significance' (p. 83). We can thus argue that analyzing gender stereotypes may reproduce social ideologies. Following Van Dijk's (2001) discourse-cognition-society perspective, the present study addresses two research issues: (1) What are the prevailing gender stereotypes in entertainment-centric tabloids? (2) Do the stereotypes identified in the tabloids represent highly defined social beliefs? Taken together, these two lines of research allow us to examine interrelations between tabloid culture, gender stereotype, and social ideology as a whole.(88)

Language use is the cornerstone of exploring gender issues in any given discourse. This is by taking stock on what men say about their relationships with women and vice versa. In Africa, liberal feminists have been on an upward trend in highlighting the plight of black women in our contemporary times. As Ruth Meena postulates:

The emergence of liberal feminism as a theory was the result of two socio-economic transformations in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, namely:-the industrial revolution which created structural changes in the methods of production and social relationships. The traditional pattern of rural subsistence economy declined in countries like England and France. Industrialisation and urbanisation led to an emergence of a powerful class, the bourgeois class, which challenged feudal and aristocratic classes. (8)

The position of women as a disadvantaged gender has been addressed right from the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a means to strike a balance societal interrelations.

As Grimshaw opines:

Liberal feminists maintain that education is unfair to females because it limits their access and retention in certain fields. The failure to educate girls can have far-reaching effects on the development of a country, especially in the production and health. Education for girls and women is thus considered as an investment with probably higher economic returns than that of boys and men. (74)

While the above stance is debatable, women have sought the equality in different fields including in the music arts and education pursuits. Still, there is need to ensure that the male gender is not disadvantaged in the matrix of gender balance.

#### 4.6 RELATIONSHIPS AND SIMILARITIES IN BEATS AND MELODY-MAKING

In the Kenyan music scene, Benga style of playing popular music is perhaps the most popular in East Africa. This beat is played with a fast rhythm as opposed to Rhumba and other emergent beats.

<i>Kai Mimu wendo uhana atia</i>	What kind of love would you like Mimu
<i>Angikorwo ti to uyu nii ngwendete nago</i>	If it's not like this one I have shown you
<i>Kana hihi nduiguaga</i>	Or don't you feel
<i>Wega, kiheririe tukiumbe kia Ngai</i>	Good. Just punish me, God's creature
<i>Chorus</i>	Chorus
<i>Korwo ninii we</i>	If I were you,
<i>Nyone mundu unyendete</i>	I get someone who loves
<i>Uria ngwendete</i>	Me the way I love you

The persona invokes the word of God to cover his shortcomings as a weak husband who spends his time in wishful thinking as he dreams of an utopian spouse under the sun.

<i>Ingimuhikira kiria kiariire ndigiri ingiuga</i>	Three years have lapsed
<i>Mimu gicokerere nyumbu</i>	My dear, still clinging
<i>Miaka itatu my dear</i>	Onto your love
<i>Iniguthira ondiumuririe</i>	I've been told you are seen with
<i>Na wendo waku</i>	Another young man
<i>Ngwerwo ni mwonagwo mwina</i>	Mimu you've punished me for a long time
<i>Mwanake ungi</i>	Until you made me be destroyed by
<i>Mimu ni uherithitie ihinda iraihu</i>	
<i>Ngonya ugatuma nii nyanagwo</i>	

Ni thii	Enemies
Ndageria u	When I try oh!
Kwendana na ungi	To love another
Nongaigua e mururu kwi	I feel her to be bitter than
Macatha	'macatha'

There is a humourous touch as the persona equates his relationship to a bitter shrub named "macatha" as he ponders how he has been crashed by worldly inequities in contemporary extra hard times as a young man who is surrounded by monstrous beasts in the city.

Ona arugu, dhania	Even if she cooks
Birirbiri hoho	dhania, pepper
Nongaigua e mururu	I feel her to be bitter
Ndarotete mugika uhiki Na ungi,	I dreamt you wedding another,
ngiuka kanitha-ini	I came to church
Na nguruniti, ngumiikia	With a missile, I threw it
Ngiona thi yagia nduma	I saw the earth get dark
Ndagurumuka nii ngihoya	When I woke, I prayed
Muno, no utuku ugiuka\gutuikana	A lot but before dawn

The persona appears to be a day-dreamer who cannot contain his emotions and is always haunted by his past promiscuous life as a spendthrift boisterous youth.

Ngirota oringi	I dreamt again,
Twi nawe Mombasa	we were with you again at Mombasa,
Swiitii, ngiukira ngihoya	Sweetie, I awoke and prayed
Ngai, agakinyaniria mwihoko Wakwa,	God to make my hope a reality
ii utuike wakwa	yes you be mine

Chorus	Chorus
Nii njukaga haria urutagira wira	When I come at your place of work
O muthenya ndakuona	Each day when I see you,
Ngaiganira no indi reke	I feel contented, but wait
Riua rithue irathuiro	till the sun sets
Uinuke kwanyu, miumu nii	You go home, Mimu
Thii gwakwa	I go to my place
Utuku hari nii,uiganaga mukwa	Night to be me, looks like a long rope
Utuire unyariraga Mimu	You've been mistreating me Mimu
Ndaguthaitha unjigruire tha	I beseech you to have Mercy on me
Chorus	Chorus

All through the night the person views it as an endless rope and so laments about his loneliness as Miimu to him as more of a tormentor rather than a spouse. The two estranged spouses are likened to clothes that are not suited to fit the wearers. They are totally incompatible.

Muthenya unia ukanjira

Twii karanie,

nguo ciakwa

Itikanjihana ringi

Ningaimbaimba

Ndugetikia niwe

Utumite hinje uu

The day you'll tell me

We be together,

my clothes

Will not fit me again

I will grow plump

You'll not believe, you are the one

who has made me this thin

In son-text entitled *Thii Ngwage*, "Disappear from Vicinity" images of women paint an irreversible point of no return between estranged spouses as revealed in the following words/

*Gwi kahinda gagakinya*

*Mundu ethire na make gutiri*

*ii tutigana gutiri mundu*

*ukuite uria ungi*

*Iii thii ngwage*

There will come a time

We part ways. Nobody is carrying the other

Yes, disappear out of

My sight

All through the night the persona views it as an endless rope and so laments about his loneliness as Miimu to him as more of a tormentor rather than a spouse. The two estranged spouses are likened to clothes that are not suited to fit the wearers. They are totally incompatible.

Mitugo yaku riu

Niyanogia, kihurukie

Mitugo yake riu

Niyanogia I gukimanirio

Riu nindarega

Your behavior has now

Made me tired

Relieve me of, your behaviour

It has now made me

Tired, yes. To be Mashed together, I've refused

There is a humorous touch as the persona equates his relationship to a bitter shrub named "macatha" as he ponders how he has been crashed by worldly inequities in contemporary extra hard times as a young man who is surrounded by monstrous beasts in the city.

Mwina Wachira

Ona wageria kuhi

Ingi nie nindarega

Nii nindarega

Even if you try to

Tell tales, I have refused

I myself have refused

Disappear out of my sight

Thii ngwage

Chorus

Githii nokio arata  
Matuire makunyanaga  
Makiuranagia  
Kai nii ndi fara ya  
Nawe niguo uhihiririe  
Na kunjiga iguru  
Ii ati nduri kindu  
Kingi gukenia thi tiga nii

Chorus

There is a humourous touch as the persona equates his relationship to a bitter shrub named “macatha” as he ponders how he has been crashed by worldly inequities in contemporary extra hard times as a young man who is surrounded by monstrous beasts in the city.

Muthenya uria ndagukorire  
Nduka kahuroko ukinyua  
soda . ii ndakunda nngiigua  
Itukanite na njohi nduru

*Waheneririe ni ndawa njega muno  
ya kihuti  
Na twauma nja ndarora  
Ngiona ni uratuguga*

Chorus

*Muthenya ungi wokire kiroko  
Na ndakuria ukinjira  
Wanyitiirwo kibandi*

*Kibetiini ni ndonire*

*Rithiti ya runjinii na*

*Ngikira murata wakwa*

*Na ngikunya giti*

Chorus

So this is why friends  
have been whispering  
asking one another  
How stupid I am  
And you’ve really flattered me  
That there is nothing  
That can make you happy  
In this world except me

Chorus

it a shop at Kahuruko taking

soda. When I sipped I realized  
It was mixed with whisky  
You cheated me, it’s very good medicine,  
for cold  
When we went outside  
I realized you were staggering

Chorus

Another day you came in the morning  
When I asked you told me  
you were arrested for lack of an I.D

In your purse I saw

a receipt for a lodging and

I kept quiet, my friend

I pinched the chair

#### 4.7 CONCLUSION

The Chapter looks into the varieties of styles employed by the three selected artists featuring similarities and differences embodied by the particular artists. It examines the relationships and similarities in poetics of the voice as well as matters of relationships in voicing women’s

liberation relationships and similarities in aesthetics of language. The position of woman and their concerted efforts to have a balancing act in search for gender empowerment is seen against the background of the fight against male dominance and the need to create a positive stand in familial matters in the Gikuyu contemporary society.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.0. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this Chapter, the study makes a recap of the major findings that have emerged during the study and isolates possible areas for further study. The researcher set out to investigate aspects of images of women presented in Murimi wa Kahalf, Joseph Kariuki and John Demathew's secular popular songs. The study argued that secular popular songs emerge as expressive tools which relay gender issues in contemporary society.

The chapters focus on the points that have emerged in the study of images of women in the compositions of the three selected secular Gikuyu popular performing artists among the Gikuyu people of Kenya. The study explores how the songs by these artists reflect style embodied in popular song poetry.

The assumptions were that there are forms of imagery in popular song artistry that depict images of women as envisaged in Gikuyu poetry that thrives in modern times and the manner it is rendered by select performing popular secular artists.

The collected song-texts provided the primary data for analyzing metaphors, similes, idiomatic expressions, irony, satire and symbolism among others. The study applied stylistics performance theory as well as communicative approaches to lay a foundation for theoretical perspectives. The symbols, devices, techniques and aesthetic aspects were explored through the approaches indicated above. Aspects of style and stylistic devices are important in highlighting language use in the researchers' endeavour to analyze and explicate the songs to show the portrayal of images of women as presented and argued within the frame work of politics of gender.



## 5.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The language that artists used and continue to use depicts the richness of indigenous African languages, like Gikuyu in representing the creative sector in the community. There is still a lot of adaptation of oral tradition from Gikuyu Folklore that influences the composition and delivery of popular song poetry in the contemporary societies. The artists focus on composition is dictated by the consumers of a given type of music rendition.

Chapter two analyzed the three selected artists' songs with a bias to the emergent images of women as revealed in song-texts created out of the raw data from CDs.

The artists use certain features of style for example, symbols metaphors, similes, idiomatic expressions and similes as well as allusion to address societal issues. In celebrating the aesthetics of the creation process, literary forms and literary techniques are used and in a way that sheds light on the treatment of women in the present generation.

In Chapter three, the study analyzed the focus on thematic concerns on women and society. We observed that the strategies employed by the three selected artists are representative of socio-cultural conflicts pitting women against men in the Gikuyu contemporary society. The themes addressed depict strained gender relations emanating from an emerging society embedded in moral decadence.

In Chapter four the findings demonstrated that while operating in contemporary Gikuyu community, the select artists' popular songs reveal the power of talent manifest in variations of style and melody that serve as inspiration and motivation for seeking a meeting point between men and women in the contemporary society.

## **5.2 CONCLUSIONS**

This study has demonstrated that contemporary popular Gikuyu secular artists re-appropriate the language used in Gikuyu folklore to build their ideas on issues affecting women and men in society. So the linguistic styles of various epochs of literary traditions have proved to be valuable.

The contextual analysis of various song-texts earmarked in this study indicates that literature is not only important as a form of entertainment but it is used for purging unpleasant feelings that come from starned relationship between men and women in love relationship, thus prompting of use og imges that affect bothe genders. The loss mutual love leads to painful experiences such as death, loss of property and betrayal, thus reconciling the person with nature. Still, literary works as perceived in the song-texts are an avenue for preservation and transmission of culture as evident also in various genres ad subgenres of oral literature. Literature also enlightens us on social, moral and political issues of our time, that is, in written and oral forms that spell out morality or immorality. The application of stylistics, feminist and performance theories is a valuable means to explore the images of women in popular secular music studied in research work in cultural studies.

## **5.3 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDY**

This study limited itself to three artists and a sample of eighteen songs in exploration of images of women emanating from gender relations espoused in members of the Gikuyu community of Kenya. There are other premiere and also upcoming artists who sing in Gikuyu language. The researcher recommends research on other artists and their song-texts to help shed more light on other aspects of images of women centering on feminism and gender issues in the contemporary society.

The Ministry of Education through the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should encourage scholars of social science to venture into studying African folklore, literature and society whereby genres like music and dance are present.

The popular music genre is a growing and engaging field as it centres not only on images of women but also on social, political, economic and religious issues of the day. From this end, scholars of literature, for instance, orature could explore images of women in *Mwomboko* poetry recorded by old generation or new generation composers. Further research on the role of women in protest literature, images of men in popular music composed by female composers like Queen Jane Nyambura of Queeneja Les Les, Lady Wanja, Wangari wa Kabera, Elizabeth Nyambara among others could also be done.

This study also suggests that popular poetry from other ethnic communities which emerged from the transition of the three epochs of literary experience: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial be looked into. This would create a viable opportunity to engage in comparative oral literature emerging from modern folklore within the popular song genre. This way, researchers may seek to establish whether popular music serves the same purpose in different communities.

### WORKS CITED

- Achebe, Chinua. *Morning Yet on Creation Day*. London: Heinemann, 1975. Print.
- - -. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Longmans, 1958. Print.
- Akivaga, Kichamu. & Odaga, Bole. *Oral Literature for Schools: A Certificate Course*.  
Nairobi: East Africa Educational Publishers Ltd, 1982. Print.
- Badejo, Diedre. Badejo Diedre in “Gender, Ideology, Global Africa, and the Challenges for  
Pan-African Studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” *Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol, No 10,  
page+, 2007. Print.
- Baldick, Chris. *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press,  
2008. Print.
- Barret, W.E.H. *Akikuyu Fairy Tales*. Man XII, London: Heinemann, 1912. Print.
- Barton, Angela. *Science Education and the Politics of Poverty*. *Journal of Research in Science  
Teaching*. 34,339-340, 1998. Print.
- Bradford, Richard. *Stylistics: The New Critical Idiom*. London: Routledge. 1975. Print.
- Bauman, Richard. *Folklore, Cultural Performances and Popular Entertainments*. New York:  
Oxford University Press, 1992. Print.
- Benstock, Shari, Herris Suzanne and Susanne Woods. *A Handbook of Literary  
Feminisms*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print.
- Benson, Douglas and Benson Hughes. *The Perspectives of Ethnomethodology*. London and  
New York: Longman, 1983. Print.
- Bukenya, Austin and Kabira, Wanjiku. *Understanding Oral Literature*. Nairobi: Nairobi  
University Press, 1992. Print.
- Cameron, Deborah. *The Feminist Critique of Language: A Reader*. London and New York:  
Routledge, 1998. Print.
- Campbell, Lyle. *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*. London: Edinburg University  
Press. 2013. Print.

- Chesaina, Ciarunji. *Oral Literature of the Embu and Mbeere*. Nairobi: E.A.E.P Ltd. 1997.Print.
- Culler, Jonathan. *Structuralist Poetics*. London: Routledge, 1975.Print.
- Davies,Carole,Boyce & Graves, Ann, Adams.*Ngambika:Studies of Women in African Literature*.Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc.1990.Print.
- Davies,Carole, Boyce & Ogundipe-Leslie,Molara. *Moving Beyond Boundaries: International Dimensions of Black Women 's Writing*.London: Pluto Press, 1995.Print.
- Dickinson, Margaret. *When Bullets Begin to Flower*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1985.Print.
- Drewett, Michael & Cloonan, Martin. *.Popular Music Censorship in Africa*. London: Ashgate, 2006.Print.
- Dundes, Alan. (ed). *The Study of Folklore*. London: Prentice- Hall, Inc. 1965.Print.
- Fine, Elizabeth. *The Folklore Text: From Performance to Print*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1984.Print.
- Gakuo,K. "A Study of Alienationin Selected Songs of Joseph Kamaru." Unpublished Thesis, University of Nairobi,1994. Print.
- Grimshaw, Jean. *Philosophy and Feminist Thinking*.Minnesota: Minnesota University Press, 1986.Print.
- Hooks, Bell. *Cutural Criticism and Transformation*.Minnesota: Minnesota University Press, 1997.Print.
- Hooks, Bell.*Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*. Boston: South End Press,1991 Print.
- Fabula, *Journal of Folktale Studies*. Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002.Print.
- Finnegan, Ruth. *Oral Literature in Africa*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1970.Print.
- - -. *Oral Poetry*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977. Print.

Foley, John.Miles. *How to Tread an Oral Poem*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002.  
Print.

E-companion at [www.oraltradition.org/hrop/](http://www.oraltradition.org/hrop/).Print.

Kabira, Wanjiku. *The Oral Artist*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1987.Print.

- - -. "Images of Women in Gikuyu Literature." Unpublished, PhD, Thesis, University of  
Nairobi, 1993.Print.

Kates, Millet. *Sexual Politics*. London: Virago, 1977.Print.

Kenyatta, Jomo. *Facing Mount Kenya*. Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya Ltd, 1938.Print.

Leach, Maria and Fried, Jerome.*Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*. New  
York: Funk and Wagnalls, Publishing Company Inc., 1972.Print.

Leech, Geoffrey and Short, Micheal .*A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*.London and New  
York: Longman Ltd, 1969.Print.

- - -. *Style in Fiction*.London and New York: Longman Limited, 1981.Print.

Vansina, Jan.*Oral tradition as History*.London: James Currey Publishers, 1985.Print.

Mbugua, Wallace. "A Critical Analysis of Conformity and Subversion in Gĩkũyũ Children's  
Oral Poetry."Unpublished PhD Thesis Kenyatta University, 2007.Print.

Mahugu, Pauline. "A Literary Investigation into the Agĩkũyũ Songs of Independence."M.A.  
Thesis, University of Nairobi, 1990.Print.

Meena, Ruth. *Gender in Southern Africa: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues*.Harare: Sapes  
Books, 1992.Print.

Miruka, Okumba.*Encounter with Oral Literature*. Nairobi: East African Educational  
Publishers, 1994.Print.

Mutahi, Karega .and Kabira, Wanjiku. *Gikuyu Oral literature*. Nairobi: EAEP Kenya,  
1988.Print.

Mutonya, Maina. *The Politics of Everyday Life*.Nairobi: Twaweza Publications, 2013.Print.

- Mwangi, Peter Muhoro. "The Dynamic Versatile Educator." Unpublished, B.Ed. Project, CUEA. Nairobi.1997.Print.
- - -. "The Poetics of Gikuyu*Mwomboko* Poetry: A Case Study of Selected Performing Artists." Unpublished M.A.Thesis, Kenyatta University, Nairobi. 2002. Print.
- - -. "The Politics of Gender in Gikuyu *Nduumo* Poetry Performance."Unpublished, PhD Thesis, Makerere University. 2014. Print.
- Ndungo, Catherine. Fabula, in *Journal of Folktale Studies*. Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002.Print.
- Njogu, Kimani and Oluoch-Olunya, G. (2007). *Cultural Production and Social Change in Kenya*. Nairobi: Twaweza Communications Ltd. Print.
- Njogu, Kimani. & Maupeu, Herve. *Songs and Politics in Eastern Africa*. Dar es Salaam: IFRA & Mkuki na Nyota, 2007.Print.
- Nkonge, M.K. "A Literary Study of the Songs of Kamaru: Themes and Styles." Unpublished Thesis, Department of Literature, Kenyatta University," 1987.Print.
- Nnaemeka, Obioma. *The Politics of (M)Othering: Womanhood, Identity and Resisstance in African Literature*. London: Routledge, 1997.Print.
- Ogola, Margaret.*The River and the Source*.Nairobi: Spear Books.1994.Print.
- Okpewho, Isidore. *The Oral Peformance in Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd, 1990.Print.
- Okombo, Okoth. &Nandwa, Jane. *Reflections on Theories and Methods in Oral Literature*. Nairobi: KOLA, 1992.Print.
- Osusa, Tabu .*Shades of Benga: The Story of Popular Music in Kenya: 1946-2016*.Nairobi: Ketebul, 2012 Print.
- p' Bitek, Okot. *Artist the Ruler*.Nairobi: EAPH Ltd, 1986. Print.
- Showalter, Elaine.*The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory*.New York: Virago Press Ltd, 1986.Print.

- Steady, Filomina Chioma. *The Black Women Cross-Culturally*. Cambridge: Scenkman Publishing Company, 1981. Print.
- Thapelo, Joshua Selepe. *Contemporary Black Protest Literature in South Africa: A Materialistic Analysis*. Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1993. Print.
- Tedlock, Dennis. *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1983. Print.
- Terry, Geraldine and Hoare. Joanne. *Gender-Based Violence*. London: Oxfam, 2007. Print.
- Tong, Roemarie. *Feminist Thought. A Comprehensive Introduction*. New York: West Views Press, 1989. Print.
- Njogu, Kimani. *Culture, Performance and Identity: Paths of Communication in Kenya*. Nairobi: Twaweza Publications, 2008. Print.
- Wang, Hung-Chun. "Language and Ideology: Gender Stereotypes of Female and Male Artists in Taiwanese Tabloids," Vol. 20 No 6 November 2009, pp-747-774. Sage Publications, 2009. Print.
- Wetaba, Aggrey Nganyi. *Kenya Hip-Hop as a Site of Negotiating Urban Youth's Identities*. Goettingen, Germany: Sierke Verlag, 2009. Print.
- Wa Kinyatti, Maina. *Thunder from The Mountains: Mau Mau Patriotic Songs*. Zed Press and Midi-Tiki, 1980. Print.
- Wa Mungai, Mbugua. *Nairobi's Matatu Men Portrait of a Subculture*. Nairobi: Goethe-Institut, 2013. Print.
- Wa Thiong'o, Ngugi and Githae-Mugo, Miceere. *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*. Nairobi: EAEP Ltd., 1976. Print.
- Wa Thiong'o, Ngugi. *The River Between*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers. 1965. Print.
- Wainaina, Binyavanga. *"Kwani?"* Nairobi: Kwanitrust Publications, 2008. Print.



Wainaina, Michael. "Aspects of Orature in Selected Gikuyu Popular Songs." Unpublished

M.A. Thesis, Kenyatta University, 1998.Print.

[www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/popular%20song](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/popular%20song), Retrieved on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016.Print.

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jan\\_Blomaert/publication/233661887\\_Applied](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jan_Blomaert/publication/233661887_Applied)

Ethnopoetics/links/54d6410c.f.Print.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/popular-music>, Retrieved on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016.Print.

URI:<https://hdl.handle.net/10500/3328> Retrieved 17<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Print.

## APPENDICES

## Appendix I: Discography of Song-texts

## KIARUTARA

1.ALICE	ALICE
Alice Mwendwa Wathire ukindiga Ngioyana na andu matekundirira	Alice my lover You went and left me I got into company of people Who did not sympathise with me.
Matoi rukihacika Kana rukiera Ingi ni ndurika Ingi ni mbura matu Cia Nairobi Kwona uriru Tigukura Nindoyanire na aria Matarumaga makahuha na nikiu ngukira Anake, mundu Enda muka agire muhiki Kwi nyina na ithe Kuma wathii, hikitie atatu, uyu ni wagatatu Ngwiigua ni aruma maitu amwita nguii guku gwakwa ndekurara	Those who know not when Things go wrong or unsteady Some are naughty Some are way ward Thugs of Nairobi Seeing a lot is not about Age I got into the company of those who bite without soothing and that's why, I tell young men, when one needs a wife to go for the bride from her mother and father since you left I've married three, this is the third one I hear she has abused my mother by calling her a dog She will not spend another night here at my home
Ndehita ndoiga Eguthii utuku Gugikire ujira Wendo ni murimu muru Na nduri dawa Wandonyirie gicagi Kia ndurika	I've sworn and said She will leave at night It will dawn on her way Love is bad disease and it has no medicine it took me to a village of naughty ones
Ui, ndina mwihoko no Ngoni wakwa wa ngoro Ngithii gukua Thina na kiondo Alice ui mwendwa Alice mwendwa Ii hihi niurajigua Torea ndagituririo gitango Ngioyana na nema kuhia Yetagwo Jane, ndurika ta Thata ya ngware Na kurima ndingirima, no gwikonyora Na macani	Oh dear, trusting that I'll get the love of my heart. I went to carry A basket full of problems Alice, oh my lover Alice my lover Can you hear me The way I've persistently lived with trouble I engage with a don't care by the name Jane, as naughty as A barren – francolin And she could not cultivate, she could only bathe And tea leaves

<p>Mathukagire camba  Andeheire ihii igiri ciina nderu  Na cikirwo cinjitage baba  Ngirigwo kana ni kunera,  kana hihii ni guci guranira  Nii ndikariganirwo wira muritu  Ndarutithirio ni Mary Atieno  Wagutega thamaki  Ndatuire rui  Mwari wa oketch  Ndaka hute</p>	<p>Got spoilt in the farm  She came with two sons with beards  And they were told to be calling me dad  I got confused whether it was to bring them  up, or to get them wives.  I will never forget the strenuous job  I did for Mary Atieno  Of catching fish.  I used to be in the river  so that Oketch's daughter  would not go hungry</p>
<p>Mary Atieno Wathire  Tuhitaniti  Athambirie mwana  Kiraini kia ngima  Na ndakiri ona rubutu  Kana rukobe  Agithamba iriuko  Riri ciana</p> <p>chorus</p> <p>Nii ndiaturaga njui  Ningahikia mundu  Urinjikagia ciara  Maitho  Mundu murume uri nderu  Nginya cia githuri  Atuikite agithio  Thayu ni muka  Ndikayaga  Itari nume  Gitege matu  Murumirwo  Ndamenyaga igithira  Umenye ndutaga wira  Muingi wa tuhu  Ungi wakuhaka  Mbaka rangi  Alice njohi ni njuru  Niyatumire njaririe  Thoguo miario minungu  Ngirwo ndikumena ngombe  Mukwa ndingiona  Ngitumirwo athuri eri  uthoni ukuo</p>	<p>Mary Atieno who went  When we differed  When she bathed the child  In the basin for ugali  She had no shame  Or shyness  Bathing by the river  Where there are children</p> <p>I could not imagine  I would marry a person  Who will be dipping fingers  Into my eyes  A man with beard</p> <p>Even on the chest  Being deprived of  Peace by the wife  It doesn't scream  Unless it is hurt  Incline your ears  One who is fed  Does not notice when there is no more  Know I do a lot of work  Useless work  Some of it to paint  a cat  Alice beer is bad  It made me be rude  to your Father  I was told if I despised the cow  I could not get the rope  Two elders were sent to me  To break the marriage negotiations</p>

Nii Kariuki ndi njira Ngiuka mwendwa Turiukie wendo uyu Witu Niui gutiri uteri apiru Ona wa kinyonga Tiwega mwendwa Ndirute muoyo	I Kariuki am on the way Coming my dear So that we can resituate this love Of ours You know there is none without appeal Even death sentence Its not good my dear I commit suicide.
--	---

<b>Murimi wa Kahalf</b>	
<b>1. INO NI MOMO</b>	<b>THIS IS A GIANTESS</b>
Ino ni momo x2 ii Ndimiikie cabi No nginya ikunde magana Wona yaigania Nota karagita Iramaga ta ngoma Anyuite kairaci x2 Ino ti vitz, ni ngari nene Turera	This is a momo x2 ii I ignite It must consume hundreds When its satisfied It's like a tractor It roars like a devil After consuming toxins This is not a vitz, it's a big vehicle, a lorry
Nii Wakahalf Murimi Ngurora naku Wiyumiririe itari ungi Itari ungi unginyuma na njira Maitu hoera na undathime Itari thau iriaga ikoro ria njira Ndokire Nairobi Gwetha kibarua ii Itekumenya ngituika ng'ombo ya momo x2	I Wakahalf Murimi Where will I go? Be encouraged, I don't have Another, who can assist me Mother pray for me and bless me One without anything will eat a peeling by the roadside I came to Nairobi to look for a casual job Without any knowledge I became a slave to a mistress
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
Ndiheaga uhoro Itekumenya ngihenio Ni ngoro yakwa Ngeita nyoko Ugi ndwaambagia Nduigaga no itigia Ngigutuka uyu ni Urimu ndekima naguo	I counselled myself Without realizing it , I was Deceived by my heart Calling myself the best Wisdom never begins I told myself it wasn't serious When I realized it was foolishness, I had indulged in

Ngurora naku? Uinanigutukire Ndiguteng'era ringi Na muigwa kuguru x2	Where shall I go? Oh! It's already dark I will not run again With a thorn in my leg
Chorus	Chorus
Nii ngimuhikia Anjirire ni gathirange I no ndiamenyaga ni ngari Ikuriiree bara	When I married her She told me she was a virgin I did not know this was an old vehicle On the road
Ciana ni ithatu cia Guka nacio i Gutiri wa ithe nongi Ndi namba cigana Kuria iriaga ta buri ciani irakamwo I ndoiga ni ngwaria Ino thibindi ndihota x2	She has come with three children None has the same father What is my position She eats like a freshian being milked I have said ill speak, I cannot put up with this speed
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
* rwa bithi nyama Ruio ni murari, Nyama ciariirwo tene ni ehitungiri Nindahingicithanirie reri O tene ii Kuhoha ti kuma Andu ndaria munjigwe Ti kuguruka na nii ti ngoma ndi nacio Giki kioho Wakahalf Ndingitobora x2	* Is known by one who spends the night meat was eaten long ago by passers-by I mismatched the rails Long ago To wither is not to dry up People when I speak, hear me I am not crazy and i do not have evil spirits This sentence I Wakahalf Will not endure
<b>chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
Miaka itandatu Ngite migwi na ngima ii Na guteng'eria ruhuho Rutekunyitika	For six years I have wasted my arrows with monkeys and chasing the wind Without catching it

<p>Ingihitania thiaga ta ng' Ondu nditu  Na guteng'erio mburoti  Ta cia miraa  Uyu ti mundu  Na nikio ndioga, ndiarie ii  Waigua irakaya  Andu aitu menya ninume x2 nikii</p>	<p>If I make a mistake I walk like a pregnant sheep  And being chased in the plot like <i>miraa</i> vehicles  This is not a human being  That's why I have decided to speak out  If you hear it scream  Our people know its bitten x2... that's why...</p>
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
<p>Riria ndainuka  Ndimwire toro, ndionaga  Ii, ngirutwo wiiro na  Ihenya no ta barathi  Ma Wakahalf  Gwakwa kwegu nikui?  Ti mawiraini  Mucii guothe  No minoga</p>	<p>When I go home  I tell you, I never sleep  I am drained quickly  It's like a horse race  Truly Wakahalf  What's good on my side?  It's not at work  At home..... all is  Exhaustion</p>
<p>Nguruka naku andu aitu  Ni rurundire ii  Ndoiga nyumbure  Munyende kana mumene x2</p>	<p>Where do I go, my people  All is bleak  I have decided to disclose  You like me or hate me</p>
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
<p>Nindoka nyene  Nindoka kwiiturura ii  Uyu murigo ndahoya  We unjaure  Mwana angitia thamaki  We ndungimuhe nyoka  Ndi mutindike nii  Ndimukinyu muthia  Nderehe baba</p>	<p>I have come Almighty  I have come to pour myself out  This load I pray  You offload me,  If a child asks for a fish  You cannot give a snake  I've been pushed  Am on the edge  I've come father</p>

Ndigakue nii Ongiaragia I Uyu ti mundu Ni irimu riakundeng'ura ....nikiu....	So I may not die Still speaking This is not a human being She will crash me
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>

<b>By Murimi waKahalf</b>	
<b>2. KAMUNGUNA</b>	<b>KAMUNGUNA</b>
Wakahalf ni thiri uriku Uyu ndihaga Ndimurige nu witu Uka ndigicura Maya mathina Ma wendo uyu Maumire naku? Ndauma kwa momo Gaka nako ni Kamunguna x2 ii	Wakahalf which is this debt I pay I don't know who is my kin Who will free me Where did these problems of this love come from? After coming from <i>momo</i> 's(tribulations) this is now Kamunguna x2
<b>Chorus</b> Kamu Kamu ni Kamunguna Gukuhiha no ta njeki No koyaga tiba Gatione kaga Njiguaga mukubirie Kanyumagiriria Gukuhiha ti gutinio x2	<b>Chorus</b> Kamu kamu is Kamunguna She is as short as a jerk But she lifts lorries She is not seen I hear the foot steps She comforts me Shortness is not being cut
Maitu anegenaga Akiuragia kiomire nakuu? Ndakonire kaiyitwo Kibeti ni mukora Ngikaiguira th muno Tonde kwari utuku Ndakinya nyumba Ngikora ti uria Ndeciragia x2	Mother grumbles Asking where she came from I found her, when she had Been robbed of her purse I pitied her too much Because it was at night When I arrived home I realized it was not what I thought.
Karakarire muno muno Ndakahe iria Gakinjuria waKahalf Kai urandua mwana Gakiuria turaruga ki, Tutikararire Ngiuga ni gia kuguru Kuu Kuuma hndi iyo ngigia mundu x2	She was very very annoyed When I gave her milk She asked me, waKahalf Do you think I am a Child She asked what shall we cook So that we don't sleep Hungry I said there I am Since that time I got somebody

<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
Maniimba makwa mahura hodi Muthenya ucio Ngakarutira indo kabati Kwanika nguo no Gakinyire giti x2	When my neighbors knocked at my door That day I removed utensils from the cupboard To spread clothes, she Had to step on a chair
Wakamau Nako ni kamunguna Ti mugunda karime Kana gatue kahua Ti gatuire ngo'mbe Mahuti ni undu wa ime Kahura nguo Kwanika no getanire x2	Wakamau She is kamunguna She can not cultivate Or pick coffee She cannot cut fodder for cows Because of dew When she washes clothes To hang she has to seek assistance
Tungihitania gacomokaga Ihenya utuku Niimba moragie, murimi Nikii uroria mwana	When we quarrel, she runs swiftly at night Neighbours ask, Murimi, What are you asking the child.
Gugateng'eria Nota guteng'eria mubira, Ndathii gukagutha, Ndarigwo ngukagutha kuu x2	Chasing her Is like chasing the ball when I try to hit her I fail to understand where to hit her
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
Ukuhi wa kamunguna Ni unogoraga Gakirwo Undu Konaga ta karairirwo Kiuga Kangirakara kanegenaga Gutatuka Ni karuru ta kabiribiri Ga kanuguu x2	Kamuguna's shortness Makes me proud When she is being told Something She feels like she is being despised because Of her size When she is annoyed, she complains until dusk She is as bad as the bitter pepper Like a baby monkey
Tutwaranite nako nii Njiguaga ndikuo Nao andu no mwihugoro No indi kaguru kuingana Iruungo ria kigwa Makaga tondu kwi Hindi twiiganaga x2	When we walk together I feel delighted People keep on turning back, Well her foot is like the Piece a sugar cane I am surprised because There are times our heights are equal
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
Mundu wina ihindi Akinite wikonotete	One with a bone Is better than one with nothing
Nikuhe thayu Kamuguna ni kindu wakwa Maitu weterere Tumuciare muri na baba	Because of giving me peace Kamuuguna is valuable to me Mother wait We give birth to you and father
Niguo witikie ati Gakuhiha ati ti tugutinio x2	So that you believe, shortness is not being cut



<b>KIARUTARA</b>	
<b>3. KIONE!! KIONE!!</b>	<b>WATCH!! WATCH!!</b>
<p>Undu uria ingiuga Maundu ni ma Ngai Ona ithui turi ake Turi ciumbe ciake Ukindiga Waugire nguturira thina Ugikirigarirwoi utari Nimuigire Wanyenjeire iriku Ngai agithithika Wendaga ngwiire ihiga ii Ngigwira thibunji Ukinyunithia ngu Li nyama itenyoneku Na riria cionekire i Wanjirire kwa heri</p>	<p>What I can say is Issues belong to God We also belong to Him We are his creation When you left me You said, id live in poverty You forgot one who does not have You dug a deep pit for me Has something kept for him God filled it up a bit for me You wanted me to fall on a stone I fell on a sponge You made me fetch firewood while there was no meat And when meat was found You bid me goodbye</p>
<p>Chorus Kione I kione I uria Uranyamarika Ni mwiiro wa ngoro ii o uria utakinyaga x2</p>	<p>Chorus Watch, watch, how You are suffering Because of heart's assumption Which is never fulfilled</p>
<p>Ndaguturiire ndu i mwendwa Ta wi Mwathani Ngithuthira ndari Ta mwana wa itumbi Ndaturaga ndiraga Ngirwara na nghona Tonde wendi wa Ngai i Ti wa mundu Wathii wanjambirie kwanyu Nginunga ta mborera Weiraga ndikona kairitu Ga kuhikia Kariuki wa Wairimu Ona ndikiri nyoni I ngiona munyendi i Gicagi ni kinene</p>	<p>I knelt down for you lover As if you were God I cuddled you darling Like a delicate infant I cried continuously I became sick and got healed Because God's wish Is not human beings' wish When you went, you spoilt my reputation I stunk like a dumping site You thought I'd never find a girl to marry Kariuki son of Wairimu I am even lucky I got a lover The village is large</p>
<p>Chorus</p>	<p>Chorus</p>
<p>Acio magikwirire undige Muhanane riu maratheka Makonwo ria gituri Matingigukua tha i</p>	<p>Those who told you to leave me So that you are the same Are now laughing Exposing their farthest teeth They cannot pity you</p>

Ciana igikuririra Tondu gutiri witemaga Agitemera ungi Ndaturaga kwanyu I utuku na muthenya Ngigeria twariririe Ukiuga karothea Ukiuga wendo witu Urio ni memenyi Thoguo agita athuri Ii tugitigithukanio	When your children cry Because none cuts himself Cutting for another I camped at your home Day and night Trying that we don't sort it out You said never You said our love Be eaten by spoilers Your father called elders Yes and we were separated
Chorus	Chorus

<b>By MURIMI WAKAHALF</b>	
<b>4. KIRIGO</b>	<b>KIRIGO</b>
Daudi ainire Ngai Nguo ikiohoka Muthamaki wari mugi Solomoni ainagirwo ni Atumia akeagakena Kwoguo ti uru, kwiinira Ndari yakwa kirigo x2	David danced for God Until his clothes feel down A king who was wise Solomon's was danced for by his wives and he was happy Therefore its not bad to sing For my darling kirigo x2
Ngoroini yakwa Kirigo Wi wa mumwe Wi njata imwe muturireini wakwa Na biu wendo wakwa nindakuneire Wa mundu ni umwe Giki kingi ni kirindi Kirigo x2	In my heart Kirigo You are the only one You are the one star in my life And truly I have given you my love One's lover is one The rest is a crowd Kirigo x2
Ndigiri ya wendo Ni ndagwikira Thumbi ya uhotani Unjarire kana Kana ga kairitu Turagatua maitu Mumera mwega Umunyekaga na maciaro x2	Love's degree I have bestowed on you The crown of victory You bear a child for me A baby girl We named her after my mother A good plant Is known by its fruits x2

### KIARUTARA

<b>5. KWANYU NDIGACOKA</b>	<b>I'LL NEVER COME BACK TO YOUR HOME</b>
Mwendwa ugiite Gwitu ndugacoka ii Twanirinia ukinga Ugoka juma Ka mwendwa utaninire Marakara ngoroini Tonde uguka Ukaregera thome x2	My lover you said you will never come back to our home when we discussed you said you will come on Saturday my lover, didn't you clear the anger in your heart for you've come and remained by the gate.
Ndukae gwika uguo Mwendwa wakwa, Kuu ni gukiima Athuri gitio Ni gugika njono Ukira athuri Maingine nawe Ukaregera kihingo-ini x2	Do not do that My lover, That's to disrespect The elders. It's a shame For you to tell elders To get in and then You stay by the gate
Horeria ngoro i Mwendwa wakwa Baba witu uiya Niomire thi Maitu nake akiuga	Calm your heart My lover Our father Passed on My mother then said,

Ithanwa rigature ngu Hiti ndingikiria mwana x2	Let the axe split firewood The hyena cannot eat its own
Kiumiririe ukinye ta muthuri na ugikinye ta muthuri na ugikinye Ta mundu wanaruona	Take courage, behave like a man and behave like one who has seen a lot
Utaiguite ndararia, mwendwa wakwa ndukamake hania ugukaira, Nii ngukaira ho x2	If you've not heard me desert you my dear do not be worried where you die, I will die there
Nindamaiguithirie uria waugite Uiguthanio mbere Mhuri thutha No magikinjira nugu igitunyo Mwana Iikagirio mungu Ihingwo maitho x2	I made them understand what you had said Agreeing first Goats later, But they told me for one to snatch a child from a monkey you first throw a gourd to blinden it
Mangihitia moige ndiri waku I ingitua mikwa na njuke gwaku akorwo ni njera kana gucurio itara manjurie no mamenye ndi waku	If they make a mistake and say am not yours I'd disobey and come to your home if its prison or being hang on the rack they hang me but know I am yours.
Kariuki ona akorwo muri ereri thoguo ndangiaga kinya kia njohi Ngunyitire mutwe nawe umiririe iteke tuthare mahinda maitu nawe x2	Kariuki even if you are poor, your father cannot lack a gourd of beer I get hold of the head and you endure the kicks we make haste of our time together.

<b>DE MATTHEW</b>	
<b>6. NI WATURUKIRIE</b>	<b>YOU VANISHED</b>
Wendo munene uinyia Ndukinyanagiria ii	A lot of love truly Is never realized
Igithi ngoma niakanduta Wega ini waku	Surely the devil was To distract me from Your goodness
Ngeragia mungo Ngiririria tucokanwo	I try hard I long for us to be back together
No niwaturukirie Ona tutingionana	But you vanished We cannot even see each other
<b>Chorus</b> Ngeragia kuria irio Ngaigua iri macatha Ndageria kwonio Wendo, ni ungi Ukarema ii Ona angigeria kuhe kiss Ndingimiigua No imajinire ati niwe Niguo ngene	<b>Chorus</b> I try to eat food I feel its bitter When another tries to show me love, it's impossible Even when she tries to kiss me I can't feel it Unless I imagine it's you So that I be happy
Ngeragia kurugirwo Ni ungi, gukarema i	I try to be cooked for By another, it's not possible

Maita maingi njiguaga Akiruria cumbi Kana ngaruma ngaigua Itari maguta ii Tugakorobana, ngamwira Ni kaba Mumbi	Many times I feel the food Very salty Or I taste and feel It doesn't have cooking fat We quarrel, I tell her I prefer Mumbi
Huragirwo nguo Gukarema Tondu nyonaga hindi ciothe Ta iragaca ii Ngamuruma muno Ngamwira kaba Mumbi Agakunja kibari Ucio agacoka kwao	My clothes are washed It's not appealing for me Because I always Find them dirty I abuse her a lot I tell her I prefer Mumbi She packs up That one goes back to her home
Chorus	Chorus
Mami na baba manjiraga Ni kaba Mumbi Ati ngucarie biu nginya tucokanwo	Mother and father tell me Its better its Mumbi That I look for you until We get back together

## KIARUTARA

<b>7. NI NDAREGA</b>	<b>I HAVE REFUSED</b>
Muhothi uyu nduire hothagira wendo, Ndoiga umuthi undekie na unjigane akorwo ni githitu wanguriire niguo ndure muhuko ta mang'otore nindarega, Kariuki nindarega I gukirwo hakiri ndi munini x2	The offering I have lived offering for love, I have said today, enough is enough if its sorcery you've been practicing so that I remain in your pocket. Like cents I have refused, Kariuki to be cheated when am young
Unjiraga nduri ungi uigite ngoro no-kanjira ati kanitha ni ihotha Wendo witu, ndungituika ta githii, gia guthia mbeca ciakwa kimungunyo thomithagie ciana itaciariate maitu angiigua angirira mathire x2	You tell me, you've none other, in your heart you also tell me, church is about offering our love cannot be like a mill, to mill my money recklessly. I be educating children Whom I've not sired if my mother gets wind, she would cry herself out.
Nguria hiki monica uiguaga atia riria ukuona wina kamwana kanini wanjirire ndige gukombora nyumba Muikarano, githi ni munyamaranio Ati ingiuga ninguthii kuona acari uhumbaga maitho na ikeno ngiri x2	I ask myself Monica, how do you feel when you find yourself with a young man you told me not to rent a house Being together, thus is suffering If I say, I will go to see the parents you blinden me with a thousand joys

<p>Kanitha-ini tutwaraga mihothi na twahotha tuckerwo, giki ni gicunji gia ikumi ici ciaku nicia ruhonge ruriku? Na mbeba koko cia karimu, ugucaria ungi wakuhenagia kunja mburi na rua no nguinuka x2</p>	<p>In church we take offerings and when we offer we are told, this is ten percent under which department does yours fall? it's money all through for fool, you will look for another to cheat. Wind up everything it's all over I must go home</p>
<p>Mbia ciakwa niwe ugayaga monica  bengi yakwa niwetu mwendwa monica gutiri biacara itekagwo ithabu ndoiga umuthi twike ithabu ni nguinuka ndumiriri maitu aroiga nyinuke Ngahikanie Gitanaita na ndumo x2 Ndumiriri itanaita ngionoria</p>	<p>Monica, you are the one who shares out My money You are my bank my lover Monica there is no business without accountability. I have said today we do calculations I will go home the message, mother says I go home. To get married Before it's too late. The message, least I spill when pouring in.</p>

## KIARUTARA

<b>8. NJOHERA MY LOVER</b>	<b>FORGIVE ME MY LOVER</b>
<p>Ona kinyi mwendwa ni ugikinyukagio I mwendwa I gukindira ndeto muno ti kuo bata Angikorwo mwendwa No undige Niundu wa ndeto Mwendwa itangiyyura Mukuha</p>	<p>Even steps my lover at times are ignored My lover stressing on matters too much Is not what is important If my lover You can leave me Because of matters my lover without substance</p>
<p>Micii mwendwa Wamiona ni ndogo i Ningi ituragio ni Gukiraniriria No wee itumbi riakua, no gwa ciifu Kinya, kingigua thi Ukanjitira athuri</p>	<p>Homes my lover When you see them, its smoke And they last because of tolerance But you when an egg breaks You run to the chief When a ground falls down You summon the elders</p>
<p>Chorus Njohera my lover Njohera my dear x2 Ui micii irutagio Ni gukiraniriria</p>	<p>Chorus Forgive me my lover, Forgive me my dear x2 Homes last because Of forgiveness</p>
<p>Wendo ugikua niuthingithagia ngoro-ini Kuhana ta gikuu kia Mwendwa wa mundu Angikorwo ati niniii Ngukira ngaita maithori Kanyiri ka mwene Niko kamwinagia</p>	<p>When love is dying there is tremor in the heart It's like the death of Someone's lover If am the one Keeping quiet and shedding tears One's burden Is what makes one restless</p>
<p>Chorus</p>	<p>Chorus</p>

Korwo ninii ngurio Twacokania ndundui Kugitira ni kwegga Kuri kuhania Niuu miario ya andu Ndihiyaga Ona ingitua ndiriini ndigi hinya	If I were the one being asked We'd reason together Prevention is better Than cure You know people's talks Will never be conclusive No matter how long it takes
Chorus	Chorus
Wehitire ukiuga Ati ndukandiga ii Na hindi ya murinduko Ukiumiriria Kai mwendwa utooi Ng'aragu ihaga Ikumwo Mambura mahitanaga Magithira	You swore and said That you will never forsake me And in terrible times You persevered My lover don't you know Hunger is at its worst When its ending Occasions go wrong When they are ending
Chorus	Chorus
Ungiigua mundu Akihera mwohere I kiundu kiuru no Ihitia ria ruturiko Onawe no ukahitia Na woherwo Thi ino ni ndaya Na ndingiaga ithioro x2	When you hear one Apologise, forgive him/her What is bad Is only careless mistakes Even you, will make mistakes And be forgiven This world is large It can never lack bends

9. NJATA YAKWA	MY STAR
10.	
Wendo mweka wi murio I	Good love is very sweet
Wendo unjiganite	Love that is enough for me
Njiguaga njiganiire wega	I feel very contented
Ona ngaigua maisha me mega	I even feel life is good
Nga kiriguo munyedi	I do not know my love
ni undu Uriku ucio ingiona	what is this I would see
Uthukie mutwe nii nguhitirie ui mwendwa twi guku thi	To spoil my mind to annoy you When we are in this world
We niwe njata yakwa,	You are my star
Rubaru rwa ndemethiu	De Mathew's limb
Aciangi ni mwingi wa Gathagu	The rest is a crowd
ikeno ciakwa nowe wiki	My joy is only you
11.	
Ngai wakwa ni wega II	My God thank you
Ritwa riaku rirogocwo	May your name be praised
Baba ni undu wa kuhe mwene – ui	Truly because of giving me an owner
Giki kiheo giaku	This your gift
Ndamenya uria ndanethaa I	Because I know how I've searched
II, ungikindiria gwaka,	For one who would be contented to live with me
Kweri mundu agikona wake amumunyaga	Surely, for one to get real love one comes across
Makoro ii maingi	A lot of bad ones
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
12.	
Undu uria ngwenda sweetie	All I want sweetie
Ngurumie na ngoro imwe	Is to stick to you with one love
Thiri ya wendo witu murata umeithe ituike iitu itu ithui eri	The secret of our love, dear be only for the two of us
Andu aya urona thi ino ii	These people you see on earth
Matete micii miingi ndeto	Have rundown many homes
Ndeto Ciao itikinyagai sweeti	Their affairs never Materialize my dear
Uthinge mwendwa matu na mbamba	Stuff your ears with cotton wool my dear
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
13.	
Aciari aya aku na akwa ii	These your parents and mine
Nio kihumo giitu twoimire Mithirimo – ini yao	Are our foundation, we descended from their loins
tumahe gitio	We respect them



Ciana ici ciitu nawe i	These our children, with you
nicio mahua maitu	are our flowers
Twiciige wega wega i	We maintain them well
Imetametage ndari	Let them shine dear
Igatunyita mitwe	They will hold our heads
Chorus	Chorus
Ninjue wega sweet i	I know very well sweetie
O nawe unyenda	You also love me
Wanjagurire gatagatiini	You choose me among
Kaingi amwe ni	Many some who
Mari na mbeca.	Had money
Tuhoe ngai witu atuige	Let's pray our God to keep us
na ngoro imwe na	in one heart
Thutha ini nitugakenaga	Afterwards we shall be happy
Ui tukiria matunda	Oh yes as we eat the fruits
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>

<b>Murimi wa Kahalf</b>	
<b>14. SOPHIA</b>	<b>SOPHIA</b>
Nii Ndahikitie muguruki wa kuuma kathozeni aya ni aria murengo mbari ya gatua ng'ongo. Wari mukuhi mwiru mutungu	I had married a crazy woman from Kathozeni. Yes, these are those used to short cuts. The clan of adventurers. She was short black and plump.
Saisi nene atendaga ready-made no athire kwa bundi	Her size was unique. She did not like ready-mades. She preferred going to a tailor.
Chorus	Chorus
Sophia coka kwanyu. Maya mothe nditoria nindiuka na athuri twarie nawe na thoguo. Sophia coka kwanyu.	Sophia go back to your home. All these I cannot put up with. I'll come with the elders we discuss with you and your father. Sophia go back to your home.
Wakahalf ndiitoria thabari ni nditu ino. Reke njoke kwi maitu o kuria Kirinyaga	I Wakahalf won't make it. This journey is tough. Let me go back to my mother At Kirinyaga.
Ndirona saisi yake athunguthite gwakwa nja	I can see her size She gyrated outside the door step
Ererwo ni ciana akimeraga ni mumau akoya kuguru uguo	Being watched by children Telling them sheis a Mau-mau She lifted her foot like this
Kuria kungi rienaini Agoka na ribathi akiugaga Ni ara firu	And she other one in the air Reversing saying she could feel me

Chorus	Chorus
Angiuka e muriu nguku Ciakwa ci muigwe Cianjagia gukengeta Ota ici ciona rwigi Ta maka mugunda gwakwa Mieu na nduma Arite ciothe Nguku ingerekia itumbi Ameragia ta giiko	When she comes drunk When my hens hear her they start quacking like they have seen a hawk Imagine in my shamba Arrow root stems and arrow roots she has eaten all If a hen lays an egg She swallows like a gecko
Chorus	Chorus
Iinyinya andeng'eretie Murimi ngonja tawa Wa maguta na wiino Na ndaranginyithia thi Ni mundu utangira undu Ni muthamaki aterwo	Oh! She has chased me Murimi, I signal Displaying petrol and oil She does not allow me to rest She is one you cannot tell anything She is a king who cannot be told
Uuyu ahana ota nding'oiing'o Njara itangioya kindu	This one is like beetle Hands which cannot pick anything
Chorus	Chorus
Giki ni gitumumu Gitongonetie	This one is blind leading
Ona ciana ndangihe cai No inyuire kwa maitu Anginyota ni cai Handu ha aingire riko Ndimwonaga gicegu anyitite Mburi akionga	She cannot even give children tea They have to get it from my mother If she is thirsty of tea Instead of going to the kitchen I see her in the goat shed, holding a goat suckling
Chorus	Chorus
Angingora na athuri Tukirung'a cia itura Atemanagia kiugo Akahanagia giuthi Na hinya njitwo Kiama Na athuni niundu wake Mburi ciakwa ndutite Igituika ciurire thi	If she finds me with elders Discussing village matters She talks ill and spoils everything Its difficult for me to be invited by elders in their talks because of her Goats I had paid dowry Went to waste
Chorus	Chorus
Andu aitu na athuri othe Ona cifu niaremetwo Gutiri ungikiaria na uritu Wa ngatha ino Handu njikare na uyu Kaba ndiithie gategwa Kana ndeithie broiler Ciegana Ndware Ndung'u	Our kin and all the elders Even the chief is unable Nobody can talk because of the weight Of this untouchable Instead of staying with this one I'd rather rear a bull Or I rear broilers When they are grown I take them to the market

<b>by John D'Mathew</b>	
<b>15. THII NGWAGE</b>	<b>Disappear from sight</b>
Gwi kahinda gagakinya Mundu ethire na make gutiri ii tutigana gutiri mundu ukuite uria ungi	There will come a time We part ways. Nobody is carrying the other
Iii thii ngwage	Yes, disappear out of My sight
Mitugo yaku riu Niyanogia, kihurukie Mitugo yake riu Niyanogia I gukimanirio Riu nindarega	Your behavior has now Made me tired Relieve me of, your behaviour It has now made me Tired, yes. To be Mashed together, I've refused
Mundu ethiire na Gwake gutiri mundu Ukuite uria ungi Ni munyala ndagukorerera Mwina Wachira Ona wageria kuhi Ingi nie nindarega Nii nindarega Thii ngwage	Each person to go His own way nobody Is carrying the other It's fortunate I have Found you with Wachira Even if you try to Tell tales, I have refused I myself have refused Disappear out of my sight
Chorus	Chorus
Githii nokio arata Matuire makunyanaga Makiuranagia Kai nii ndi fara ya Nawe niguu uhihiririe Na kunjiga iguru Ii ati nduri kindu Kingi gukenia thi tiga nii	So this is why friends have been whispering asking one another How stupid I am And you've really flattered me That there is nothing That can make you happy In this world except me
Chorus	Chorus
Muthenya uria ndagukorire Nduka kahuroko ukinyua soda . ii ndakunda nngiigua Itukanite na njohi nduru Waheneririe ni ndawa njega muno ya kihuti Na twauma nja ndarora Ngiona ni uratuguga	That day I found you it a shop at Kahuruko taking soda. When I sipped I realized It was mixed with whisky You cheated me, it's very good medicine, for cold When we went outside I realized you were staggering
Chorus	Chorus
Muthenya ungi wokire kiroko Na ndakuria ukinjira Wanyitiirwo kibandi	Another day you came in the morning When I asked you told me you were arrested for lack of an I.D
Kibetiini ni ndonire	In your purse I saw

Rithiti ya runjinii na Ngikira murata wakwa Na ngikunya giti	a receipt for a lodging and I kept quiet, my friend I pinched the chair
Chorus	Chorus
Nii ndiguthita cira Tonde ni kwinogia tuhu Tonde mburi ya rwanio Ikuaga ona rwanio Bururi uyu witu Nduigana ruhi Reke tumanwo Njethe utari Mutangatangi Githii ngwage	Ill not prosecute Because its unnecessary bother Because a dissatisfied goat will die dissatisfied This land of ours is not the size of a palm Lets parts ways I look for one who's character is upright Disappear from my sight
chorus	Chorus

<b>KIARUTARA</b>	
<b>16. UYU NI MUGOGO</b>	<b>THIS BAGGAGE</b>
Acio muthiaga thiritu nao Acio muriaga mwi hamwe Niomegutuma wendo Ugituike ii Tonde ndihota gukiriria Uyu ni mugogo wanjigiriire Riria uguthie ndunyu kana nduka Ndigagwo ngigwetha Ta mburi njii Mwendwa ii na ndikiriwo mbugi Kana gichuhi	Those you are in friendship with Those you dine together They are the ones who will Make our love end, Because I cannot tolerate This is a log on you placed on me When you to the market or shop I am left looking for you Like a notorious sheep My dear and it cannot be belled Or a ring
Nima wandorire Ukinjagira bata Na ngingo niui Ndiri yakira mutwe Kai ukamenya niwakihikire Watumirwo itega Tonde wahiuhire ii ta thathi wa mworio Ndireciritie nguhure Ngumunye igeo niguu Wage magego ma guthekia arume Ndirerwo ni aciari akwa Ngwirorere ona maitho Ona mweri uri nja niwaroragirwo	Surely you looked at me And found me useless And you know the neck Has never been above the head Will you know, you are married When you'll be sent a delegation Because you become hot like soup I had thought of beating you I remove a tooth so that You have no teeth to smile at men My parents told me To just watch you Even when the moon is outside It is watched
Nduire na cati imwe Ta ithagu ria nguku Ndimiite raha Ndukararire Ndakuhaka maguta Ukihaka muhu	I have had one shirt Like a hen's wing I curtailed my luxuries So that you do not sleep hungry I smeared you with oil You smeared me with ashes

Mwendwa ii na ui Murimi ndaunagwo guoko Mucii uri na muthuri Umenyagwo na inoro No kanoro gakwa Waikirie ngiri ini Ukinjira ngire Mhuri iria ndaraciite Na cianina mwaka Ni njura na ago	My dear you and you know A farmer's hand is never broken A home where there is a man Is known by a grindstone But my grindstone You threw into the bush You told me to go for the goats I had paid dowry with And if a year goes by It will be a closed chapter
Guciara ciana ici Ti undu munene Musa ni atigire Uthamaki misiri Na akiuga to mugate Ungimuturia muoyo I kindu kiria kia ma No thayu wa ngoro Mutwe nduteagwo Utari mwatie Gaka ni kahinda gaku Wicirie, unjire kana Mwendwa ni ukunjiga Na thayu I tondu Ndigituraa na ciagago	To give birth to these children is no big deal Moses left a kingdom in Egypt And he said, not only bread would keep one alive Yes the only true thing Is peace at heart A head is never thrown away Before it's done with This is your time To think and tell me if My dear you will give me Peace because I cannot live with uncertainties

<b>WAIRIMU-DE-MATTHEW</b>	
<b>17. Wairimu</b>	
Kai Mimu wendo uhana atia Angikorwo ti to uyu nii ngwendete naguo Kana hihi nduiguaga Wega, kiheririe tukiumbe kia Ngai	What kind of love would you like Mimu If it's not like this one I have shown you Or don't you feel Good. Just punish me, God's creature
Chorus Korwo ninii we Nyone mundu unyendete Uria ngwendete Ingimuhikira kiria kiariire ndigiri ingiuga Mimu gicokerere nyumbu	Chorus If I were you, I get someone who loves Me the way I love you I'd marry him. What ate the donkey, I'd say Mimu should go back to the mule
Miaka itatu my dear Iniguthira ondiumuririe Na wendo waku Ngwerwo ni mwonagwo mwina Mwanake ungi	Three years have lapsed My dear, still clinging Onto your love I've been told you are seen with Another young man
Mimu ni uherithitie ihinda iraihu Ngonya ugatuma nii nyanagwo	Mimu you've punished me for a long time Until you made me be destroyed by

Ni thii	enemies
Ndageria u Kwendana na ungi Nongaigua e mururu kwi Macatha Ona arugu, dhania Birirbiri hoho Nongaigua e mururu	When I try oh! To love another I feel her to be bitter than 'macatha' Even if she cooks dhania, pepper I feel her to be bitter
Ndarotete mugika uhiki Na ungi, ngiuka kanitha-ini Na nguruniti, ngumiikia Ngiona thi yagia nduma Ndagurumuka nii ngihoya Muno, no utuku ugiuka\gutuikana Ngirota oringi Twi nawe Mombasa Swiitii, ngiukira ngihoya Ngai, agakinyaniria mwihoko Wakwa, ii utuikwa wakwa	I dreamt you wedding another, I came to church With a missile, I threw it I saw the earth get dark When I woke, I prayed A lot but before dawn I dreamt again, we were with you again at Mombasa, Sweetie, I awoke and prayed God to make my hope a reality yes you be mine
Chorus	Chorus
Nii njukaga haria urutagira wira O muthenya ndakuona Ngaiganira no indi reke Riua rithue irathuiro Uinuke kwanyu, miumu nii Thii gwakwa Utuku hari nii,uiganaga mukwa Utuire unyariraga Mimu Ndaguthaitha unjiguirire tha	When I come at your place of work Each day when I see you, I feel contented, but wait till the sun sets You go home, Mimu I go to my place Night to be me, looks like a long rope You've been mistreating me Mimu I beseech you to have Mercy on me
Chorus	Chorus
Muthenya unia ukanjira Twii karanie, nguo ciakwa Itikanjihana ringi Ningaimbaimba Ndugetikia niwe Utumite hinje uu	The day you'll tell me We be together, my clothes Will not fit me again I will grow plump You'll not believe, you are the one who has made me this thin

18. NJATA YAKWA	MY STAR
Wendo mweka wi murio I	Good love is very sweet
Wendo unjiganite	Love that is enough for me
Njiguaga njiganiire wega	I feel very contented
Ona ngaigua maisha me mega	I even feel life is good
Nga kiriguo munyedi	I do not know my love
ni undu Uriku ucio ingiona	what is this I would see
Uthukie mutwe nii nguhitirie ui mwendwa twi guku thi	To spoil my mind to annoy you When we are in this world
We niwe njata yakwa,	You are my star
Rubaru rwa ndemethiu	De Mathew's limb
Aciangi ni mwingi wa Gathagu	The rest is a crowd
ikeno ciakwa nowe wiki	My joy is only you
1.	
Ngai wakwa ni wega II	My God thank you
Ritwa riaku rirogocwo	May your name be praised
Baba ni undu wa kuhe mwene – ui	Truly because of giving me an owner
Giki kiheo giaku	This your gift
Ndamenya uria ndanethaa I	Because I know how I've searched
II, ungikindiria gwaka,	For one who would be contented to live with me
Kweri mundu agikona wake amumunyaga	Surely, for one to get real love one comes across
Makoro ii maingi	A lot of bad ones
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
2.	
Undu uria ngwenda sweetie	All I want sweetie
Ngurumie na ngoro imwe	Is to stick to you with one love
Thiri ya wendo witu murata umeithe ituike iitu itu ithui eri	The secret of our love, dear be only for the two of us
Andu aya urona thi ino ii	These people you see on earth
Matete micii miingi ndeto	Have rundown many homes
Ndeto Ciao itikinyagai sweeti	Their affairs never Materialize my dear
Uthinge mwendwa matu na mbamba	Stuff your ears with cotton wool my dear
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>
3.	
Aciari aya aku na akwa ii	These your parents and mine
Nio kihumo giitu twoimire Mithirimo – ini yao	Are our foundation, we descended from their loins
tumahe gitio	We respect them

Ciana ici ciitu nawe i	These our children, with you
nicio mahua maitu	are our flowers
Twiciige wega wega i	We maintain them well
Imetametage ndari	Let them shine dear
Igatunyita mitwe	They will hold our heads
Chorus	Chorus
Ninjue wega sweet i	I know very well sweetie
O nawe unyenda	You also love me
Wanjagurire gatagatiini	You choose me among
Kaingi amwe ni	Many some who
Mari na mbeca.	Had money
Tuhoe ngai witu atuige	Let's pray our God to keep us
na ngoro imwe na	in one heart
Thutha ini nitugakenaga	Afterwards we shall be happy
Ui tukiria matunda	Oh yes as we eat the fruits
<b>Chorus</b>	<b>Chorus</b>