MWOMBOKO AND MUSIC TRADITIONS OF THE AGIKUYU OF MURANG'A COUNTY

BY

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DECLARATION

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

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DEDICATION

To my husband Mr Peter Kinyua, my children Ann and Antony for their support, love and patience. May the work encourage them to endeavour to achieve their destiny in God and the scholarly world.
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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Agikuyu: A Bantu speaking community that inhabits the Central Province of Kenya.

Cucu: Agikuyu children’s singing game performed while squatting round a girl who sits on the ground.

Gitiiro: Agikuyu song for girls performed while kneeling for entertainment.

Korathi: The third movement in the Mwomboko dance. A movement with simple formation that sets the pace for the more complex movements in Mwomboko.

Kibuiya: Agikuyu older children’s first dance performed accompanied by kiigamba (small tin rattles) on the legs.

Kimoto: Agikuyu female dance performed with the legs close together, and hands clapping rhythmically in time with the song for entertainment.

Mwomboko: An Agikuyu neo-traditional dance which emerged in the 1940s performed by both men and women

Marobo: Agikuyu singing game performed by both boys and girls.

Music: The use of organised sounds and beats whether sung or played to express feelings or emotions.

Mucungwa: Agikuyu dance for boys and girls performed during harvest.
Agikayu dance which emerged in the 1930s among Miithirigii: Agikayu the due to political upheavals. Performed by both men and women.

Miithu: Agikayu circumcision song performed by boys.

Miithunguci: Agikayu dance for old people performed for entertainment.

Ndumo: Agikayu female dance performed as they clap and shake their hands.

Ngucu: Agikayu dance by young boys and girls for entertainment during the moonlight evening.

Nguthia: Agikayu dance performed during harvest by bigger children who have broken away from their mother’s aprons.

Neo-traditional music: A technical term describing any musical forms whose compositional elements (harmony, rhythm, melody) show the influence of other cultures.

Traditional Music: Any music which has entered into the heritage of the people but cannot be attributed to any composer. The music has been presented for many generations through the process of oral transmission.

Weru: Agikayu dance performed by girls only for entertainment.
### ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Cultural Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Community Development Assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCDO</td>
<td>District Cultural Development Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRD</td>
<td>Descriptive Research Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KBC</td>
<td>Kenya Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOEST</td>
<td>Ministry of Education Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PST</td>
<td>Purposive Sampling Techniques</td>
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<td>RST</td>
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ABSTRACT

This study focused on analysis of the content and style of mwomboko music to determine influential factors for its assimilation within the Agikuyu of Muranga County. The study sought to find out the factors which could have led to the survival of mwomboko music genre even after other neo-traditional genres had disappeared. To do this, the study specifically analysed the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko in context of Agikuyu music traditions. The textual content of mwomboko in order to expose the meanings of the messages it embodies. The role played by mwomboko within the socio-cultural setting of the Agikuyu community. The study sought to find out factors that have influenced the survival of mwomboko among the Agikuyu. The study employed the descriptive research design. Relevant information was gathered by reviewing literature related to the study. The reference materials were obtained from Moi Library, Kenyatta University, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi University Institute of African Studies, Bomas of Kenya, Kenya Institute of Education Library and KBC Library. Relevant journals, periodicals were also used. The study location was within Muranga County since the County is one of the areas where mwomboko began. The study used questionnaires which comprised both structured and unstructured questions. The questionnaires were effective tools for obtaining important information on the role played by mwomboko and the textual content. An interview schedule was used which enabled the researcher to collect information concerning the historical and developmental aspects of mwomboko. Participatory and non-participatory observations were made in order to record what was observed during data collection. This was in relation to the features that characterise mwomboko and the style of performance. A sample of 45 members from three existing dance troupes, namely Kamune, Kangema and Mükangü, a District Cultural Development Officer, 3 Community Development Assistants, 2 elders from each location were utilised in the study. Purposive sampling, random sampling and snowball sampling methods were used to select the respective samples. Data from the field were analysed through qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. Research equipment included a still camera, a tape recorder, notebooks and writing pads. Music was transcribed in Western staff notation and analysed while song texts was transcribed and analysed to establish the emerging patterns vis-à-vis the thematic content embodied in the song text. Responses from the interviews and questionnaires were summarised. The findings were discussed and conclusions made before proposing pertinent recommendations and suggestions for further studies.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Agikūyū people constitute one of the largest Bantu-speaking people in Kenya (Middleton, 1997). They inhabit the Central Province of Kenya, which has eight administrative Districts, namely; Nyeri, Mūrang’a, Kīambu, Thīka, Kīrīnyaga, Nyandarūa, Gatūndū and Maragūa. The neighbours of the Agikūyū are the Amīrū to the North-East, the Aembu to the East, the Akamba to the South-East and the Maasai to the South-West. However, some of the Agikūyū have migrated to various parts of Kenya.

The main occupation of the Agikūyū is mixed farming. They grow crops and keep animals such as cattle, sheep, goats and poultry. However, as a result of socio-economic mobility and education, some of the Agikūyū have taken up other occupations. Traditionally, the Agikūyū men went to work in the gardens. They were responsible for tending cattle, digging, planting bananas, yams and tobacco, as well as cutting and erecting timber and house building. The women also went to the gardens and were responsible for planting maize, millet, beans, weeding and harvesting crops. They were also responsible for fetching water, collecting firewood and grinding grains. As the adults went through their daily chores, they made traditional music to accompany themselves. Children were left at home with their grandparents. The youngsters performed singing games and dances such as cūcū, kibūiya and ngūcū during the moonlight nights. Grandparents narrated to
children stories accompanied with songs. Apart from making music for entertainment, the Agikūyū also performed music to mark various ceremonial rites.

Performance of traditional music of the Agikūyū is based on mariika, a system of age groups and gender (Zake, 1988). Such music are categorised as nguthia, cūcū and kūbūiya for children; mūcūng’wa and njukia, for the young men; ndumo, werū, kūmoto, gūtūro and ērathi for women; kībaata, ndarama for adult men and múthūngūcī for old men and women.

Besides the traditional Agikūyū music genres, there are also neo-traditional music forms/styles namely mwomboko, múthūriğū, kūrathi, gūchamba, kūriara and kamanū which emerged during the colonial period. Müthūriğū emerged as an instrument of protest against the colonial rule (Mwangi, P 1997) and was banned by the colonialists in 1930s. Mwomboko then emerged in the late 1940s after the banning of múthūriğū. Mwangi (1997). The genre rose as a result of cultural reaction that was both artistic and political. The genre was viewed as artistic because the youth identified it with the European music and musical instruments in their territory and was political in that there were those who rebelled against the political scenario using the genre. The rise of mwomboko and other neo-traditional music genres were occasioned by the socio-historical and cultural changes during the colonial era (Munene, 1991). Munene (1991) further notes that after
independence, mwomboko composers / performers diversified the textual content to cover many other aspects of the Agīkūyū culture.

According to Mwangi (2004), mwomboko genre borrowed from European dance styles that were learnt from the ex-soldiers who fought the First and Second World Wars. One of the distinguishing factors in mwomboko is the use of Kīnanda kīa mūgeto, (accordion) and karing’arīng’a. (metal ring)

According to Munene (1991), mwomboko was first performed by unmarried men and women but nowadays the dance is performed by both the young and old men and women. The genre is currently performed as a cultural song dance during public occasions and state functions. Mwomboko has continued to flourish since its beginning (Munene, 1991). One wonders why mwomboko has continued to flourish, while the other neo-traditional genres of the Agīkūyū are no longer performed. It was in view of this that the study proposed to analyse the content and style of mwomboko in order to establish what has led to the survival of the genre among the Agīkūyū.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

During the colonial period many new music genres emerged among the Agīkūyū. The genres were used as means of expressing discontent against the colonial rule. Immediately after independence most of these genres such as gčamba, kariara, korathi, and Mūthūrūgū disappeared. However mwomboko survived and has
continued to flourish as part of the Agikuyū music tradition. The Agikuyū perform mwomboko in both traditional and modern socio-cultural settings. The fact that mwomboko survived even after other neo-traditional genres disappeared posed a concern on what factors could have led to its survival. The foregoing concern led to the formulation of this study.

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

i. What are the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko?

ii. What is the textual content of mwomboko?

iii. What role does mwomboko play within the socio-cultural settings of the Agikuyū?

iv. What factors influenced the survival of mwomboko among the Agikuyū?

1.4 Research Objectives

The general objective of the study was to establish why mwomboko has persisted among the Agikuyū while the other neo-traditional genres have been discarded. The specific objectives were to:

i. Analyse the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko in the context of the Agikuyū music traditions.

ii. Analyse the textual content of mwomboko to reveal the messages it embodies.
iii. Determine the role of mwomboko within the socio-cultural settings among the Agikuyu community.

iv. Establish factors that influenced the survival of mwomboko among the Agikuyu.

1.5 Research Assumptions

The study was based on the following assumptions:

i. *Mwomboko* is not a traditional Agikuyu music genre but has stylistic attributes that are associated with Agikuyu culture.

ii. The messages embodied in *mwomboko* are useful in establishing its significance among the Agikuyu.

iii. *Mwomboko* as a neo-traditional genre has aspects of the Agikuyu culture for it to be accepted by the Agikuyu.

iv. *Mwomboko* has important social function among the Agikuyu hence its continued existence within the culture.

v. The continuous existence of mwomboko among the Agikuyu has been influenced by certain unique aspects that have distinguished it from other neo-traditional genres.

1.6 Rationale and Significance of the Study

According to Merriam (1964), Nettl (1983) and Middleton (1990), ethnomusicological studies are supposed to focus not only on the traditional music systems but also on the study of new music systems and concepts that keep
emerging in the changing social cultural settings. The formulation of the study was therefore as a result of the call by scholars such as those cited above to incorporate new music genres like mwomboko in ethnomusicological studies. The study has therefore contributed to a body of knowledge in the field of ethnomusicology in general and the Agikuyu music in particular. It sought to contribute to the understanding and appreciation of the mwomboko music genre.

Scholars namely Mwangi, P (1974) and Zake, W (1986) who have studied Agikuyu music have concentrated their attention on traditional music genres. However, neo-traditional music genres like mwomboko escaped much of their attention despite the genre's continued existence. This was evident from the scarcity of literature on neo-traditional music of the Agikuyu. The study therefore endeavoured to analyse the content and style of mwomboko with a view of establishing the factors that have contributed to its survival among the Agikuyu.

This study was important, as it collected and analysed mwomboko for preservation. It also added to studies in neo-traditional music genres. The findings are intended to stimulate other researchers to undertake similar studies in other neo-traditional music genres from other communities. It could also be used for academic and teaching in the field of ethnomusicology, anthropology and analysis of African music.
1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was carried out in Murang’a County of Central Province. The County was considered because it is one of the earliest places where mwomboko began. Mwangi, P (1974). The other counties were not covered due to the limited time within which the study was supposed to be completed. Besides, the study was constrained by limited financial resources. Due to lack of adequate scholarly writing on the mwomboko, the study reviewed literature rated to the study besides relying on personal interviews. The study was limited to three dance troupes with members comprising of soloists, instrumentalists and dancers. Informants with relevant information and knowledge about mwomboko within Mūrang’a County such as Community Development Assistants, District Cultural Officer, former mwomboko dancers and Agikūyū elders were equally utilised in this study.

1.8 Review of Related Literature

This section reviews and discusses what has been enunciated by other scholars as well as establishing areas of shortcomings, weaknesses and strengths of the issue under study. It highlights the issues and views of proponents of traditional music genres of various Kenyan communities. The discussions in this chapter also include the general indication of scholarly line of reasoning and statements about mwomboko from proponents who have studied other aspects of mwomboko music such as song texts.
Zake, W (1986) discusses music found in various Kenyan communities. However, he concentrates a lot on the traditional music genres. In the study, he discusses the different categories of traditional music genres found among the Agikuyu people but barely addresses the Agikuyu neo-traditional music genres. The study however acknowledges the existence of certain neo-traditional genres. The acknowledgement is regarded as supporting the existence of mwomboko as a neo-traditional genre, which was the focus of this study.

Kaggia, B (1975) discusses the important role played by the new music genres that emerged during the colonial era. The music genres, according to Kaggia (1975), carried the message of Agikuyu grievances and aspirations. Although he did not specifically discuss mwomboko, he explained factors that led to the emergence of these neo-traditional genres. His study was useful in that it provided information that helped in understanding of the role played by the new genres at their emergence, mwomboko being one of them.

John, R (1972) notes that Africa has never been isolated from the rest of the world. Its music has taken in aspects of other traditions as circumstances have dictated, sometimes extensively or in small degrees. The contact between Europe and Africa before or during the colonial era has resulted in the emergence of a number of modern urban popular styles. Music of these styles is played on Western or a mixture of African and Western instruments and contains materials from both cultures. Though John’s (1972) observation centred on Africa as a
whole, it was useful to this study since it set out to analyse mwomboko in order to establish the musical aspects that are inherent in the music.

Nketia, J (1963) in his discussion of the music of Ghana notes that although every society produces its own recreational music, one comes across instances of borrowing and adaptation. This is done either between societies in the same language groups or between societies in different language groups, especially in areas where social interaction has been greatest and prolonged. He notes that alongside the indigenous music of various ethnic groups have emerged new musical types of Ghanaian creation.

Nketia, J (1974) notes that the cultural interaction between people of one culture and another resulted in the borrowing and adaptation of cultural items including music. The study looked at the consistency of this observation, as it sought to analyse the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko in order to establish the extent to which mwomboko has borrowed from other cultures.

Leach (1978) argues that as societies change, their songs change with them. In other words, changes occurring in the ethnic songs come about due to changes in the society. This is because music exists in respective societies and cannot be isolated from them. Music comments on what goes on in the society. Based on Leach’s (1978) argument, the study sought to establish the textual content of the mwomboko music to find out whether the messages embodied could be useful in establishing its significance among the Agiküyü.
Honingsheim, P (1973) notes that dance culture keeps on developing and new styles are realized. He asserts that a certain style may have emerged in the society and cultural structure of a given period and clarifies the sociological pre-requisite and conditions involved. In normal circumstances, social conditions have an effect on the course of human events, music included. This means that society keeps on changing and in the process other aspects of life including the music are affected. Honingsheim’s (1973) study provided useful information that helped the study to seek and determine the changes that have taken place in the mwomboko music and the way they have contributed to its survival and hence being incorporated into the Agikuyu music tradition.

Mahugu, P (1990) recognises the indebtedness of the composers of the Agikuyu songs of independence to Agikuyu oral literature. Composers adopted the traditional narrative techniques of dialogue, rhetoric and query response forms. Composers also largely borrowed rhythm from Agikuyu traditional music. Although Mahugu (1990) centres her work on songs of independence without specifically concentrating on mwomboko, her work is important to this study in that her approach and analysis of the song text provided useful analytical frames to the study.

Mahugu (1990) in her literary investigation into the Agikuyu songs of independence notes that mwomboko evolved with the coming of modern musical instruments and no wonder it was called mwomboko (eruption) for it was
descriptive of the manner in which the Kinanda kia mūgeto (accordion) rendered the sounds. The songs were danced to the accompaniment of the accordion. The work provided important information about mwomboko which this study used to establish the musical aspects that characterise the genre.

Mwangi, P (1997) attempts to explore the history of the Agikūyū as constructed in the mūthūrīgū and mwomboko song genres. He mainly focuses on the song texts of the genres. He uses them to bring out historical changes that were realized by the Agikūyū and other communities in Kenya. He tries to show how and why the song-narratives depict the colonizers as agents of oppression and exploitation. He however does not touch on the other musical art forms of the mwomboko. Mwangi’s (1997) study was helpful to this study in that it provided background information on the emergence of mwomboko music.

Mwangi, P (2004) notes that mwomboko is a social product which facilitates dissemination of knowledge on oral traditions and the emerging modern art in the Agikūyū community. The rendering of social face is quite important and significant not only to the Agikūyū community but also to Kenyan society as it incorporates a diversified element of music across Kenya. It further portrays an international touch in borrowing aspects of the Scottish dance. The social pressures for the struggle for political and economic independence altered the content of the messages in order to accommodate protest literature that was suitable for the impending armed struggle. The influences of social presence have
continued to necessitate change in the content of mwomboko. The study provided vital information, which was useful in the analysis of the song texts of the mwomboko.

Wainaina, M (1999) discusses the relationship that exists between oral literature and forms of contemporary verbal expression particularly the pop song. He analyses how, why and with what effect aspects of Agiküyū oral literature have been appropriated in the Agiküyū popular songs. He also discusses the process of change on the Agiküyū oral literature forms. He points out the ways in which these traditional oral forms adapt themselves to the contemporary modes of thought through the popular songs. Wainaina's work provides important information which helped in establishing the aspects of the Agiküyū traditions that characterised mwomboko.

Maina, K (1981) notes that the Agiküyū resisted the complete destruction of their culture and history and the imposition of colonial culture. The Agiküyū in the process developed a new anti-colonial culture that found its expression in patriotic songs, poetry and dances. He discusses the Mau Mau songs that were composed by the workers and peasants in the heat of resistance. These songs marked the high point of the Agiküyū anti-colonial cultural expression. However, besides being an expression of anti-colonial culture, these songs constituted sociological developments and an important pool of information. They were an echo, a record of people's determination to liberate their community from foreign domination.
Maina’s work provided background information on the new genres sung during the colonial period, which was a historical reflection for the study.

Muoria, H (1994) notes that the white settler’s aspirations to make Kenya a white man’s country were bitterly opposed by Agikūyū. The Kikuyu Central Association carried on this task for many years before its banning in 1940 during the Second World War. As far as the Agikūyū were concerned, they had suffered a damaging blow. White settlers grabbed some of their lands in those early days. This was done through song, poetry and dances among other things.

Finnegan, R (1970) notes that one of the advantages that songs may have is that of being vehicles of political expression. She gives several examples to show how songs were used in African nationalist movements when concealment of organized political activity was felt desirable. Among examples given of songs of political parties and movements are Mau Mau hymns. These observations by Finnegan (1970) were useful in the study in that they provided useful information on the role played by the new music genres and which informed on the aspect of the role of mwomboko.

Muriuki, G (1966) discusses the pre-colonial, social, economic and political organization of the Agikūyū. He analysed the historical traditions of the Agikūyū, relations between them and their neighbours and also the establishment of the British rule and how the Western Civilization had far-reaching effects on the life
of the Agikūyū. The discussion by Muriuki (1966) was important to this study in that it provided useful information on the history of the Agikūyū socio-culture.

Kenyatta, J (1938) discusses the political, cultural, social and historical traditions of the Agikūyū. He discusses their tribal organisation, economic life, music and musical instruments, education, system of government and religion. His work was important to the study in that it provided important information on the Agikūyū socio-cultural history.

Albert, B (1951) observes that the only true notation is the sound tract of the record itself and that the human mind is not able to translate aural tones into visual signs. Albert’s (ibid.) observation was useful to the study since the first stage of transcription used was the recording of the mwomboko music during the live performances which was later transcribed in Western notation.

List, G (1974) observes that transcriptions made by ear are sufficiently reliable to provide a valid basis for analysis. He recommends the use of prescriptive music notating. This is what was applied after the fieldwork in order to assist in analysing the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko.

Koeting, J (1992) observes that giving an accurate example of an African melody in musical notation presents some problems, since the musicians do not think in terms of specific pitches and rhythms as notes on paper. This is because they learn by rote. Also, the Western notation as is known is best suited to display pitches of
equal tempered system. Koeting's (1992) observations show the inadequacy of Western notation in transcription of the traditional African music in general, and that of mwomboko music in particular.

Kenyatta, J (ibid.) mentions the role of the Agikuyu folksongs and dances in the initiation ceremonies. He asserts that the songs rendered by the relatives and friends generally pertain to sexual knowledge. This, according to Kenyatta (1938), was meant to give the initiates an opportunity of acquainting themselves with all the necessary rules and regulations governing social relationships between men and women. This information was important in exploring the role played by mwomboko in the socio-cultural settings among the Agikuyu.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1972) notes that literature does not grow or develop in a vacuum; it is given impetus, shape, direction and even area of concern by social, political and economic forces in a particular society. That implies that the literature of a people emanates from the people through their beliefs and day-to-day activities. Though Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1972) did not touch on mwomboko music, his statement was important to this study as it sought to establish the textual content of mwomboko music.

Dundes, A (1980) notes that folklore provides a socially sanctioned outlet for the expression of what cannot be articulated in the direct way. This was significant with regard to the content of mwomboko music in the textual analysis.
Gakuo, K (1994) shows how modern songs borrow from the African traditional songs. He shows how literary devices like proverbs are central in Joseph Kamaru’s poetic songs. He says that proverbs used in modern songs are borrowed from the traditional songs and that they concretise the issues that the artist addresses. They do not only demonstrate Kamaru’s skill and prowess in the manipulation of language but also the indebtedness to the Agikuyu oral traditions. Based on Gakuos’s (1994) argument, this study sought to analyse the mwomboko in order to establish the aspects of Agikuyu traditions that characterise.

Bebey, F (1969) notes that indigenous African music is based on several elements, namely words, musical instruments and social functions of the music. Although he did not particularly deal with mwomboko music, his observation was important to this study as it sought to establish the aspects of Agikuyu traditions that characterise mwomboko.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study used the theory of syncretism as advanced by Manuel (1988). According to this theory, syncretism is the process through which elements of at least two or more cultures are blended. The process of syncretism thus exhibits the borrowing and exchange of musical elements from a cultural group that a society is in sustained contact with. They then adapt the elements into their own musical style. This resulting style becomes a new musical culture that has elements from both the borrowing and lending cultures. The interaction between
what the theory stipulates, there must have been some elements from Western and Agikuyu musics that were compatible and which made it easy for the Agikuyu to adapt mwomboko. The theory was employed in this study as a basis for understanding how the elements were employed.

This theory was used in the analysis of the content and stylistic attributes of mwomboko in order to trace the elements of the different cultures that have amalgamated to form it. The study analysed the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko in the context of the Agikuyu music traditions. The theory was also used in this study to determine aspects of Agikuyu traditions in mwomboko. The theory was equally useful in that it aided in establishing factors that have contributed to the survival and incorporation of mwomboko into the Agikuyu music traditions.

1.10 Research Methodology

This section discusses the manner in which data for this study were collected and combined in order to meet its objectives. The methodology was discussed under the following areas: research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis.

1.11 Research Design

This study employed the descriptive research method due to its suitability in investigating the factors that have contributed to the survival of mwomboko
among the Agîkûyû. According to Phelps, R (1980) descriptive research design can be used to obtain data on current conditions or procedures so as to establish relationships among factors or conditions to determine trends, needs or changes.

1.12 Study Area
The study was carried out in Mûrang’a County of Central Province. The specific locations of the County were Kangema, Mathioya and Kahuro respectively. These are the three places where Kangema, Kamune and Mûkangû dance troupes are found. The County was preferred due to the fact that it is one of the earliest places where mwomboko began (Mwangi, 1977) and also because its proximity to the researcher.

1.13 Population and Sampling Method
It was established through the Mûrang’a District Cultural Office that only three dance troupes exist in Mûrang’a. This study considered sampling all the three troupes to provide in-depth study of the subject under discussion. The three dance troupes are Kangema, Kamune and Mûkangû. The dance troupes have a membership of 30 both men and women each. This study used purposive sampling where the subjects that had the required information were selected. Respondents were randomly picked in order to ensure that each member has an equal chance of being selected. Snowball sampling was used where the identified respondents helped identifying others that they knew had the required information. This enabled this study to get the required sample size.
1.14 Target Population

The target population constituted members of the three dance troupes that consisted of soloists, dancers and instrumentalists. Key informants, elders versed with mwomboko history, the District Cultural Officer, Community Development Assistants and former mwomboko dancers were also considered as part of the study target population.

1.15 Sample Size

According to Fischer quoted in Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) 50% of a heterogeneous population is an adequate sample for a descriptive study. This study, therefore, sampled 15 (50%) of the total number of members from each of the three dance troupes. The study also interviewed 2 elders from each of the three locations, 1 DCO and 3 CDAs. Twenty-seven songs were collected from each of the three dance troupes during the study. According to Louis and Lawrence (1989), there is no clear-cut answer for the correct sample size because it depends upon the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under scrutiny. However, they advise that a sample of 30% is held to be the minimum number a study can use. The researcher purposively selected 8 songs from each group to make a total of 24 songs out of the 81 songs collected during the study. The songs were selected because they were elaborate and each represented one of the movements of mwomboko. This sample, therefore, translated to 30% of the total number of songs selected for transcription, translation and analysis.
1.16 Sampling Techniques

The study used the following sampling techniques: random sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling.

1.16.1 Random Sampling Technique (RST)

To obtain an equal representation of both men and women into the sample size, this study used random sampling technique. Names of each performer from all the three groups were written on small pieces of paper, which were folded and put in a box. After shuffling them, fifteen members from each group were picked to make a total of 45 members. This gave the study a sample of 50% of the total population of members of each of the three dance troupes. The respondents included the dancers, soloists who are also the dance troupe leaders and instrumentalists.

1.16.2 Purposive Sampling Technique (PST)

This technique was considered appropriate for the sampling of key informants. The purposive sampling technique allowed this study to pick a sample of key informants that had the required information and experience related to the mwomboko music. The informants included a District Cultural Officer, 3 Community Development Assistants, that is, one from each area.

1.16.3 Snowball Sampling Technique (SST)

The study also used snowball sampling where the identified respondents helped in identifying 2 elders from each of the three locations to make a total of 6 elders.
1.17 Data Collection

Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The study collected the music during the live performances.

1.17.1 Primary Data

Primary data were collected during the study conducted within Murang'a County. This study visited the three mwomboko dance troupes on different occasions after obtaining a permit from the Ministry of Education. The data were collected through interviews, field observations and questionnaires. Questionnaires were self-administered. A total of 81 songs were recorded; 27 from each of the dance troupes. Twenty-four were then sampled 8 songs from each of the groups for transcription, translation and analysis. The first stage of transcription was done by audio recording of the mwomboko. This enabled the researcher to collect the songs during the study before they were transcribed and translated for analysis. Note-taking and photography were carried out during the interviews by the researcher. The oral interviews were conducted during live mwomboko performances in order to get first-hand information. The interviews targeted key informants that is, people with relevant knowledge and experience about mwomboko. Information collected on mwomboko was recorded in order to be analysed later after the fieldwork. Field observations were carried out and pertinent features noted for coding and subsequent analysis. Both participant and non-participant observations were carried out during the live performances in order to get first-hand information on the cultural features incorporated in
mwombo k song dances. Participant observations provided an opportunity to have the actual experience and to raise further questions for the interviews. It also helped in verifying the truth of statements made by informants in the questionnaires or structured interview schedules.

1.17.2 Secondary Data
Relevant information from various reference materials was gathered. This was done by reviewing books and theses related to the study. The reference materials were obtained from Moi Library, Kenyatta University; Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library, University of Nairobi; Kenya National Library, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi University Institute of African Studies, Bomas of Kenya, Kenya Institute of Education Library, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Library and the internet. Relevant journals, periodicals, audio materials including pictures, cassettes were also used.

1.18 Research Instruments and Equipment
Primary data were collected using the following research instruments:

1.18.1 Questionnaire
This study used questionnaires which consisted of both structured and unstructured questions among which the members of the selected dance troupes were required to choose the appropriate responses and/or give further explanations. The questionnaire was an effective tool for obtaining important information, as it contained questions appropriate for getting the desired
responses from the respondents. Data on the role played by mwomboko and the textual content were collected using this instrument. The questionnaire was translated into Agikuyu and Kiswahili languages in cases where the respondents were not able to read English.

1.18.2 Interview Schedule

Thomas and Nelson (1985) observe that interview schedule is a more reliable data collection tool when dealing with smaller samples. The study conducted in-depth interviews with key informants that included the dance troupe leaders, DCDO, CDAs and Agikuyu elders. The collection of data was on a one-to-one level through question and answer. This instrument also enabled the researcher to collect information concerning historical and developmental aspects of mwomboko. The interviews were conducted on appointment with key informants.

1.18.3 Observation Schedule

Phelps, R (1980) observes that the direct observation is also one of the ways used in obtaining data. This was done without interviewing the respondents. The study made both participatory and non-participatory observations on observable features such as the instruments used to accompany the dance, costumes, dance movement and instrumentalists. The instrument enabled the researcher to record what was observed during data collection. The information obtained was then coded and analysed in relation to the features that characterise mwomboko and the style of performance.
1.19 Research Equipment
The following research equipments were instrumental in facilitating collection of data. These included: a tape recorder, notebooks, writing pads and a still camera.

1.20 Data Analysis
After the fieldwork, sorting out of the questionnaires was done first in order to identify those that were properly filled. Data collected were coded and analysed descriptively to determine the textual content besides establishing the style of mwomboko music genre among the Agīkūyū. All the data collected from the field and documentary sources were analysed, coded and presented in simple statistics for easy interpretation. Qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were used. The music collected was transcribed in Western staff notation and analysed under the following music elements: that is, melody, rhythm, instrumentation and form. The song texts were transcribed and analysed to establish the emerging patterns visa-vis the content embodied in the songs.

The analysis of the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of the transcribed songs was useful in discussing aspects of Agīkūyū music that characterised mwomboko. A descriptive analysis of the data collected through participant and non-participant observations, tape-recording and photography of performances was done. Responses from the interviews and questionnaires were summarised. The findings were discussed and conclusions made before making recommendations and suggestions for further studies.
CHAPTER TWO
MUSIC AMONG THE AGĪKŪYŪ

2.1 Introduction
The chapter discusses music among the Agīkūyū. Mūranga is given focus in this study because it constituted the main study location. The discussion is done under the following sub-topics:

i. Background information on the Agīkūyū music.

ii. Music education among the Agīkūyū.

iii. Types of music found among the Agīkūyū.


v. Costumes and Artifacts of the Agīkūyū.

vi. Background information of Mūranga District.

vii. Economic activities of the people of Mūranga.

viii. The culture and music of the people of Mūranga.

2.2 Background Information on Agīkūyū Music
Music among the Agīkūyū plays a significant role especially that of transmitting societal norms and values. It also serves as media for social integration and cohesion, media for the satisfaction of the individuals need for religious, emotional and aesthetic expression. This means that music among the Agīkūyū is an essential part of many ceremonies. It is an integral part of the traditional life in the community and it begins as soon as a child is able to make understandable words and continues throughout lifetime.
Music for the Agikuyù is the use of organized sounds and beats whether sung or played to express feelings or emotions and to please the ear. The Agikuyù do not have a word that is equivalent to the English word for music and dance. The word used to mean music and dance includes all the activities that take place during music or dance performance. The general name for music and dance among the Agikuyù is rwimbo used to refer to both vocal and instrumental musical performances. When a person sings a song they say ndiraina rwimbo and when they attend any musical performance, they say twathi rwimbo. Music and dance are not thought of as separate and so they are often allocated the same name rwimbo. The two are looked at as the same entity (Wahome, personal interview, Nov 2008).

All the different occasions and rites of passage have different types of music. There are nyimbo cia ühiki (marriage songs), nyimbo cia gúthuthíra mwana (lullabies), nyimbo cia gúciarwo kwa mwana (birth songs), nyimbo cia irua (circumcision songs and manhood songs), nyimbo cia mbaara (war songs), nyimbo cia gíkuú na mathiko (death and funeral songs) and nyimbo cia mahoya (worship songs). There are also songs exclusively for different categories of people, namely children, women, men, girls and boys, young and old. Children songs are made of repetitive phrases. They are performed as the children play or do other activities like grazing. The songs are such as kíbúiya, marombo, cúcú, ngúthia, ngúcú. Generally, the Agikuyù have three major groups of songs and dances. These are recreational ones where song dances are performed for leisure.
Occasional ones are performed to mark ceremonial rites such as circumcision and funeral and incidental ones are performed during daily activities such as digging and grazing. Instrumental music does not feature prominently among the Agiküyü because instruments are basically used as accompaniments.

Songs may be accompanied by instruments or may be unaccompanied in the musical performances of the Agiküyü. They may be in solo form or call-and-response. The call-and-response types comes in three forms where:

i. The solo has a long call, with the chorus responding with a few syllables.

ii. The solo has a short call and the chorus completes the phrases that are different from the soloists call.

iii. The soloist has a long call which the chorus repeats without alteration.

In some cases, the soloist and chorus parts or sections overlap. The soloist sings a phrase and before it is completed the chorus comes in with an answering phrase. The rhythms become more complex when accompanied by instruments, hand clapping, ornaments and vocal interjections. The melodies are in most cases short and repetitive with a background story. Where songs are short, two or more are joined as long as the text of the songs deals with the same theme. Dance accompanies most of the music of the Agiküyü and the climax is marked by ululation. The soloists do not use an instrument to pitch their music. Instead, they use their own pitch discretion to find a comfortable tuning for themselves and for the singers.
Dance is an essential element of the Agikiiyi cultural wealth. It acts as a means of communication that allows members of the community to express their feelings and emotions. It also serves as a cultural identity. According to Tieron (1992), dance has more power than gesture, more eloquence than words, and more richness than writing. It expresses the most profound experiences of human beings and it is a complete and self-sufficient language. It is the expression of life and of its permanent emotions such as joy, love, sadness and hope. Dance among the Agikiiyi is also used to convey thoughts or matters of personal or social importance, reaction to attitudes of hostility, one’s beliefs through the choice of movements, postures and facial expressions. This means that most musical performances among the Agikiiyi evoke some sort of dancing. There is no time that both the performer and the spectator remain still in a performance. The Agikiiyi use dance as a medium to express the issues of life be they social or religious. It communicates life in bodily action. The songs that accompany dances influence the activities and dance movements performed through the song text.

Music that is integrated with dance is more prevalent among the Agikiiyi than music which is not designed for dance. According to Nketia (1974) sounds, however beautiful, are meaningless if they do not offer an emotional experience or contribute to the expressive quality of performance. The Agikiiyi therefore encourage the affective response to music for it is through this that members of the community relate to musical events and interact socially with others in musical situation. Dance also intensifies one’s enjoyment of music through
feeling. Dances among the community members include ngũcũ (youngsters dance), Kĩbaata (young men's dance) Gĩchukia, mũgoiyo and mũcũng'wa (boys and girls dance) and Mũthũngũcũ (a dance for the elderly).

Individual dances have different names which are given to them depending on the kind of instrument accompanying them like wandĩndĩ, the action that is common in the dance performance or the people who perform it like mwomboko. In other cases, names may not necessarily be related to the accompanying instruments or event or the action of the dance. Women adorn themselves with ornaments and costumes such as mĩguthĩ (necklaces), bangiri (bangles) and mĩthuru (traditional skirts) while the men wear thũmbĩ (headgears made from colombus monkey skin), they carry ngo (shields), matimũ (spears), thimbu (clubs), njora (swords) and icuthĩ (flywhisks). Their movements, their dress and their dancing all attract the attention of the spectators. These ornaments help in articulating the body movements.

2.3 Music Education Among the Agĩkũyũ

Members of the Agĩkũyũ community are trained as musicians in order to ensure that there is continuity within the community. Training is not done in a formal systematic way because much of it is believed to be a natural endowment and a person's ability to develop on his own. Members receive training as they participate in the music-making activities. Much of the learning is done through social experience where members of the community are encouraged to freely
participate in the music-making activities. The would-be musicians get a chance
to learn from the traditional musicians who play an important role in the process
of training members of the community. The musicians also ensure that there is
abundant supply of music that is pertinent to various community functions.
Participation in music-making activities enables the trainee to learn to sing or play
instruments in the style of the Agikūyū culture just as he/she learns his/her mother
tongue.

Music education among the Agikūyū begins early in life as the children perform
singing games. They learn the music by imitating the performances of adults and
other children and by so doing they are able to learn different styles of music that
are contained within the Agikūyū culture. Mothers and other members of the
family also introduce them to many aspects of music as they sing to them. As the
mothers also go with the children to various musical performances, they are able
to share all their musical experiences such as rhythm and movement. The children
learn how to imitate playing musical instruments at their disposal or by using toy
ones and also how to sing in the style of the Agikūyū. They also learn from close
relatives who are also performers. As they continue to grow, music occasions
such as traditional ceremonies and festivals provide an opportunity for training of
talented members of the community. As the child is exposed to these musical
situations, he acquires his/her musical knowledge through participation and slow
absorption until he/she is able to express himself/herself fully and credibly.
These experiences accelerate the speed at which they learn to absorb elements of their musical tradition. Encouragement by people around them also plays a big role in their learning process and in them becoming aini (musicians). The Agiküyü do not have specific category of members whose sole profession is to make music. All members of the community are given an opportunity to become musicians.

Exposure to üini (traditional music-making activities) in social life and participation are emphasized among the Agiküyü since singing and dancing spread through every social activity and no one is excluded from performance. Members learn songs that accompany various social activities. This enables the individual to acquire his/her music knowledge in slow stages and to widen his/her experience of music of the Agiküyü through the social groups. A member is then admitted in a group of musicians after the period of exposure and training where he continues with the learning. Those who sit under musicians have to rely on their ability to imitate, on their eyes, ears, memory and on correction by other people who are already good at playing or singing. That way, they are able to acquire their own technique of learning. Formal and systematic instructions are given only in cases where the skills or knowledge cannot be acquired informally.
2.4 Types of Music Found Among the Agikuyū

The following types of music exist among the Agikuyū:

a) **Traditional Folk Music** - This music centres on events and matters that are of common interest and concern to the members of the Agikuyū community. The music deals with everyday life activities and all matters relating to the Agikuyū cultural practices. This type of music is closely integrated with traditional institutions, ceremonies, rituals and many other community events. The music is accompanied by traditional musical instruments as well as dance. It includes lullabies, singing games, wedding songs, funeral songs and courting songs. The songs are used to transmit cultural values and practices to the Agikuyū from one generation to another orally through performance. Traditional music can be divided into vocal music performed by an individual or a group with or without instrumental accompaniment, instrumental music performed by a group with or without song(s). It is important to note here that instrumental music is not very common among the Agikuyū since most of the musical instruments found in this community are percussive rather than melodic. Again, group performances are more prominent than individual performances among the Agikuyū and in every performance, there is a song. This means that singing prevails over instrumental playing and dancing among the Agikuyū.

b) **Contemporary Music** - This music includes various songs and dances which result from the fusion of traditional Agikuyū music and European
music and dance elements. It shares many characteristics of Western popular music beginning with the advent of recording technology and the development of recording industry. It is influenced by R&B, American soul music, Jamaican reggae and other musical forms from America. It embodies and expresses social issues which emerge as a result of urbanization and modernization. Composers and performers also employ various combinations of Western and traditional musical instruments. Some of this music is that played in night clubs and places of entertainment, hymns drawn from Western music and then translated in the Agikuyu language, Christian sacred folk music, and art music.

c) **Neo-Traditional Music** - The music adapt, re-arrange and reinterpret old traditional songs and melodies to give them new meaning and relevance. The tunes of this type of music are Agikuyu but make use of both the traditional and Western musical instruments. They also incorporate dance styles from the Western music. These include Mūthirūgu, Korathi, Gicamba, Kariara, Kamanū and Mwomboko which evolved during the colonial period. Mwomboko is one of those that have continued to be used by the Agikuyu to express contemporary and emerging issues such as HIV and AIDS, girl-child education and many others.

2.5 **Musical Instruments of the Agikuyu**

Agikuyu traditional songs and dances have many musical instruments that accompany them. These instruments can be classified into four main categories:
stringed instruments, instruments with vibrating membranes, self-sounding instruments and instruments that allow a column of air to vibrate through them.

2.5.1 Stringed Instruments

These produce sound when the string is plucked, bowed or struck. The Agikuyu community is known to have very few stringed instruments. The most commonly known are the Wandindi and Nderemo. Wandindi is a two stringed instrument played by bowing. The instrument is used in solo performances to accompany songs and it plays in unison with the performer apart from a few notes which are added occasionally. It is made out of a hollowed wood, tin or gourd which is covered with goat or cow skin on both ends. This serves as the resonator of the instrument. It is important to note that resonators which are made out of a tin produce tones of poor quality as compared to those that are made from wood. A stick is then passed through the resonator protruding slightly to the other end and so it serves as the arm of the instrument. Two strings made of sisal fibre, animal tendons, nylon or wire are passed over a bridge from the protruding side of the arm to the other end of the arm and then wound on a peg or a nail. The instrument is played by bowing and it is tuned by tightening or loosening of the strings by use of the tuning pegs. The player uses fingers of the left hand to produce different notes. Other accompanying instruments that play together with the Wandindi are njingiri and gichandi. (See Figure 2.1).
Nderemo is a ground bow which is played by striking the string with a stick. It is an instrument that is more often used by children. Its resonator is a hole dug on the ground and covered with a cow hide stretching over it. Pegs are used to hold the resonator to the ground. A flexible stick is firmly stuck onto the ground and a string made of sisal or banana fibre is tied to the end of the stick. On the lower side, a small hole is made in the centre of the membrane where the string is pushed through and a piece of stick is tied to the near end. The stick is then bent down forming an arc. The player tunes the instrument by winding the string from the bent end to the required pitch and different pitches can be obtained by altering the tension of the string. (See Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.1: *Wandindi*—Drawn by Sheilla Munyiva
2.5.2 Self-Sounding Instruments

They produce sound when struck or rubbed one against the other, or shaken. They provide rhythm to the music and help the dancers to dance uniformly in step and movement. They also provide a percussive sound which acts as an accompaniment to the music. These form the largest group of instruments among the Agikuyu community. The instruments are:

1. Gichandi- This instrument is played by shaking and it is made from a gourd decorated with small shells which are tied on strings. Thorns are fixed on it, seeds enclosed and the open end of the neck covered with bee wax. This instrument is rarely used to accompany dances but whenever it is played, it provides a percussive effect to music. It is used to accompany the wandindi. (See Plate 1) below.
2. **Kiigamba**- This is a tin rattle half filled with dried seeds, pebbles or broken pieces of glass made in the shape of a large pea-pond, with one side slightly open. It is worn on the right foot by boys and men while dancing so that when the leg is shaken, the pebbles hit on the pea-pod making a rhythmic accompaniment. This is the most commonly used instrument among the Agikuyü. It accompanies most the performances of the community such as mumburo (a circumcision dance), Kibüiya (children dance) and muthungüci (old people’s dance). (See Figure 2.3).
3. *Njingiri*-This is an oversized pea-pod-like shell made of cast iron, inside which are ball bearings from metal. The bearings hit on the walls of the pea-pod-like shell to make a percussive sound. The name *njingiri* is translated from the word jingles. It is used to accompany dances such as *ngūcū* and *kibūiya* (youngsters dances), *mūmbūro* a (circumcision dance), *mūchūng'wa* (a dance for both boys and girls) and *mūthūngūcī* (a dance for old people). (See Plate 2) below.
4. *Tūthaju*- This is a type of idiophone which is made from putting a bundle of sticks together. It produces a rattling effect as a way of accompanying music played by boys. (See Figure 2.4) below.

Figure 2.4: *Tūthaju*-Drawn by Sheilla Munyiva
5. *Karing‘aring‘a*- This is a fly wheel played by hitting up and down across the diameter with a steel rod which is brought to rest on a hard surface such as a box on the last beat of every bar. The player holds the instrument with the left hand and uses the right hand to hit the wheel with the steel rod. The instrument mainly accompanies the *mwomboko* dance. (See Plate 3).

![Plate 3: A Member of Mükangū playing Karing‘aring‘a-Photo taken on 28th May 2008](image)

2.5.3 **Instruments That Allow a Column of Air to Vibrate Them**

These form the second largest instrumental group among the *Agiğiyyü*. They produce sound when air is blown through a mouth hole or reed into a tube open on one end. They are made from animal horns, wood or modern plastic pipes. The instruments include:
1. *Mūtūrirū*- This is a type of a flute which is twisted out of a green twig from mūkūe or *mūgio* tree. The instrument is open-ended and thinned on one end. It consists of four to eight holes. It is held obliquely, with the thinner end on the lips. The instrument is more commonly played while grazing and guarding millet. (See Figure 2.5).

![Figure 2.5: Mutūrirū-Drawn by Sheilla Munyiva](image)

2. *Biringi* (whistle) - This is the name given to the whistle which has found its way into the traditional music. The name *biringi* is derived from the *Kiswahili* word *filimbi*. It used to accompany dances and its role is to cue the dancers. (See Plate 4) below.
3. *Coro*- This aerophone is made of a bamboo or an ox horn. It is played by blowing into the hole on the side. This instrument is capable of producing several notes depending on the blower’s experience. Other than being used as a musical instrument, *coro* was also used by the *Agikuyu* to summon people for meetings. *Njingiri* is used to accompany this instrument. (See Plate 5).

Plate 5: Mr Kimotho playing *Coro*-Photo taken on 20\textsuperscript{th} June 2009
4. *Rūhia*- This is an aerophone made from a cow horn and played by blowing. (See Figure 2.6) below.

![Figure 2.6: Rūhia-Drawn by Sheilla Munyiva](image)

5. *Murenge*- This particular instrument is made from a pumpkin stalk. It has two holes and a mouthpiece. This instrument is commonly played by children. (See Figure 2.7).

![Figure 2.7: Murenge-Drawn by Sheilla Munyiva](image)
2.5.4 Instruments with Vibrating Membranes

In this family, the Agikuyū have various sizes of the drum. The drum is known as ndarama. The instrument is made from a hollowed trunk of a tree or a hollow vessel such as a tin or oil drum cut to the desired size. Any type of rīa (an animal or reptile skin) is stretched over it on both ends and the skin is held at the ends with strings. The strings may be made from leather strips, tendons or ropes and stretched from end to end connecting the two ends of the instrument. A string may be tied from one end to the other so that the player can suspend the instrument. The instrument is played by striking the skin with the palms of both hands and it is tuned by warming it on fire or by leaving it outside in the hot sun.

In contemporary times, various hollow vessels such as kībaba or ndiramu (tins or drums) have been used to substitute the wooden log. The Agikuyū drum is double-headed. They are used to accompany the singing and dancing. However, not all performances will have drums accompanying them. In a musical performance, the drum may be used as the main instrument to supply a constant rhythmic pattern in accompaniment of the performance. In other cases, the drum can be excluded from a performance without any serious effect on the performance. The drum helps in keeping the performance together by determining and maintaining the tempo of a song or dance. They also provide rhythms which keep the dance or song moving. They are used to enrich, punctuate, fill in and add variety to the music. (See Plate 6) below.
2.6 Costumes and Artifacts of the Agiküyü

Costumes are used among the Agiküyü to decorate a performance. There are costumes for both men and women which are worn during music-making times. The researcher learnt that the traditional Agiküyü women wore both ankle and knee high length mithurū (skirts), which were made from rūa (animal skin). Men wore rūa’made from an animal skin. In modern days, men and women wear dresses made from modern fabrics. The fabrics used are usually brown in colour. Alongside the costumes, the Agiküyü use artefacts such as:

1. Hang’i- These are circles of thin iron wire onto which are threaded very small beads of different colours worn by women and girls. The women wear a big bunch of hang’i on each ear. Young warriors of the Agiküyü would also wear hang’i for certain dances. (See Plate 7) below.

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Plate 6: Ndarama-Photo taken on 6th April 2010

1Rūa-this is an animal skin made into a costume worn by men
Plate 7: _Hang'i_ worn by Wangui a dancer- Photo taken on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2010

2. _Bangiri_- These are bangles worn on the wrist of the hand by women and girls and on the legs. They provide a percussive effect as the performance is going on. (See Plate 8).

Plate 8: _Bangiri_- Photo taken on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2010
3. *Migathī*-These are beaded necklaces worn by *Agīkūyū* women and girls made from dry seeds or from various types of beads and shells. The beads/seeds are drilled in the middle and then joined by a string. They are also worn diagonally across the chest. (See Plate 9) below.

![Plate 9: Agīkūyū Women Wearing Migathī- Photo taken on 19th June 2010](image)

4. *Thira*- A waist ornament which is made from a leather base from which a number of strings are hung, each string of the fringe being threaded with grass stems called *thage*. At the end of each *thage* is fastened a seed of wild banana. (See Plate 10) below.
Plate 10: \textit{th\'ira} worn by Wangui a dancer- Photo taken on 6\textsuperscript{th} April 2010

5. \textit{Kamweng\'i}- This is a small apron that was used by men for dancing \textit{Ngur\'i}. It was decorated with beads sewn on in various patterns. (Plate 11) below.

Plate 11: \textit{Kamweng\'i}. Source M\'urang\'a on 6\textsuperscript{th} April 2010

6. \textit{Gicuthi}- This is a fly whisk made from the tail of an animal. To make it long, a string is strung between two sticks and the hairs of the tail are
pulled out and tied as a fringe of this string. The string is then wound spirally round a specially cut wooden handle and securely fixed. (See Plate 12) below.

Plate 12: A member of Mükangū Dance Troupe holding Gicuthī- Photo taken On 28th June 2009

2.7 Background of Mūrang’ā County

Mūrang’ā County is one of the seven Counties in Central Province with its headquarters in Mūrang’ā Town. The County was previously known as Fort Hall and it is around 80 km by road from Nairobi. It is mainly inhabited by the Agikūyū who speak Nyeri, Kīambu, Kīrinyaga and Mūrang’ā (which is the most dominant) dialects. This is as a result of labour migration, business and intermarriage. Mūrang’ā County is also developing quickly such that it is attracting people from other parts of Kenya. The County has four administrative
divisions, namely: Kiharu, Kahuro, Kangema and Mathioya. It has seventeen locations and seventy sub-locations. It has three local authorities mainly Mārang’ā Municipal Council, Mārang’ā County Council and Kangema County Council. The County is bordered by Nyeri County to the North, Maragūa County to the Southwest, Nyandariia County to the West and Kīrinya County to the East. The total land area of the County is 756km² while the expansive Aberdares forest which has a combination of both indigenous and exotic trees covers a total of 174 km². Mārang’ā County covers a total area of 930 km². The County had a population of 355,337. (Mārang’ā County Bureau of Statistics 2002-2008)². Much of the land in Mārang’ā is characterised by a series of ridges and deep river gorges.

2.8 Economic Activities of the People of Mārang’ā

According to the District Agriculture and Livestock Office (Mārang’ā 2001), the County is predominantly an agricultural region with farm holdings, which are generally small but varying from the highland areas, the middle zone and the low areas. Sixty percent of the income in the County he is generated from agriculture since the population working in the agricultural sector constitutes about 243,000 persons. The County has a high potential for horticulture which has not been exploited. The main food crops are mbebe (maize) and beans (mboco) which are often intercropped with other crops such as waru (Irish potatoes), marīgi (bananas), ngwacī (sweet potatoes), ikwa (yams), mīanga (cassava), ndīma

(arrowroots) and *miciri* (French beans). In the upper zones, potatoes are the dominant food-crops while in the lowland areas, dry land crops such as *noe* (pigeon peas) and *Mìanga* predominate.

The principal cash crops grown are *macani* (tea) and *kahùa* (coffee) with tea predominating in the upper zones and coffee most commonly found in the middle zones. Fruits such as avocados, pears, plums and macadamia are also grown in various parts of the County. The main Livestock bred are Fresian and Ayrshire cows and the population working on the livestock sector is about 120,000. Fish farming is also popular in this region. It has 106 fish ponds, about 101 fish farmers and the main species of fish kept are tilapia, zilli and catfish. Agíkùyù farmers have placed a high value on trees within their society and as a part of their economy. Therefore, the main forest products in the County are timber, fuel wood and bamboo. Important sources of local employment other than formal employment and business are coffee and tea plantations which are variously owned by cooperatives, individuals and companies. There are a few tourist attractions from which the County generates some income such as sport fishing, Aberdares forest, *Mùkùrwe wa Nyagathanga* and tourists hotels which include *Mùrang’a Mùkawa Logde*, and *Mùrang’a Tourist Lodge*.

2.9 The Culture and Music of Mùrang’a People

According to Onalo (1986), Mùrang’a County is the area of longest settlement for the *Agíkùyù* and, in many respects, is viewed as the *Agíkùyù* homeland. Of the
territory which the Agikiiyu migrated into over the last several centuries, settlement in Murang'a dates back to the 16th century. The centre of dispersal for the Agikiiyu is traditionally associated with the area around Gaturi location of Murang'a County.

According to Kenyatta (1938), Gakiiyu is a name for Mukiiyu tree while Gikiiyu means ‘The big fig tree’ from which the name Gikiiyu is derived. Muriuki (1974), notes that the site of dispersal at the location, Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga is named after another tree where nyagathanga birds nested. The name of the sacred site was given to Gikiiyu the man, and is where it is said, God appeared to him, and allotted him all the land South and West of Mt Kenya to the edge of the forest. It is also said that in the beginning when Ngai (God) was apportioning the land, He called Gikiiyu and gave him this portion of land which consists of hills, rivers, valleys and forests, milk, honey and all kinds of animals. Ngai placed on this land a big mountain that He called Kirinyaga which he used as his resting place when in an inspection tour of the land.

One day, He took Gikiiyu on top of the mountain and pointed out to him a spot on the Southern side full of many sacred trees. Among them was one significant tree known as mukiurwe. After arrival at the site where the tree stood, he found a beautiful woman waiting for him as promised by God. He took her to be his wife and called her Mumbi which means creator. This site was the location where Gikiiyu and Mumbi, his wife made their home and raised their nine daughters.
who were later married by the nine men provided by God. The daughters were: Wanjirū, Wambūi, Njeri, Wanjikū, Nyambura, Wairimū, Waithīra, Wangarī and Wangūi. These daughters became the forbearers of the nine main Gīkūyū clans. The nine Gīkūyū clans which originated by the nine daughters of Gīkūyū and Mūmbi are known as: Anjirū, Ambūi, Aceera, Agacikū, Ethaga, AichakiūNy, Aithirandū, Aithe Kahuno and Aithiegeni. These clans are found in Mūrang’ā and in other parts of Central Province.

According to Christopher Kariuki (personal interview 10th Jan 2009) Mūkūrwe na Nyagathanga is one of the cultural and recreational centres where the traditional culture of the Gīkūyū is promoted and marketed. The centre is 27 km from Mūrang’a town in Gakūyū village near Gakūyū shopping centre Gaturi location off Mūrang’a Kīrīa-inī road. It is believed to be the mythological home of the Gīkūyū people and has been considered sacred by the Gīkūyū. The home was initially used in offering ceremonial sacrifices by the elders to their God, especially whenever the community faced calamities such as famine, diseases, lack of rain, and conflict between neighbouring communities. The community would also offer sacrifices for thanksgiving for bounties. Nowadays, the site is used to bring the community together to address current issues and to educate the community on their culture. It is also used as a tourist destination where visitors go to learn about the Gīkūyū culture.
The community with the help of the Murang’a County culture office started cultural festivals after realising the rate at which the traditional songs and dances in the community were being eroded. One such festival is held at Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga where cultural cerebrations are held every December 30th and 31st to enable the community to reflect on their culture, enjoy and preserve it for the present and future generations. The event is usually viewed as an important activity of the community’s cultural festival. The participants get a chance of displaying the culture of Gikuyu, Embu and Meru people. The centre has nine huts representing the nine clans of the Agikuyu. The centre was registered in 2001 under the District Social Services. It is managed by the Akuria a Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga self-help group. The group constitutes men, women and youths who have organised themselves into several groups from the community.

The groups meet once a month at the centre to practise traditional songs, dances, drama and poetry for performance in the centre, during national cerebrations and social gatherings, Irene (personal interview 10th Jan 2009). Agikuyu elders also come to the centre to provide information on the Agikuyu culture and herbal medicine. Education on how Agikuyu ceremonies such as circumcision, offering sacrifices to Ngai (God) and power distribution through age groups (riika) were conducted is given. Planting of trees with herbal sources and other environmental trees is also done during the festival. Preservation of water catchment areas like the streams around the centre is done in order to maintain beauty of the environment. The purpose of this centre is to expose people to the Agikuyu
traditions, revive and preserve the culture of the Agǐkũyũ and to educate the community on emerging issues like HIV/AIDS.

Visitors to the centre are such as education officers, tourists, youth groups and individuals who come to tour the cradle site of the Agǐkũyũ people. Media stations such as Kameme FM, Radio Citizen and University students largely benefit from the lectures given on the traditions of the Agǐkũyũ by the elders. They have shown interest in the Mūkūrwe wa Nyagathanga as a resource centre. Partners of the centre are: The National Museums of Kenya which provide the centre with teaching materials; Mūrang’a County Council which pays salaries to the workers, The Green Belt Movement which organises the planting of trees within the centre and the Department of Culture which gives technical advice.

Kangema Cultural Festival is another festival which was inaugurated in 2005 as an annual event. Its main sponsor has been the late Hon. Minister John Michuki. The festival’s aims are to:

- Offer the community a platform through which authentic Gěitiiro dance style would be preserved.
- Record and document Gěitiiro for posterity and research.
- Ensure Gěitiiro sustainability as a rich cultural heritage of the people of Mūrang’a.
- Offer entertainment to community through Gěitiiro.
- Enable Mūrang’a people to reflect on their rich cultural heritage.
• Cultivate cultural tourism.

• Expand avenues of marketing cultural resources.

• Increase the number of registered cultural groups to participate in the festival.

• Promote cultural festivals of the Agikuyu.

• Raise awareness at the local level of the importance of the Agikuyu culture.

• Educate people on emerging issues through song.

A wide range of Agikuyu traditional songs and dances such as ndumo, kibutha, gikanda, ngucu, nguri, mumburo, mutuhi, mugung'wa, mwomboko and kagicha are also featured in the festival. According to Wanjiru Gathere (personal interview 16th Jan 2009) other activities performed during the festival are comedies, narratives, story-telling, poems, drama, games, exhibitions by artists and traditional food services. The festival is important in Murang'a since it gives the community a chance to express itself. The festival brings together members of the community, the Department of Culture in the County, prominent people and various artists. Dance troupes are awarded certificates, trophies and cash prices.

Agikuyu cultural festival is also another festival that is cerebrated annually. Participants of the festival are usually drawn from Meru, Kirinyaga, Embu, Kiambu and Nyeri. The organisers of this festival are the Department of Culture in Murang'a, elders and members of the community. To ensure that traditional
songs and dances are performed well, the County Cultural Office organises training and workshops to enable the teams to prepare for Kenya Music and Cultural Festivals. The teams also perform during national celebrations, Presidential functions and other social gatherings. Participating dance troupes are such as Wandūhū, Rwathia, Kīrūnyū, Gaichanjīrū, Kangema Urban Gītīiro, Kībutha, Ebenezer, Kangema Nyakīn guys, Kīrathie Boys, Kīlangūn guys Maen dlelo, Nyakahūra Adult Class and Nyathirū Village dance troupes. These groups also train primary, secondary and college students how to dance traditional dances.

Other than traditional music, there is also a variety of musics performed in Mūrang’a such as modern popular music played in various entertainment places. According to Charles Michigo (personal interview on 10th Jan 2009), the most popular clubs in Mūrang’a are Maka Villa, Migingo Island (see Plates 13 and 14), Parkside and Ngurungu in Kangema. Music played in these entertainment joints is mainly that of Gīkūyū popular musicians such as John Ndemethio, Joseph Kamarū, Kamande Kīoi, Salīm Junior, Kinyua (one man guitar), Timona Mbūrū, Wangārī Kambera, Wahome Maingī and Mike Rūa. Soul, reggae, hip hop and benga music is also played depending on the kind of audience in attendance at any particular time. The most prevalent topical issues addressed by the musicians are love, daily activities, political issues, national and emerging issues. Gospel music such as that of Gīthuku, Esther Wahome, Elizabeth Nyambere, Joseph Kamarū and Jimmy Gait (Mūhathara) is also popular in most of the entertainment joints.
Plate 13: Migingo Island club- Photo taken on 31st May 2010

Plate 14: Maka Villa Club-Photo taken taken on 31st May 2010
According to Christopher Kariuki (personal interview on 10th Jan 2009) schools and colleges participate in the music festivals held every year. In these festivals, students perform traditional songs and dances not only from Central Province but also from different ethnic groups in Kenya and outside Kenya. These include Western music, art music as well as instrumental music. The music festivals are held at regional, district, provincial and national level. Church festivals are also held by the different denominations around Murang’a County where Christians participate in various musical activities. They sing Christian hymns, choruses, traditional folksongs with sacred text. The Anglican Church of Kenya (Dioceses of Mt Kenya Central) has started a music school in Murang’a town where the students who enrol in the school are taught theory of Western music, voice training, drama and how to play Western musical instruments such as piano, recorder, guitar, clarinet.
CHAPTER THREE
MWOMBOKO SONG DANCE AS A NEO-TRADITIONAL GENRE OF
THE AGİKÜYÜ

3.1 Introduction

The chapter discusses the data obtained from the field through the questionnaire, library sources, participant observations, and interview with soloists, dance troupe members, instrumentalists, former dancers, CDAs, CO and elders. The chapter addresses issues of aspects of Agikuyu expressions that characterise mwomboko song dance and factors that contributed to the survival of mwomboko as a neo-traditional genre among the Agikuyu.

The findings are discussed under the following sub-topics:

i. Mwomboko Song dance.

ii. Performance of Mwomboko song dance.

iii. Dance movements of mwomboko.

iv. Factors that have led to the survival of mwomboko.

v. Changes in the mwomboko.

3.2 Mwomboko Song Dance

The name ‘Mwomboko’ according to King’ori (personal interview, 2008) comes from the Agikuyu word ‘kwomboko’ which means eruption. It was used to describe a style of dancing which involved making rhythmic and patterned steps in pairs. Mwomboko music emerged in the 1940s as a dance based on the Agikuyu.

3 Kingo’ri Wa Mwangi, leader of Kamune dance troupe-interviewed on 20th June, 2008
traditional songs. John wa Nyambura (personal interview, 2008)\textsuperscript{4} indicated that the genre started after the burning of \textit{muriithigii} by the colonialists between 1941-42. According to his submission, \textit{mwomboko} was first brought to Murang’a from Kiambu by some \textit{mwomboko} artists like Cinda wa Watiri. Cinda was among the first \textit{mwomboko} performers. According to Nyambura, another informant (personal interview, 2008) \textit{mwomboko} was called so because of the dancing style \textit{kwomboka}. Nyambura (ibid) added that she started performing \textit{mwomboko} in 1942 as a young lady. According to Nyambura, all those who performed \textit{mwomboko} were expected to keep high moral standards. The emergence of \textit{mwomboko} is highly associated with the coming of the accordion brought to Kenya by the African soldiers who participated in the First and Second World Wars.

Ndaiga wa Muchiri (personal interview, 2008)\textsuperscript{5} indicated to me that these soldiers had learnt how to play and sing to the rhythms of the accordion. They had watched the white man perform their Waltz and the Scottish dances which were accompanied by accordion. The \textit{Agikuyu} returnee soldiers then taught the \textit{Agikuyu} dancers how to dance the Waltz and the Scottish dances. The Waltz that was taught to the \textit{Agikuyu} dancers later transformed to \textit{mwomboko}. Mwangi wa Murefu (personal interview, 2008)\textsuperscript{6} stated that \textit{mwomboko} emerged around 1937.

\textsuperscript{4}John Wa Nyambura, dancer Kamune dance troupe- interviewed on 20\textsuperscript{th} June, 2008
\textsuperscript{5}Ndaiga Wa Muchiri, Kangema dance troupe leader-interviewed on 28\textsuperscript{th} June 2008
\textsuperscript{6}Mwangi Wa Murefu, dancer Kamune dance troupe- interviewed on 20\textsuperscript{th} June 2008
According to Mwangi (ibid) *mwomboko* was banned around 1947 by the colonialists but picked up again after a few years.

Mahūgū, P (1990) notes that *mwomboko* emerged with the coming of Western musical instruments such as the accordion and guitar and no wonder it is called *mwomboko* (eruption) for it was descriptive of the manner in which the instruments rendered the atmosphere with vibrations of sounds played on the accordion. At first, the players of the accordion backed up those who sung *

*Mūthūrīgū* dance. The dance was a protest dance performed to rebel against the colonial rule and the foreign traditions colonialists wanted to impose on the *Agūkūyū*. Some of the traditions according to Lazaro Maina (personal interview, 2008)\(^7\) included the banning of female circumcision viewed as an important rite of passage by the *Agūkūyū*. He added that after the banning of *mūthūrīgū* by the colonialists, the players of the accordion came up with *mwomboko* since they knew that the new genre would not provoke the colonial government. The intention was to use the genre as a way of communication of various messages and more so the messages of protest.

The dance appealed more to the youth because it brought with it a new style of dancing. It also provided opportunities for the youth to meet and court. This occasionally resulted in marriage and thus, sustenance of the community through procreation. As the youths learnt to perform the dance, they also got educated

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\(^7\)Lazaro Maina, dancer Kamune dance troupe- interviewed on 20\(^{th}\) June 2008
about the Agikũũũ culture. Finnegan, R (1970) notes that a good number of the Mau Mau songs were composed in mwomboko style to voice Agikũũũ opposition to colonialism. The rhythm of the mwomboko made the songs a viable means of communication. According to King’ori, Wangũũi, Ndaiga, Florence, Wangari (personal interview, 14th June 2008) mwomboko consists of several dances, namely: machindogo, tindo, rumba, mbombo, matore, ndongomothi, njeki, machi korathi, machi ndaihu.

Mwomboko incorporates aspects of the Waltz and Scottish dances which the dancers learnt from the Agikũũũ soldiers who fought in the First and Second World Wars. Mwangi, P (2004) notes that mwomboko tends to offer potentiality for action and humorous teasing which touch the hearts of singers, dancers and audience and therefore, the strong characteristics of African traditional musicality is reflected in mwomboko.

According to Muchiri wa Komũ (personal interview, 2008)8, mwomboko serves the Agikũũũ at different levels. At the social level, it provides a platform for moral and social education on emerging issues such as HIV and AIDS, political issues, girl-child education. At the recreational level, it offers a ground for enjoyment and personal satisfaction. At the functional level, it provides a spirit of togetherness and sharing which is important for the maintenance of ethnic identity and enhancement of social binding.

8Muchiri Wa komu, dance troupe leader Mũkangũ- interviewed on 14th June 2008

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3.2.1 Song Text and Themes

According to Mary Wangūi and Nyambura wa John (personal interview, 28th May 2008), the song texts of mwomboko were initially meant to pass messages of protest against the colonial rule. They would sing and dance and as they did that, they would pass the message to the effect that they would never accept a stranger to rule them. Most of the texts were highly symbolic such that for one to understand its meaning, one needed a good knowledge of the Agĩkũũyũ language. However, other times the song texts would also cover other topics such as the social life of the Agĩkũũyũ, of the accordionist, political life of the community, historical events and any other issues affecting the community.

According to Bakare & Mans (2003), the songs guide the dance and they strengthen its purpose through texts. The Agĩkũũyũ would sing about mĩtugo ya ũgĩkũũyũ (their cultural values/ ethics) which gave them a sense of identity and pride of their community. According to Gaithos (personal interview, 2008)⁹, submissions mostly 'Maci' and 'Korathi' had texts that discussed the exploits of the accordion player. He added that the accordionist would praise himself and narrate his experiences. One of the informants interviewed, Mũrũthi wa Wanjirũ (personal interview 2008)¹⁰ demonstrated how Korathi was sung by singing the following phrases:

\[Ni\ nii\ Mũrũthi\ wa\ Wanjirũ\ nderwo\ nyinĩre\ ageni,\ ngũina\ mũinaine\]

⁹Gaitho, dancer Kangema dance troupe, interviewed on 28th May 2008
¹⁰Mũrũthi, dancer Kangema dance troupe, interviewed on 28th May 2008
After independence, the song texts not only included topics on the Agikuyu cultural traditions, but also social and emerging issues, worship and many others. The respondents added that nowadays the song texts cover a wide range of topics. These topics may however, depend on the occasion for which the dance is being performed and the soloist ability to perform.

3.2.2 Venues, Contexts and Occasions of Mwomboko Performance

Bowman (1995) observes that culture is constantly being created, recreated, and modified, contested and negotiated. Mwomboko has undergone some of these phases. According to Kihonge, Hunja, Wangeci, Kabura, Wambūgū, Elija, Njūgūna, Waigwa (personal interview, 28th May 2008) when mwomboko emerged, it would be performed at night in the valley since the dancers feared being discovered by the colonial government. The colonial government then was against the performance of the dance. They added that they would carry weapons so that in case they were caught, they would also fight back. They would perform the dance from about 12 midnight after which they would go home. After independence, the genre was brought to the public places. Thus, a dance that would go on for a whole night then was reduced to just a few minutes. According to these informants, the venue of performance is now chosen depending on the
occasion and event. *Mwomboko* is, therefore, performed in places such as a stadium, church and public places depending on the occasion.

The purpose of musical performance defines the context in African traditional society. According to Bakare & Mans (2006) whether the performance has ritual purpose or is solely for entertainment will determine the rules for performance. The context of performance provides the meaning, frame and environment based on culturally stipulated rules or expectation (Bakare, 2006). They maintain that the contextual environment provides further reference in terms of a performance being private or public, having restricted or open attendance, whether urban or rural and whether it is ritual or recreational. In this respect, *mwomboko* is a rural and urban genre, for public performance having open attendance and recreation. *Mwomboko* is performed for worship, education, entertainment and recreational purposes and as a way of passing certain messages to the members of *Agikuyu* community.

Occasions of performance, on the other hand, refer to the special events/ceremony for which the music is performed. Today, the genre is performed during public holidays, national day celebrations, administrative barazas, weddings, Kenya music festival competitions, political rallies and campaigns, religious meetings and any other social gatherings in both rural and urban settings. All these occasions have had an effect on the performance of *mwomboko* in that the dance has had to be restructured so as to fit into the allocated time of performance.
3.2.3 The Soloist

The mūkūi (soloist) in mwomboko song dance performance is the leader of the group (Githee personal interview 2008). He controls the dance troupe with his voice and his instrument. He takes charge of the whole performance and is expected to have a strong voice that exhibits command and authority in singing. He decides when to change from one movement to another. He embellishes the dance with some vocal ornaments that come at the end of a movement or may mark the beginning of the next movement. He has the liberty to compose melodies on the spot to suit the occasion. His appeal and musicianship in performance depends on his ability as a musician for his target audience. There are usually no standard texts since the soloist creates most of the texts as the dance goes on. It is the articulate choice of words and manner of playing the accordion which render him popular. He is, therefore, expected to have a good command of the Agikūyū language and culture to be able to use idiomatic expressions; metaphors, parables and symbolic language effectively. The language that he uses represents responsibility and creativity.

In the modern setting, he combines several languages English, Kiswahili and Agikūyū to secure multicultural appeal and appreciation by the audiences. Githee added that songs on current issues have gained popularity in the contemporary setting while those whose themes are based on historical events are slowly

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11 Githee, elder in Kangema and a former dancer of mwomboko- interviewed on May 29th 2008
disappearing. The soloist, therefore, tries to find a common ground acceptable to
the audience taste. Sometimes the artist composes songs for the consumption of
his audience at the venues of performance. The soloist emerges as an
entertainment figure in all social occasions. It is important to note that the role of
a soloist in the mwomboko song dance is exclusively for a male.

3.2.4 Instrumentation

The study observed that the musical instruments in mwomboko song dance
performance consist of the kïnanda kïa múgeto, (accordion) and karing'aringa,
(metal ring). However, according to Wambûi Maina (personal interview, 2008)\textsuperscript{12},
mwatû (an empty bee-hive box) or ithandûkû (a wooden box) is used to articulate
the rhythm of the ring. This box or bee-hive box also serves as a seat for the ring
player. The ring is played by striking its sides across the diameter with chuma (a
short metal rod). The ring and bee-hive box form the percussive accompaniment
to the dance, whereas the accordion mostly plays a complementary role to the
voice by filling in the gaps when the soloist is not singing. Wambui added that as
far as she knows, the accordion was brought to Kenya by the African soldiers that
had participated in the First and Second World Wars.

3.2.4.1 Kïnanda kïa múgeto (The Accordion)

The accordion is a portable reed wind instrument with keyboard on one side,
buttons on the other side and bellows in the middle that forces air through the

\textsuperscript{12}Wambui Maina, elder in mûkangû- interviewed on 14\textsuperscript{th} June 2008

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metal reeds. The accordion player operates the instrument by pumping the bellows while pressing one or more of the instrument’s piano keys. Pressing the keys allows air to pass from the bellows to the reeds, creating different pitches. Leather straps, worn over the shoulders, support the accordion leaving both hands free to play the instrument. The right hand plays the melody on the keyboard, while the left works the bellows and manipulates the two or three bass harmony keys, of the tonic and dominant triad. It is one of the smallest members of the organ family. (See Plate 15).

The player of the accordion in mwomboko song dance doubles up as the lead soloist /singer. The accordion is the lead instrument and therefore, plays the most prominent role in mwomboko. The accordion plays the following roles:

- Directs and coordinates the player of the metal ring and the dancers.
- Plays introductory section and melodies.
- Gives the preliminary statement of the next movement which determines the steps of the next movement.
- Plays interludes, marking the end and the beginning of the next section.
- Plays the concluding section (postlude).
- Accompanies the voice of the singer.
- Doubles the human voice.
- Pitches the soloist.
- Enriches the texture of the music.
3.2.4.2 Karing'aring’a (The Metal Ring)

The metal ring is the highest pitched instrument in the mwombo k dance and it plays its rhythmic patterns on monotone. Nellias wa Mwangi (personal interview, 2008) submitted that the instrument produces high or low pitch depending on the circumference of the ring. She added that a karing'aring’a with a big circumference produces low pitch while the one with a small circumference produces high pitch. (See Plates 16 and 17).

Nellius Wa Mwangi, dance troupe member Kangema-interviewed on 27th May 2008
The *karing'aring'a* provides a percussive accompaniment to the dance. It is played by striking its sides across the diameter with a metal rod. However, *ithandükü* (an empty wooden box) is sometimes used to mark the rhythm of the metal ring, articulate the strong beat and provide a percussive effect to the dance. The wooden box also serves as a seat for the metal ring player. The metal ring helps in directing the dance steps, dance formations and keeps a constant tempo of the performance. It plays ‘ostinato’ rhythm but it is slightly varied from one dance to another. The player of the instrument neither responds to the soloist vocally nor does he dance.

Plate 16: A Member of Mūkangū playing *karing'aring'a*. Photo taken on 20\textsuperscript{th} June 2009
King’ori (personal interview, 27th May 2008), explained that in the initial stage, mwomboko did not have any particular costumes but as the dance became more popular, the young men started wearing baggy trousers and long sleeved shirts with scarves around their necks or sometimes they would wear ties. The ladies on the other hand wore ihuruto (round skirts) and the skirts would be allowed to flare out as they danced and therefore exaggerated their dance movements. For the upper parts of the body, they tied a khanga such that they left one shoulder bare. They all danced bare-footed. Nowadays, the performers wear uniform which...
constitutes a trouser and a shirt for men and a dress with a round bottom for women. They also wear shoes while performing. (See plate 18 and 19) below:

Plate 18: *Mwomboko* women dancers from *Mükangü* in their modern khanga
Photo on 20\textsuperscript{th} June 2009
Plate 19: Kangema Mwomboko dancers in their modern costumes. Photo taken on 28\textsuperscript{th} June 2009.

3.3 Performance of Mwomboko Song Dance

*Mwomboko* song dance consists of several dance movements, namely; *machi ndogo, tindo, rumba, mbombo, matore, ndongomothi, njeki, machi korathi, machi ndaihu* and *kariara*. The dance is graceful, unhurried and solemn and involves movement of various parts of the body. The predominant dance formation is *mira\text{\textsc{i}}ni \text{\textit{ir\textsc{t}}}i* (two lines) where the dancers move in twos. Wanjikū (personal interview, 2008)\textsuperscript{14} claims that the genre is a cultural music performance

\textsuperscript{14}Wanjiku, dance troupe member Mûkangû- interviewed on 18\textsuperscript{th} May 2008
performed in many social occasions. The performers of *mwomboko* song dance include the accordion player who also plays the role of a soloist, the player of the metal ring and the dancers who respond to the music sung by the soloist accompanied by the accordion. The soloist is the one who starts and leads the dancers throughout the performance. Observations and interviews revealed that the soloist has the liberty to compose spontaneously as a way of remaining relevant to the occasion. *Mwomboko* therefore, allows creativity in the course of the performance.

According to Judith (1965) dance is an important component of African social life and an essential element of African cultural heritage. Dance is a human behaviour composed from dancers' perspective and shared by members of the same audience within that culture. (Judith, 1965) further observes that unlike other human motor activities, in dance the motor activities are intentionally, purposefully and rhythmically binding. It is a means of communication that allows people to express their feelings and emotions. It has the capacity to simultaneously reconcile the heart body and spirit (Judith, 1965). The researcher observed that the dancers in *mwomboko* perform in pairs of male and female. Githaiga, (another respondent) who researcher interviewed on 18th May 2008 echoed Wanjikū's sentiments by explaining that in order to execute the dance, performers must know their movements, the dance themes and choreography, presentation framework and rules.
Dancers must master their own minds, bodies and emotion. They must maintain a high level of coordination between them and the soloist and they must show a high level of commitment in the performance. The dance consists of singing, body movements, and playing of instruments. The playing of instruments and singing incorporates sound patterns while the dancing consists of organised movements of the body which are executed according to a rhythm and the sound of music. In the performance, the instrumental sections are played to allow the dancers and the soloist to change over to the next movement. Field observations further revealed that the dance starts from outside the arena in a relatively slow tempo. The dancers enter the arena in pairs of a man and woman and the two dance with one another throughout the performance. Once inside the arena the dancers create several formations depending on the dance movement being performed. The members of the audience are an important part of the performance. They cheer and applaud a good performance and also give material appreciation to an impressive dancer and soloist.

3.4 The Dance Movements of Mwomboko

3.4.1 Machi Namba Imwe/ Machi Ndaihu (Long march)

Waititu (personal interview, 2008) \(^{15}\) clarified that the movement was called *Machi namba imwe* because the dance style took a military like formation and march. The movement is performed in a military style whereby the men and women form two lines and then march in pairs. The movement starts from outside

\(^{15}\)Waititu, elder Kumune, interviewed on 20\(^{th}\) May 2008

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the arena where the performers get into the arena marching to the beat of the song and holding hands. This movement takes a longer time than the others. (See Plates 20 and 21).

Plate 20: Kangema dancers entering the arena. Photo taken on 28th June 2009

Plate 21: Machi namba imwe Inset-researcher with CDA. Photo taken on 28th June 2009
3.4.2 Ndongomothi (fool)

In this movement, the dancers march and swing their feet while at the same time they rotate and move around in circular formation. The man’s right hand is usually on the woman’s left under arm while the man’s left hand holds the woman’s right hand. The woman’s left hand lies on the man’s right shoulder. They also dance sideways with less vigour. (See Plates 22 and 23) below.

Plate 23: Kangema dancers performing *Ndongomothi*. Photo taken on 28th June 2009.

3.4.3 *Machi Namba Igiri/Nachi Ndogo/Nini* (small march)

This movement resembles *machi ndaihu* since it also assumes a military-like march. In this particular movement, men form an extra linear formation where they dance turning round rhythmically. The movement is termed as small just because it does not last as long as the other march and also because it has formations that are slightly different. (See Plates 24 and 25).
Plate 24: Kangema dancers performing *Machi Namba Igīrī*. Photo taken on 28th June 2009.

3.4.4 *Njeki* (Jack)

The name of this movement is derived from 'Jack', a mechanical tool which is used for raising a vehicle off the ground to enable one to change a flat tyre. The pairs rotate in revolving movements going forward and back and pausing to lifting one leg between the forward and backward movements. This is a much faster movement as compared to the others. The dancers form several formations within the arena. (See Plate 26).

![Plate 26: Kangema dancers performing *Njeki*. Photo taken on 28th June 2009](image)

3.4.5 *Luba* (Rumba)

This movement was adopted from the *rumba*\(^\text{16}\) style. The dancers copied the rumba dance style and formed a movement in which the dancers make formations of three steps which are performed in rumba beat.

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\(^{16}\)A ballroom dance that was popular in the 1930s and steaming from Afro-Cuban folks origins its basic rhythm is quick-quick-slow in simple quadruple time and its trademark is side-to-side hip movements.
3.4.6 Machi Korathi (Chorus)

This movement is called korathi the Agikuyu pronunciation of 'chorus.' This is not because the movement is performed in a responding manner. In this movement, the formations are much simpler than the other movements. At times it serves as an interlude whereby the singer and the dancers re-organise themselves after performing other movements which are more complex. Korathi lyrics are soothing in nature and catchy to mwomboko fans.

3.4.7 Mwomboko Dance Style

In mwomboko dance style, the performers move in a file, count two steps, bend down and then move majestically back and forth in the dancing arena. The movement basically provides a climax to the mwomboko performance. (See Plates 27 and 28) below.

Plate 27: Kangema dancers performing Mwomboko. Photo taken on 28th June 2009
3.4.8 Tindo (chisel)

Tindo is the Kiswahili word for ‘chisel’. The dance formations of Tindo are similar to those of mwomboko movement. The main difference is that the dancers do not bend after counting two steps instead they move their feet rhythmically the same way a carpenter drives his chisel into a piece of wood splitting it. The dancers move in a file swinging their bodies in a zigzag posture and then march majestically within the arena. (See Plate 29).
3.4.9 Kariara

In this dance movement, the dancers make the formations whereby they turn around and then sideways while still holding hands as they file forward, back and forth inside the arena. Kariara originated from River Kariara in Kandara Division, Mūranga County. (See Plate 30).
3.5 Factors That Have Led to the Survival of *Mwomboko* Dance Song

One of the concerns of this study was to ascertain factors that contributed to survival of *mwomboko* given that other neo-traditional genres have disappeared with time. Forty out of a total 55 (73%) of the respondents interviewed, alluded to the following as reasons for the survival of *mwomboko*:

- It is a genre that accommodates change. The soloists use *mwomboko* tunes to relay new themes which are relevant to the contemporary society.
- The song text of *mwomboko* music is dictated by the needs of the target audience.
- The accordion can accompany literally almost all tunes sung in the Agikũyũ idiom.
- *Mwomboko* tunes appeals to people of all ages.
- *Mwomboko* has been used as a means of carrying cultural values of the Agikũyũ, communicating important information and educating members of the community.
3.6 Changes in *Mwomboko* Dance Song

- *Mwomboko* was initially used as a protest dance against the colonial rule but has recently become a symbol of expressing both the *Agikūyũ* culture and emerging issues.

- The themes were initially political and of protest in nature but have now adopted themes which incorporate emerging issues, praise, religious and social issues such as those that encourage virtues or condemn vices. This has added a new aspect to the song texts.

- *Mwomboko* is now performed in public unlike before where it was performed at night and in hideouts. Currently, it features a lot in political rallies and campaigns, public holiday cerebrations, bars, night clubs, restaurants.

- It is performed for entertainment although it is occasionally structured to suit the needs of the audience.

- It is not restricted to only the old. Presently, it is performed by both the young and old alike.

- It nowadays contends not only with the *Agikūyũ* but also with a mixed audience that cuts across all ages, gender and ethnicity. The soloists combine several languages in order to cater for their audiences.
CHAPTER FOUR

TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION OF COLLECTED SONGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the music transcription of 9 mwomboko songs and the text translation of 15 songs selected from among the total sample of 81 that were tape recorded during the field study which took place in Mūrang’a County. The study focused on the three mwomboko dance troupes found in Mūrang’a, namely; Kamune, Kangema and Mūkangū. This chapter transcribed the music and translated text in order to present general overview of:

1. Rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko music.
2. Establishing the textual content of the mwomboko music.

Song 1- Maci ndaihu (long march)

1. Thenga thengai mūhīrīga nōrīa
   Mūhīthū ateng’ere auge.
   Njīra yariio kībarī kīng’ori ndakagīe
   rūkūngū

2. Tondu kīng’ori
   nīndaingīra
   niheo njūng’wa
   njikare thī.
   Mbūri ya kīama nī nduīīte ndigetwo
   Mūthīgā na
   mumo

3. Ninjiirwo nyūmba itū twarie
   naniī njuge ūrīa ndīrenda.
   Ndereba angīōna ụgwati mbere

   ....Move move clan and the right run and say Path spread mat Kīng’ori not get dust

   ....Because Kīn’gori I’ve arrived give me traditional stool I sit down
   Goat of clan I’ve removed not to be called a youngster

   ....Call me my house we talk say what I want Driver if see danger ahead
This song is about a man who is complaining that his piece of land might be grabbed by members of his community. He says that he worked hard to get it and so he voices his concern that he would not want anybody to grab the piece of land from his children after his death or claim that it belongs to the clan. He warns that he and his family have vowed to protect the title deed of the land. He also warns...
that anyone who tries to grab it will face the consequences. The performer uses the song to caution members of the community who have the habit of grabbing other people’s land in the pretext that land belongs to the clan.

The theme covered in this song is on land issues among the Agikuyu community. He sings about the issue of land ownership, grabbing and inheritance as some of the social concerns dealt with among the Agikuyu. It was clear from the interview conducted that the Agikuyu acquired land by the gradual process of cutting down the forest, clearing the bush thus establishing the right of the user. After death, the land became the property of the sons of the deceased. The performer may have intended to remind the members of the Agikuyu community that issues of land ownership, grabbing and inheritance are some of the social concerns that are constantly dealt with by the Agikuyu.

The composer uses several stylistic devices in the song to enable him to pass the message in a poetic manner. These were such as repetitions where the performer says *thenga thengai...gwakwa gwakwa* (move move ...my place my place) to emphasise something and to catch the listener’s attention. He uses hyperbole to state the position that he holds in the family when he says *njira yarwo kibari Kungi ndakagie rükungü* (spread a mat on the path so that dust will not get on him as he walks). He says that he has met all the requirements of the elders and, therefore, he can confidently go before them to present his grievances.
The composer also uses proverbs when he points out *ugwati ndūrī njamba* meaning that no one is able to avert an accident and so people need to be careful at all times since one may not be able to predict an accident. The song provided a vehicle which the performer uses to express his emotions and also to highlight important social concerns of his community. Such concerns may have been individual or collective emotions and concerns attached to land ownership among the *Agiküyü*. 
Song 2: Ndongozothi (a foolish one)

1. Ndongozothi ni ya itonga
   Ndongozothi ni ya itonga
   Gwitu Mūrang’a
   Ndongozothi ni mwaigua

2. Ndaire ngińyua ndi mūriu
   Ndaire ngińyua ndi mūriu nī king’ori
   Ndaire ngińyua njohi tūri na itonga

3. Ndongozothi ikinyagwo ūguo ūguo
   Ndongozothi ikinyagwo ūguo ūguo
gwitu Mūrang’a
   Ndongozothi ikinyaga ūguo ūguo
   ni itonga

4. Ndongozothi iri mūthīre
   Ndongozothi iri mūthīre
gwitu Mūrang’a
   Ikinyagwo icemetwo thī nī itonga

5. Nīnī thuthagīra itonga
   Nīnī thuthagīra itonga
   gwitu Nīrī
   Nīnī thuthagīra itonga
   Rūrīa ikūnyua

6. Ikūnūra mbaru
   heaguo rwambū
dispeech: Gikūyū kiugaga njagutino
   rūambū
   Cia Mūrang’a mūri ageithie
   Cia Mūrang’a mūri ageithie
   Nī king’ori
   Nīnī thuthagīra itonga
   cia thîna
   Speech: Nikūiigunga ino itagwo
   Ndongozothi ya itonga

   ...Ndongozothi is for the rich
   Ndongozothi is for the rich
   Ours Mūrang’a
   Ndongozothi have you heard

   ...I slept drinking I am drunk
   I slept drinking I am king’ori
   I slept drinking with the rich

   ...Ndongozothi is stepped this
   Ndongozothi is stepped this
   way our home Mūrang’a
   Ndongozothi is stepped this
   by the rich

   ...Ndongozothi has way of walk
   Ndongozothi have way of walk
   our home Mūrang’a
   It is done carefully by the rich

   ...It is me who soothes the rich
   It is me who soothes the rich
   at our Nyeri.
   It is me who soothes the rich
   when they drink

   ...When they eat the ribs
   they give me the fat
   Gikūyū says servant is
   fat
   of Mūrang’a you are greeted
   of Mūrang’a you are greeted
   by king’ori
   I sooth the rich when they
   become poor
   It is to hear that this is called
   Ndongozothi of the rich
The song is about praising the rich. The performer brings out the fact that when the rich are praised, the one praising them benefits because they will always get something as a reward. This also implies that those who praise the rich will never go hungry. The parallel to that is that one cannot work hard at something and finally not reap benefits out of it. The performer uses the song to encourage his clansmen to work hard in whatever they do. He gives the example of a person who got rewarded after taking care of his parent without giving up. The performer highlights a social concern regarding the importance of working hard in whatever one does.

The performer used stylistic devices such as repetition where he repeats the word *ndongomothi* throughout in order to emphasize the message of the song. *Ndongomothi* means a foolish person. In the context of the song, one who entertains a rich man might look foolish but he actually gains from what he does. Wise sayings are also used such as *njaguti no rwambū* meaning a servant is recognised because of his strength and ability to serve and that a rich man can only have one’s services as long as they are strong.

The song also makes use of words which can be interpreted in more than one way, thus interplay of meaning. An example of that is the word *ikūmūra* which in this song means to eat. In other cases, the same word means to peel. The performer has also used ellipses where a word or more is omitted from a sentence. Usually
the omitted word is understood from the context and so he leaves out some words at the beginning of a sentence where the performer says... *cia Murang'a* and expects that the meaning will be understood from the context.
Song 3: *Githīna* (trouble)

1. *Nī ni ndungataga aciari akwa na gikeno kīngī*
   *Na ngatungata andī aiitura ndīna ngoro theru*
   *Ndikanatigīrwo kīgau ndigwo ngīri'a thīna*
   
   ....Me I serve my parents with a lot of happiness
   And I serve my villagers with a clean heart
   so that they don’t not leave me a curse i be eating poor

2. *Ndīngienda githīna ta kīngī ndīronire itīra*
   *Mwanake aiyite taito ya aciari ake akāmihi'tha*
   *Norio kurīa iiri agakana na karinga thenge*
   *(Speech: nī ni nūi kūrīa iīrī)*
   
   .... Don’t want problem like
   I saw in village
   Youngman stealing title deed of his parent and hide
   When asked he denied with the he goat
   Speech (I don’t know where it is)

3. *Rīrīa aciari acio makuire magītiga kīgau*
   *Mākiri'ongerīa mākiuga na marakara maingī*
   *Ūrīa iiri na taito iyo ndari thayū akona ari gūkū thī.*

4. *Rīu mwanake úció niányiturwo nī kīgau giw aciari*
   *Mwanake athiaga arī njaga aigī'rīre nguo ciande*
   *Akiyaragīria akiugaga ndari na taito*
   
   ....When parents died
   they left a curse
   and, said a lot of bitterness
   Whoever with that title deed will have no peace on this earth

5. *Nīkīo ndungataga aciari akwa na gikeno kīngī*
   *Na ngatungata andū aitū na ngoro theru*
   *Ndikanatigīrwo kīgau ndigwo ngīri'a thīna*

   ....Now young man that was got by the curse from his parents
   Young man walks naked putting his clothes on shoulders
   Talking saying he doesn’t have the title deed

   ....That is why I take care of
   parents with joy
   And I take care of my people with a clean heart
   I don’t get a curse and be left being eaten by poverty
6. Gikiiyi kiugaga yumbüka ga
kūrīa imeretie
Na noithui tugaga mūndū aumaṣīra
na Kūrī aituie
Nayo njīrā ya kūrā
īgīaga imē kūrī mūthenya
Nake mūndū ūkūrā ndari hīndī
angīūngā wandūgū

....Gikīyi says it flies with what
it has swallowed
It is us who say one leaves
with that he has picked
And the way of getting lost
gets dew during the day
And the person getting lost does
not meet a corrector

7. Nikīo ndungataga
aciari akwa ndīna ngoro theru
Na ngatungata andī
aitūra ndīna ngoro theru
Ndikanatigīrwo kīgau
ndigvo ngiona thīna
Ndingēnda gīthīna ta
kīngī ndīronire itūra
Mwanake aiyīte taito ya aciari
ake akahitha
Noorio kūrī a
īrī a

gakana na kīringa thenge
(Speech: nīī ndīū kūrīeri)

....That is why I take care of
parents mine with a clean heart
And I take care of people of the
village with a clean heart
So that I will not be left a curse
and be left eating poverty
I don’t want problem like
another I saw village
Young man stole title parents
His and hide
And when asked where it is he
deny with kīringa thenge
(Speech: Ndiū kūrī a īrī)

The song is meant to warn people about putting themselves in trouble. The singer
warns that trouble comes as a result of doing wrong things. His advice is that one
should not expect any good thing as long as wrong things are done. He gives an
example of a son who decided to steal his parents’ title deed and when he was
asked, he denied having taken it or seen it. This song also deals with a social
concern where the performer expresses the importance of taking good care of
parents in old age and having a good relationship with members of the
community. He gives the example of a young man who did not conform and that
he finally got a curse from his parents because they were unhappy with him.
Several stylistic devices were identified in the song. The use of different senses of a word was identified where the performer uses the word kīgau (curse) instead of kīrumi in verse 5 which means the same. Wise sayings were also identified such as mūndū wa kūra ndatingaga wa ndūgū (a person who is determined ignores the acceptable norms of behaviour will never listen to anyone). The use of proverbs features in verse 6 where the performer says Njīra ya kūra īgīaga ime kūri mūthenya. This means that some people do not heed calls of responsible and diligent living no matter what you do. The song brings out the fact that the things which people choose in life have consequences that are obvious but people still do not take heed.
Na nosithu tu-ga mu-ndumali-gi-ra-nu sa-ti-te
Na-vu njire-kura ti-gi-ga-mi-me-
na ku-ri mu-tha-
li ni "mo-olu ku-
ra ndiru he-
tu-nga-ga wo-
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N-koo ndo-nga-ta-ga a-ciu-na-kwa ndo-na ngo-so-thu-ra
Na nga-tu-nga-ta a-ndan-la-ru ndo-la ngo-so-thu-

Nd-an-gaugi-ru
Nd-a-na-ku goto kikagun hicka
Ndo-ggae-nda ghi-ta-ka ghi ngi

Ndo-ne-ei-tu-ra
Mwu-ke ai -yi-te tae tu ya cia-ka-ku hitha
No o-rio ku-rie-
Song 4: Machi dogo (small march)

1. Hündi hündi ndonye mucii
   Hündi hündi ndonye mucii
   Athoni akwa kana njokere
   mūhĩrĩgai̱nĩ?

   ...Knock knock I enter home
   Knock knock I enter home
   My in-laws or I
   go back?

2. Tonya mūhĩrĩga
   na uingĩre
   Tonya mūhĩrĩga
   na uingĩre

   ...Come into the entrance
   and enter
   Come into the entrance
   and enter
Mwanake iyũ mwana
mũciare
Ndateyagwo iyai ī yaĩ

3. Ngũmwamba na ngeithi
njuge Wanyua
Njokerere wakia maitũ
athoni
Kanua kega karĩ
ruhĩa rwa njoohi

I start with greetings
I say wanyua
Then I go back how you are
In-law?
Good mouth has
a horn of beer

4. Ngeithi ciaku
nitwaciamũkıra
Wtigue rũū úganiũre
mwarĩ iyũū
Tatua rũū ĕrí kwa
ruũkuwa na thoguo

....Your greetings
we havereceived
Feel comfortable
daughter this
Imagine now you are at
your mother and father

5. Ndarehe mwati iyũū
na harika
Nandarehe giũmbi kĩa njohi nĩ
Kuonania mbũri yanyu iria
yũũri
ũũĩ guĩtũ

....I have brought a male
and a female goat
I’ve brought a gourd of beer
to symbolize your lost sheep
is
at our place

6. Ndingienda athuri moke
mahũũro nĩ ime
Tondũ ndingienda nĩ njũtiũ
mbũri ya ime

....I would not like elders to
be beaten by dew
I would not like to be asked
for a sheep of dew

7. Mũndathime ngathũkũũme
Mũndathime ngathukũme
aciari akwa
Kĩría ndona tũgayanage na
inyũũ

....Bless me I go work
Bless me I go and work
my parents
What I get we divide with
you

8. Kĩría kũmbagia ni
mahũũ tiiyai

.... Compost is made big by
leaves tiyai
The song is about a young man who went to his in-laws to report his having eloped with their daughter. He had gone to his in-laws to take goats which are traditionally accepted as part of dowry and to request for blessing as he goes to work hard in order to bring more goats since dowry is never paid in a day but over a long period of time. He promises to pay the dowry in bits and hopes to complete paying it one day. The in-law cautions him not to forget fulfilling his promise otherwise he will encounter a curse. He then promises that he has written the piece of advice in his heart and will make sure that he fulfils the promise he has made.

The theme highlighted in the song is the importance of members of the community (and especially the young men) of the acceptable way of marriage.
young man referred to in the song had done something that is not acceptable among the Agikuyu. The performer is using this song to discourage this kind of behaviour. The song also brings out the Agikuyu cultural norms and this contributes to the continuity and stability of the Agikuyu culture. The song has been used as a means of transmitting history through education and control of straying members of the community. Such songs were meant to bring about change in behaviour of members of the community. The artist brings out the fact that the community does not approve of marriages where young men just decide to marry without involving their parents.

The performer poetically used dialogue like language where the supposed in-laws are seen to engage in dialogue with the young man in order to pass the message of the song. Repetition was used for emphasis when the performer says ńūndị ńūndị tonyańgire tonya ńgire tonya ńgire. He used words and expressions not in modern use to emphasize such times when these words were in use. An example of this is mbūri yanyu... ńmbūri in this case refers to the daughter of someone.
Song 5: Njeki (Jack)

1. Ngai teithia airitu arīa marĩre thia na ti kwenda kwao
Niguthĩnĩrwo nĩ tumwana turĩa twa bote

   ....God help the girls who ate Gazelle and not choice theirs
   It will be slaughtered for by the boys of forty

2. Makĩrĩa nyama meranage irio (nyama) icio nĩ Nduru mbithari
Nake ūrĩa ungi akamũcokeria ti mbithari ndũrũ ni cumbũ

   ....As they eat meat they sayfood it has a lot of pepper
   And the other one replied not pepper but it is salt

3. Njeki no njeki wakwa múthoni
Niya mútarakwa ndũkaunwo
Ngũũhĩ nayo ya king'ori,
wa kwa múthoni Tondu
ĩno ndũtubagia múndũ

   ....Njeki is njeki of Múthoni
   It is of eucalyptus don't break.
   I will go with this one of kingori,
   From múthoni because this does not rough up somebody

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4. **Gītūmi íthiaga**
aa mwene
Maria, kūria makāreherwo mutwe
na rūa Na matharigo
Makīrwo ūyū nīguo
ūira wakūuiga ni thia
mūrīte

....Because it goes like the owner
after eating they were brought for skin and hooves
They were told this is the evidence that it is a gazelle you have eaten

5. **Amwe makīambirīria kūrīra ariia**
angī magītahīkaga
Gūtīrī wathire na īrrīa ungī

....some started crying and others vomiting
Nobody went with the other

6. **Nacio hūni ciathēkaka geturūrīra**
īkānaga
Niithuī mīamba mīkarabuu
gūthūrī no kuma buremi

....The hooligans were laughing and singing
We are the mīamba mīkarabuu
chest is hard

7. **Cīhūri no gwatūrwo mbaū**
Njeki no njeki wa kwa mūthoni
Niya mūtarakwa ndūkaunwo
Īkīra njeki na ndūkanjokerie
mūgambo
Nengera we nengera kana
ngwūūreitaliani

....Calabashescan produce timber
Njeki is njeki of mūthoni
It’s of eucalyptus not break
Put njeki and don’t return the sound
Give me you give me or I call the Italians

The song is about girls who were refusing to get into relationship with boys. The boys then planned how they could embarrass them and so they killed an antelope for them. When the girls finally ate the meat, the boys laughed at them because they had succeeded in embarrassing them for refusing to accept their proposals. The boys really boasted because they had finally done it. The moral behind the story is revenge. The performer is trying to bring out the fact that some people like to revenge because something was done to them. He discourages members of the community from revenging. Through this song, the artist is able to express the
community sentiments. In this song, the singer is expressing the fact that revenge is not good. One should not hit back at another simply because the person did something unpleasant to them.

The performer used stylistic devices which are characteristic of Agikuyū music in order to pass his message. He used repetition for emphasis when he says Njeki no njeki wakwa Mūthoni emphasizing that Mūthoni belong to him. He also used hyperbole to show how the boys laughed at the girls after they ate the antelope meat without knowing. He says gūtheka iguretūrri ra meaning laughing until one falls down. Sarcasm was also used where some of the expressions in the song mean the opposite of what the performer is saying with an intention to mock. An example of this as identified in the song is cihūri no cia tūrı̈o mbaū meaning it is possible to get wood for building from calabash material.
Song 6: Luba (Rumba)

1. Gükü ndiükaga nį
   Gūciara
gütūmîte njûke
Gükü ndiükaga
nįgūciara
gütūmîte njûke
Ngūcûmîthia rumba mwana aciarwo
Acûnîthagio iri irigû
Ngūcûmîthia rumba mwana aciarwo
Acûnîthagio iringû

....Here I don’t come
   it is giving birth
   which has made me come
Here I don’t come
   it is giving birth
   which has made me come
Give Rumba child
   is given banana
Give Rumba child
   is given banana
The song is about women who went to visit parents of new-born babies. They never wanted a man in their midst and if any went near, they would embarrass them by asking whether he was present when the woman was giving birth. The singer says that such occasions should only be attended by women whose children
are teenagers or adults. The ceremonies are meant to bless the new-born babies. For *tūhī* (baby boys) the *Agīkūyū* ululate 5 times to signifying that *miūthamaki* (a king) has been born. For *tūirītu* (baby girls), they ululate four times to signify that *miūtumia ngatha* (a noble woman) has been born. They sing *gītiiro* or *nāumo* to celebrate the birth of a new baby.

The song brings out the importance placed on the birth of a child among the *Agīkūyū*. They placed a lot of importance on the birth of a baby boy in the family more than that of a baby girl. It was believed that the boy would be the one who carries on the family name after the death of his parents. The boy would also be the one to inherit his parents’ property and not the girl. The singer says *Gūkū ndiūkaga nū gūciara gūtūmīte njūke*. This means that the reason for visiting the said homestead is because a child has been born. He has visited the family to celebrate the birth of a new baby. The performer used repetition to pass the message where he says *Gūkū ndiūkaga .....Gūkū ndiūkaga nī gūciara gūtūmīte njūke* to emphasize the reason why he had visited the said homestead. He also used a tongue twister thereby creating humour in the song and also espousing command of the *Agīkūyū* language in this example *Nyakīnyua inyue yanyua yanyotoka* meaning let the women drink *gīthambio* (the traditional fermented porridge) until they quench their thirst.
King'ori

Accordion

Kuring'aling'a
Clappers

Gu - ku ndiu - ka - ga ni gueia - ra

Gu-tu - mi-te _ nju - ke

Gu - ku ndiu - ka - ga ni gueia - ra gu-tu - mi-te nju - ke

Gi-thambo ni - kiu - mie _ na _ nji - ku - nya i - na mya - ki - nyai - nywe _
U-gwo ni kwo-na-mangatha ya mu-ndu mu-ka ni mjia-re

li gu-ku ndiu-ka - gu ni gu-cia - ra gu-tu-mu-le nju-ke Gu-ku ndiu-ka -
Song 7- *Machi Korathi* (March Chorus)

1. Arata akwa nī nīndoka
   Na ndoka na ngeithi cia
   thayū
   Ndoka ndina thayū múngī
   Nī ndirī úthū na
   Mündū

   Friends I have come
   I come with greetings of peace
   I come with a lot of peace
   Me I don’t have grudge with anybody

2. Úyū nī guo utamaduni
   Nīi ndatigiirwo nī aciari
   Na wahenga walinena mwacha

   This is our culture
   I was left by parents
   And the old said leaving
3. *Cia thenge cieriruo nĩ hĩa*
   *Nacio cia andũ nĩ ruthiomĩ*
   *Arata nĩ ndamũgeithĩa*
   *Nainyũĩ mũngeithĩrie aciari*

   .... For he-goat it was said they are horns
   For people they are sayings
   Friends I have greeted you and you greet for me parents

4. *O mũndũ na mũini wake twambũrũrie utamaduni*
   *No rĩa utari no mũmũinia*
   *Ni athũrũrike arĩ wiki*

   .... Each with a companion his we start culture
   Whoever doesn’t have a partner can dance alone

5. *Andũ a Nairobi ükai tũine undũire*
   *Andũ a Mombasa ükai tũine undũire*
   *Andũ a Naikuru tũine undũire*
   *Andũ a Nyahururu tũine undũire*
   *Andũ a gwitu Nyũrũ ükak tũine undũire*
   *Andũ a Mũrang’a tũine undũire*

   .... People of Nairobi come we sing our culture
   People of Mombasa come we sing our culture
   People of Nakuru we sing our culture
   People of Nyahururu we sing our culture
   People of Nyeri come we sing our culture
   People of Murang’a we sing our culture

The song is about the *Agĩkũyũ* culture and the importance of peace among the members of the community. The singer insists that a people’s culture is very important since it enables a person to follow the footsteps of their forefathers. He therefore urges the people of his community to familiarize themselves with their culture and he also asks them to live in peace with each other. He says that there is a saying in his community that *cia thenge cierirwo nĩ hĩa nacio cia andũ nĩ ruthiomĩ* meaning that people are recognised by their culture and language and so each member should be proud of that.
The artist uses repetition in the song such as \textit{n}\text{d}oka.....\textit{n}\text{d}oka. He also makes use of words which are not \textit{Agikuyu} to make the song more interesting when he says \textit{wahenga walinena mwacha mila nimtumwa}. This means that a person who abandons his culture becomes slave of another. This song is highlighting the traditions and customs of the \textit{Agikuyu}.
Song 8- Mwomboko (eruption)

1. Waigua kiarira igungo
    kiratangathira njorua cia mwomboko
    omundu eharirie Kuri
    macindano me guku
    Mumi namba ime
    akeheo thenge na
    mihiaka akeheo
    Uguo niki kionania munkyaka
    thuaga na mwene
    When you hear it cry it is
    broad casting to experts of
    mwomboko
    everybody get ready there is
    competition
    Singer number one will be
    given a he-goat
    and the bride will be given
    a she-goat
    That is to reflect good luck
    goes with the owner

2. Mumi namba igiri akaheo
    gihi
    Nake mihiaka akaheo
    kiondo
    Uguo niki kionania njamba
    itiganainie mirera
    ....Singer number two will
    get a gown
    And the bride will get a
    basket
    That is to show that heroes
    are not the same

3. Mumi namba ithatu akaheo
    njigwa
    Nake mihiaka akaheo
    gicango
    Uguo niki kionania njata ndiiganaine
    na mweri
    ....Singer number three
    will get a traditional stool
    And the bride will get
    Gicango
    That is to show a star is not
    like the moon

4. Muoka
    ni mukona
    (nii) Kimano wa Mwai
    Njiikiire thiambi ya ngiyo
    O nawe ndakturia ngoka
    iigerie munkyaka waku munkyaka waku
    Mwoka ni mukona
    Kimano wa Mwai
    ....When you come
    you will see
    (me) Kimamoson of Mwai
    wearing a gown of baboon
    Even you I ask you to come
    and try luck yours
    When you come you will see
    Kimamo of Mwai

5. Akiigucia kinanda
    Nirio mugeko
    Kimano wa Mwai
    Agucagia kinanda rendi
    igakengeta ta nganga
    Nayo mihiini ikingaga
    gukinga
    Igakinga ta
    ....Pulling the accordion
    that is when you believe
    Kimamo of Mwai
    Pulls the accordion girls
    scream like sparrow
    And hooligans becomes
    dormant
    They become dormant like
The song was meant for competition where winners would get different prices and as the competition went on, the audience got entertained. This was meant to be a competition between dancers who were good at dancing *mwomboko* dance. Since the dancers perform in pairs, the singer announces that the pair that will become number one will be given *thenge* (a he-goat) which will be for the man and *mwati* (a she-goat for the lady). The pair that becomes number two will get *githii* (a gown) for the man and *kiondo* (a basket) for the lady in order to show that heroes are not the same when it comes to strength. The pair that becomes number three will get *njungw’ a* (a traditional stool) for the man and a *Gicango* (mat) for the lady. He says that this will signify that a star is not like the moon and so what they get is what they deserve. The artist announces that he will also be there for the competition playing his accordion and encourages other people to join in and try their luck. He praises himself saying that when he plays the accordion, girls stand in owe and men are amazed at his prowess. This kind of activity enhanced social cohesion among members of the community. Members get to know one another’s strength and weakness and also establish friendship which strengthens
the social bonds. Members are also entertained as the musical performance is going on. This performance plays the role of providing an opportunity to all members to participate.

The performer used personification by attributing human qualities to accordion. He says *waigwa kīarīra ūguo kīratangatha njorua cia mwomboko*. That is, when you hear the accordion cry, it is announcing that the experts of *mwomboko* are here. The use of wise sayings such as * múnyaka üthiaga na mwene* meaning that one’s luck will never go to someone else. The *Agīkiyū* use wise sayings to educate their members. To exaggerate how the player is perfect in playing his instrument, the performer says *Agucagia kīnanda rendi igakengeta ta nganga* (when he plays, the instrument girls scream and shout with excitement and appreciation like sparrows). Again, he uses simile where he compares two different things when he says *nayo mihuni iṅkīnga ta Ĭrīkīte nī ndutu matende* (the men pose like those eaten by jiggers on the feet).
Munini nambo i-tha-tu a-ka-he-o nju-ng'va na mubsiki a-he-o yi-ca-ngo

Gaon kwa-nia ui yi fana dali-ga-mne na muwe-ri
Song 9- Matore (Prayer)

1. Kiroko tene ni ndokira
   Ninjokagiria Ngai ngatho
   Ni ndona ruoro rilemete
   Ngamenya Ngai no anyendete
   ....Early morning me I wake up
   I give God thanks
   I when see dusk
   I realize that God loves me

2. Kinanda gi̊ki kia muge to niki̊
   kiandikito baibui̊ni
   Niki̊ kiainaga
   na Daudi ri̊ri̊
   aina giria Ngai wake
   ....The pulling instrument is
   the one written in the bible
   It is the one that was singing
   with David when he was
   singing to His God

3. Mbere ya kūr̥ia kana k̥nyua
   Ninjokagiria Ngai ngatho
   Tondû ni njuri niwe mwene
   Hinya wothe ūri mwir̥i wakwa
   ....Before eating or drinking
   I give thanks to God
   Because I know he is the owner
   of all strength in my body
4. Nainyuĩ kĩrĩa nĩ ngũmũhoya  
   Notuikarage twendaine  
   Tondũ maithe ma maithe maitu  
   Matũire mahunjagia wendo  

5. Ithuothe ni tugei  
   thai Thathaiya Ngai thai Ngai  
   wakĩrĩnyaga  
   Wakĩrĩmbirũrũ na kĩanjahũ  
   Thaithaiya Ngai Baba  

6. Ùgĩthiĩ ũthiũ rugsendo rwega  
   Nandũkahingĩrũwo njirainĩ  
   Thũi na wangai na wanyeki na  
   Gĩthuku. Ñio ngo yaku

The song is a prayer of thanksgiving where the singer is saying that he gives praise to Ngai (God) every morning. He acknowledges that it is by the power of God that he is alive. In the prayer, he urges his clansmen to live in peace with one another like their forefathers did. He encourages members of the community to honour their God at all times. He says that the Agĩkũyũ believed that God lived on top of Mt Kirũnyaga (Mt Kenya) and that as a member of community went on a journey, God would send Wangai, Wanyeki and Gĩthuku (some kind of angels) to accompany them and give them protection. He says that the instrument (accordion) he is using to praise God is the same one that was used by musicians like David who are recorded in the Bible. This could signify that the God whom David worshipped is the same one who the Agĩkũyũ worship.

...And you, what I would request is  
We love one another  
Because fathers of fathers ours  
kept preaching love

...All of us let us say  
thai praise praise God  
of Mt Kenya  
of kĩambirũrũ and kĩanjahũ  
Praise God the father

...When you go, go journey good  
and you not be closed way  
Go with wangai, wanyeki and  
Gĩthuku. They are shield of yours
Song 10 - Ni ndaingira (I have entered)

1. *ii no hindi ndaingira niî*
   - *mwangi*
   - *mwanjirire ngoka jūma nīnengerwo*
   - *narua*
   - *Nīnengerwo narua kīrīa*
   - *mūnjīgīre*
   - *Ndīmūtuīre gīathī kīa rūciū*
   - *Mwanjīrire ndōka*
   - *hūni ciakwa*
   - *Ngathīnjīrwo ngūkū ya jogoo*
   - *Ndīnjīrwo narwa niî mwangi*
   - *Ndīngūthīra gīathī kīa*
   - *Joithī*
   - *Wangeci anjītīte*

   ...*ii it is now that i have entered*
   - *Mwangi*
   - *You told me to come on Saturday*
   - *Let me be given*
   - *Let me be given what*
   - *you have kept for me*
   - *I have an appointment for tomorrow*
   - *You told me when I come my*
   - *friends*
   - *I will be slaughtered for a cock*
   - *Slaughter for me quickly I Mwangi*
   - *I cannot miss the appointment of*
   - *Joyce*
   - *Wangeci when she has called me*

2. *Nguoneire rūgongo*
   - *rendi yakwa*
   - *Ungūkūrūka kīanda*

   ...*I saw you from the other side of the*
   - *ridge lady of mine*
   - *As you were coming down*

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I was seeing you.

Lady you are of soko and I am of market

None of us does not sell eggs

There I have touched you my lady

You will feel sorrow and tears

Let us agree my lady

If I miss to fall in the compound

I will fall at the gate with my body

3. Murĩrwo nĩ ìrikũ hũni cia nda yakwa

Mũkomire na nda

rikoinĩ

Mũrathũ nĩ mĩtwe mũgakurũrũka

Mũkagaragara ta cionje

Ndĩmũrũrũte kaingo hũni cia nda

yakwa mwanyua mũtikonie

Ngai nda

Mũririkanage rũrĩa

mũrakena rũrĩa mũratheka

Kũrĩ mararĩra nĩ thĩna

4. Mũhiki nyakairũ nĩaraitire mwana.

Arauga ndari nyondo cia

Kwongwo

Korwo arari mũgĩ mũhiki nyakairũ

Angũramũheire mwũtha

wa ngo ’mbe

... What ate you young men of my stomach

You slept on your stomach in the kitchen

You are going on the head crawling rolling like disabled

I have told you many times that when you drink don’t show God your stomach.

Be remembering when you are enjoying when you are laughing

There are some who are crying because of Poverty

... Lady Nyakairu struggled child

she said she does not have breasts for suckling

If she was bright lady Nyakairu

She would have given the child milk of cow

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Kirimũ ni Kũru kĩerwo

A foolish person is bad when he is
told to cut banana he goes for an
axe and panga.

tema irigũ kĩgĩraga ithanwa na

When told to climb a tree he climbs
banga

with shoes

Kĩerwo haicha mũũĩ gĩkahaicha na

iratũ

iratũ

5. Ndĩmwĩrĩte kaingĩ

.... I have told you many times

hůni ciakwa

my young men

Mũigwa kũhũría mũndũ

Thorn come here a person is

ti waru

not potato

Ningĩ ndari mũigua

again he does not have thorns

ta njëge

like porcupine

Rũŋ no kwaheri hũni ciakwa

Now its bye my young men

Mũkũũĩũra rendi yakwa mũmenyage

As you sing for my lady know

mĩkebe nũ mũngi kũri ikombe

That tins are more than cups

Na mũgũnda mũkũrıũ ūri ūmاثho

And an old garden has harvest

A man had been invited by his friends to their home and had promised to
slaughter a cock for him. When he arrived, he indicated that he was in a hurry
because he had an appointment with his lover called Joyce Wangeci and so in the
song, he is asking them to slaughter the cock quickly.

In the song, the artist flatters his lover by telling her how he saw her from far as
she came towards him. He tells her that they blend well with each other. He is
wooing her for friendship and is hoping to win her love. The song also warns the
young men who drink beer until they have no control over themselves. He tells
them that they should not be ungrateful to God. They should remember that as
they drink and enjoy themselves, there are others who are languishing in poverty. He also talks about a girl called Nyakairu who killed a child just because she did not want the baby to suckle her breasts and adds that this is a foolish girl. He warns the young people and especially girls against engaging in sex since this can lead to pregnancy. He says that when girls get pregnant, they either abort or kill the babies because they are not willing to take responsibility of the child. He is addressing social concerns by pointing out how the young people do things without considering the consequences. He is warning the members of the community and more so the young people against unacceptable behaviour such as alcoholism, sex before marriage and abortion.

Song 11 - Giki kiriro (this cry)

1. Giki kiriro na maithori mwana 
   uri na ithe akiri a thina
   Noria wakuthirie ithe tene
   ariagira metha
   Kahora muno Mwangi nguria
   gikuyu kiaugire aifa
   ....This cry and tears a child
   with father eating poverty
   And the one whose father died a
   long time eating from the table
   Slowly very Mwangi I ask Gikuyu
   said what

2. Giki kiriro muurarira
   Nitud wa giku kia
   mwana umwe
   Gwitu gikuite ngiri
   ikumi na nding tua tondia
   Kahora muno Mwangi nguria
   ....This cry you are crying
   Because of the death of
   one child
   At our place they have died ten
   thousand and I don’t care
   slow very Mwangi I ask

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3. **Gikūyū said what**
   
   .... Because you are calling yourself youths
   
   The numbers for don’t care youths
   
   how do you know them
   
   don’t you know don’t care attitudes
   
   is education
   
   At marara its only three months
   
   At the don’t cares is only nine months
   
   Slow very Mwangi

4. **Mūrītu nī tūrīkanĩre**
   
   Tha mūgwanja ītanagonga
   
   Ndaria kirimī na nyama ngerima na njohi
   
   Kahora mūno Mwangi
   
   Ngūria Gikūyū kīoigire aĩa
   
   .... Lady let us agree
   
   One o’clock before
   
   After I eat the cream and meat and beer
   
   Slow very Mwangi
   
   I ask Gikūyū said what

5. **Ngūgeria cumbī rūtikwenja**
   
   Ndageria igata rūtikwenja
   
   Kai rwenjaga na mūndũ ũngĩ
   
   ũrĩa ndi thabarĩ
   
   Kahora mūno nīgūo rwenje
   
   .... I try salt it is not working
   
   I try igata it is not working
   
   Does it shave with somebody else
   
   when I am on a journey
   
   slow very so that it can shave

6. **Ngūciara mwana agakũhana**
   
   Na ndaciara ũngĩ
   
   Agakũhana
   
   .... I gave birth to a child and it looked like you
   
   And when I give birth to another one
   
   he looks like you
Kai īnjokaga na mūciī rīria
ndī thabarī
Kahora mūno wakinī ûyū

do you enter my house
when am on a journey
Slow very friend this

7. Bomu īrarekirio moyale
Huštie mwana wa itariani
Na nī ngiuga ndingīmūrekia
Ndī wa kwa mbrarū
Tirīrīrīa ndirenda gūthaka

.... A bomb was dropped at Moyale
I touched a child of Italian
And I said I will not let loose
I am of the forces
Hold it I am not joking

8. Ndariire ngūkū ēarī
mbute
Handīi wabandīi arūgamīte
Ngīrīra na ngīnyūrūrūkia
Ngīrīra muoyo-inī ngīmenya
mehia nīmo thīna

.... I ate chicken without being
removed feathers
At place where officer was standing
I cried and tears dripped
As I cried in my heart I knew
sin was the problem

9. Maitū withambe ūgeithanie
Ngeithi ciugaga ndī mwega
Ugakomera riko cokia
gīthūri mata maitū

.... Mother bath we greet each other
Greetings say am fine
You sleep in the kitchen return
saliva on the chest mother

10. Mūndū ērīa ūngūguā ēru nī nī
Niarute maitho ekīre
Mondo
Wona ndarīkia kūhītūkia acokie
maitho make
Mwangi nī thī na thayū

.... The one will feel bad because of me
Let him remove eyes and put
them in the pocket
After I pass let him return
his eyes
Mwangi me go in peace
11. **Ndathire gúcera mūgūnda**

   *Ngōna kairītu ka nyondo inya*
   I saw a girl with four breasts

   *Ndendire kūrara githaka*
   I almost slept in the bush

   *Njūi ni múlaika*
   I thought it was an angel

   *Kahora muno Mwangi*
   Slow very Mwangi

   *Ndutige kura ni muiritu*
   Don’t run away it is a girl

The artist is expressing his concern about the fact that a child with both parents is having problems and yet a child from a single parent is well taken care of. He draws the attention of the *Agīkāyū* to the social responsibility that parents have as far as taking care of their children is concerned. He points out the fact that men leave the responsibility of taking care of the children to the women. They display “don’t care” attitudes but he warns them that it will not be for long. The song is also pointing out the issue of unfaithfulness among married couples. A man is wondering whether somebody else sleeps with his wife when he is not at home. He observes that his wife gives birth to children who resemble the suspected adulterer. He confesses that he is also not faithful to his wife and gives the example of how he touched an Italian lady while working in the forces and was really punished for it. He is an arrogant man who does not care about what other people say about him and he is only interested in women. This song is meant to bring the married couples to the attention that infidelity is not acceptable among the members of the community.
Song 12 - *Nyeki ndirimaga* (Grass does not cultivate)

1. *Nyeki ndirimaga rika riakwa*  
   *Muigwe na ndirimagirwo nī mūndū*  
   *No itukū yonaga ta tochi*  
   *marimū Ikiombora mitambo*  
   Grass does not cultivate my age  
   mate and nobody cultivate it  
   But at night it sees like a torch  
   giants uprooting rails

2. *Ndathire notukū ngicoka*  
   *notukū ta mbono*  
   *yendetie kabuti*  
   *Gīto nī kīru*  
   *kiraragia mūndū njīra-inī*  
   *Marirū ikiombora mitambo*  
   I went at night and came back at  
   night like *mbono*  
   that had sold a coat.  
   A greedy one is bad it makes  
   one sleep on the way  
   Pretty ones uprooting rails

3. *Mūthuri wa itūra ūkūnjīta*  
   *maraya.*  
   *Nīugūcaria wakū*  
   *tūmuone*  
   *Wanjagīra thoni*  
   *Naniindiri thoni*  
   *Njira tūcemanie kīharo*  
   *Marirū ikiombora mitambo*  
   Man of the village you call me a  
   prostitute  
   You will give birth to yours we  
   see him  
   If you do have shame on me  
   even me I haveno shame  
   Tell me we meet in the field  
   Pretty ones uprooting rails

4. *Twaigwo rūgongo reke*  
   *ndimwīre*  
   *Twacokire kianda kūrūina*  
   *Mūikūrūki kianda nīatige egaīra*  
   *mūrū wa ithe*  
   *Marirū ikiombora mitambo*  
   When we were dropped down let  
   me tell you.  
   We went down to dance  
   The one going do let him give  
   instructions to his brother  
   Pretty ones uprooting rails
A man is complaining that he has been called a prostitute by his fellow villagers. He reminds the villager that he might bare a child who might also become a prostitute. He warns the villager that if he continues to disrespect him, he will also not respect him. He emphasises the importance of respect among members of the community. He says that a musician can very easily be called a prostitute because when one gets involved in dancing, the likelihood is that he will not come back home. When dancing is taking place, the artist will be playing the accordion and
showing off his prowess on it and so he gets too engrossed in music to an extent that he can very easily get lost out there.

**Song 13 - Mwomboko ti hinya** (Mwomboko is not difficult)

1. **Mwomboko ti hinya** .... **Mwomboko** is not difficult  
   mwomboko ti hinya no meri na Mwomboko isnot difficult it is  
   kuuna x2 only two steps and bending x2  
   Hi Wairimū rendi Wanjikū Hey Wairimū lady Wanjikū lady  
   rendiWambūi rendi gacungwa Wambūi lady an orange  

2. **Niwe nano haithuru ndiri no ündū menja** .... It is you and me okay I don’t have  
   urī Mwe ga anything major  
   Generari ngūria gustūire atia General I ask how it is  
   hai wairimu rendi wanjiku are you fine  
   rendi wambui gacungwa Hey, Wairimū lady Wanjikū lady  
   Wambūi ladyan orange  

3. **Niwe nano ndīrاغthaithira** .... It is you, and me I am pleading  
   maündu no meri two things  
   Mwomboko ti hinya no Mwomboko is not difficult it is only  
   makinya meri na kuna two steps and bending  

4. **Ngingo yakīrirwo ndīkīraga** .... The neck was said it goes not go past  
   mūtwe the head  
   No mūrimū úyü wa mūkingo But this disease of Aids  
   Ndiūū mūthamaki does not know a king and  
   na ndīū gūtonga does not know the rich  
   kana mūthīni or the poor  
   Hai nū ümagia mūti mathangū Hay, it makes the tree leaves dry
Na honge mîri na gîtina mûrata
And the branches, roots and the bottom Friend

5 Ndonire rendi îmwe îtunguhîte... I saw one lady who was fat
I ndurûme îrî gîcegû Like a fattened ram in the shed
Ngîmenya na ngoro ndûrûme I knew in my heart a ram I will feed
ngatuûra ndaracia after I pay bride price
Thînjagîra nyûmba I slaughter in the house
Hai ngîgathimaga maguuta Hey and squeeze fat out of it

6 Mwomboko ti rwîmbo,... Mwomboko is not a song,
Mwomboko ti ndaci Mwomboko is not a dance
Tûmwana twa boti young men of forty
mwaigua aîtâ what have you heard
Hai ndaciariwro bote Hey I was born in forty I got
ngîrua bote ngihika bote circumcised forty I married forty
ngiciara na bote i gave birth with forty.

7 Njogu nîragûire rûi rwa... An elephant fell in river
Chania Chania
îkiuma kûina As it came from singing
rwîmbo mûrang’a ii song Mûrang’a ii
kwa ndaiga at Ndaiga’s
Hai îröigaga wui múîndu Hey, it was say woi remove
Mûîndute rûi ndigaakue Remove me from the river I don’t die

The song brings out the fact that Mwomboko is not difficult to dance, it is only
two steps and bending. In the song, young ladies are being shown how to dance
mwomboko. Wairimu, Wambui, Wanjiku who are being referred to as gacung’wa meaning “young beautiful girls”, are being shown how to dance and the men showing them are competing with each other in teaching the ladies how to dance mwomboko. The song brings out the issue of the way men compete against each other in order to win women. They are always ready to do anything for the ‘gacungwa’. One man is pleading with a girl to accept his proposal of friendship.

He brings out the fact that many times men go for girls because of their beauty and not character. He warns that when this happens, the men end up contracting HIV/AIDS. When they contract it, it leaves them drained of all their resources and leaves them for dead. He adds that HIV/AIDS affects all whether rich or poor. He says that he saw a lady who was looking very healthy but he was careful not to involve himself with any girl until he got married since that is the only way he would be sure that he is safe from the disease. He tells the young men that he saw a man who had been infected by the disease desperately looking for a way to get cured but it was too late. He gives a comparison of an elephant which had fallen into the river crying out for help with a promiscuous person. This person only realizes his mistakes when he is already in trouble.

Song 14 - Baba (Father)

1. İndirire baba angüranire
   itanathi Mūrang’a
   kwiyananga
   Thogora īteri na githimi nguona
   .....I told my father to marry for me
   before i goto Mūranga to destroy
   my self
   Price without measure I see like

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na ngûhenio

2. Haiya Wambari irigithathi
   rïakwa rïa mbere kwamwana
   Mûrû ndî mûgendi na
   thinacara ïtanakinya
   twigaire kïama

3. Twahunyûkîte ta andû
   moima ithinga
   Tûkiuma ndaci Mûranga
   twina ndaïga
   Tûgikinya kangema twanogete
ta huko

4. Nguku twariire kwa Nyambura ii
   Ndïarî ngûkû yarî mbûri
   Ngûkû twaitaga na
   micakwe iremete rûhiû

5. Haiya ngwîra kiama angûranire
   Itanathîi nyûri kwiyananga
   Thogora ùtarî na gïthimi
   nguona ta ngûhenio
   Wûi nïatia Wanjau mûrû wa
   wanjiru ûkuga atia

6. Wûi kîhiû gikûrû nota ithe
   Ndonire Wanjau macemete
gacungwa mena ithe
   ûkurû nota kigaragaro

I am going to lied to

.... Haiya Wambari first born
of mineyoung man
.... young man am a traveller
and six o’clock before it reaches
we share in the council

.... We had dust like people coming
from plastering
Coming from dancing at Mûranga
with ndaiga
Arriving at Kengema we were tired
like mowls

.... The hen we ate at Nyambura ii
It was not chicken it was goat
Chicken we were struggling with
maize combs it had refused a panga

.... I will ask Kiama to get married for me
Before I go to Nyeri to destroy myself
A price without measure I see like am
going to be cheated
Wûi how are you Wanjau son of
Wanjiru what do you say

.... Wûi a grown boy is like his father
.... I saw Wanjau running after an
“Orange” with his father
old age is like rolling
This is a young man asking his father to help him get married before he indulges in promiscuity in Murang’a where he lives. He is aware that if he is lured into promiscuity, he might end up paying a heavy price for it. The song is bringing out the fact that life in town for a young man who is not married is dangerous since he can very easily be spoiled by the town girls. The song is warning young men against loose morals because they can very easily lead them to engaging into reckless sex encounters which would lead to HIV/AIDs. His father on the other hand is willing to support him. The town women give the young men good things to lure them into relationships. In this case, a big chicken was prepared for the young man by two women. The song likens the chicken given to the young man by these two women with a big goat. They get out of their way to make the young men happy and to confuse them. A big chicken that was the size of a goat signifies their perceived generosity.

They are very generous to men but the artist warns the young men not to be enticed by these women like their fathers are. So the artist warns the young men not to do like their fathers do. He tells them not to keep running after the young beautiful girls since they will end up falling in their trap.

**Song 15 - Kumaka kwa mwanake** (fear of young man)

1. *I mihuni ngwenda mithikiriri* .... Hey boisterous young men I want you
   *ndina kaiindu* to listen I have something
   *ngwenda kuuga* I want to say
   *Nyonete undu wa kugegania* I have seen something stunning

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that I have not seen other time
And know it is stunning my father
woke me up at 3.00
And told me young man open we mix
love

2. Kĩnanda giakwa nĩ ngukwenda
Unduĩte mwana wa
mũthini
Koruo unduĩte wa gitonga
ndiągĩre metha
Mũirũtu ni woiga ūmene
Ngĩmũnuo nĩ andu nĩ
gũthĩna
Nake muhiki no kiriro
mwanjika Atia
Njũkĩte ndi wa icati rĩmwe
iũna nota wonje

... My accordion I will sell you
You have made me a child of a
poor person
If you had made me of a rich man
I be eating from the table
young you have said you hate me
when people hate me because I am
poor
And the girl just crying
what have you done tome
I have come a person of one shirt
poverty is like disability

3. Ngũihoya Ngai anjįtįkįrie maitũ
ndagakue itari ŋa indo
Ngamũthika na mũtharaba na
indo ta cia comba
Kibindo giakwa nyegenyuka
ndikuona ngirotu manyira
Kibindo ndiąguriire nyama baba ti
gitonga

... I pray God not to allow my mother
not to die before I have wealth
I will bury her with a cross and
thing like of Europeans
My sword move I have seen myself
being sneared at
Sword I did not buy for meat, my
father is not rich
4 Miika üyũ wakwa angĩgathũka
Ndikooria mündũ ngoria baba
nũwe wangũrũire thekeni ngari
igũita üiro
Kuuma gũciarwo na kũigana ndiri
ndariria müka wene
No üyũ woiga ni athira
Thoni ningucuna wanga
No üyũ woiga ni athira
thoni
Ni ngũmuora ruoro

.... My wife this if she ever got spoilt
I will ask my father
who bought mesecand had car that
pours oil
From birth to maturity I have never
talked to somebody’s wife
But this one says she has finished
shame I will burn starch
But this one says she has finished
shame
I will brand her a mark

5 Ndonire thũa mucii mũrang’a
Njagite münde wa Kündeithia
Tiga Kinyaunu muru wa Mwangi
wanũrũire tonya
Akĩnjiũra kingori nĩasũa wonũo ta
ũmakite
Ngũmũira ndina thina muno
ndiri na mundwari
Nake akiŋjiũra ndũkũmakate
tuonaniũre nawe

.... I saw poverty at home Muranga
I missed somebody to help me
Only Kinyaunu son of Mwangi
told me to enter
He told me Kingori why do you look
like you are worried
I told him I have a problem I don’t
have somebody to take me
He told me not to worry as long as
we have met

6 Ndakigucirie mucii gwitũ mũng’ei
ũkĩragatha maito
Mbía ciatũmitie ciũmbane
Ciaṭhekeire thiũna
Rũkũngũ rũnene rwonirwo
rwatubia ũũria tunini

.... I pulled it at home the young ladies
twitched their eyes dry
Rats were quiet ready to woe
they laughed for poverty
A big cloud of dust was seen which
draw the small ones
A young man is telling his agemate what has befallen him. He says that a man who is the age of his father knocked at his house at 3.00 am and wanted to get in and sleep with his wife. He says that he is a poor man and adds that what has made him poor is his accordion which does not give him enough money. He believes that if he was rich, he would not have been rejected by a girl he had approached for friendship. He brings out the fact that more often than not girls marry men because of what they have. If you are poor, they reject you since they first look at what you have in terms of wealth. He points out that the only reason why he is being rejected is because he is poor. He says that he really would not like his mother to die before he gets rich because he would love to accord her a decent burial like the rich do *ngamūthika na mūθaraba na indo cia comba* (I will bury her in civilised manner).
He complains that the wife he has is not his choice and that if his wife will ever become wayward, he will blame his father since he is the one who made him marry her. He complains that his wife is shameless. She is promiscuous even though he has been faithful to her by not sleeping with somebody’s wife. He warns the adulterous wives against this vice. He gives his experience about how he sees women behaving whenever they go to see him playing the accordion. They treat him like a priest who is baptizing people who are willing. They are usually quiet and attentive in admiration and recognition of his competence in playing the accordion.

**Song 16 - King’ori nǐaingīra** (King’ori has entered)

1. *Tondū King’ori nǐaingīra*  
   *cīana no icokio na mīgongo*  
   *Noūria ūkūrīra athaithwo*  
   *akire nāina ūndū ngūgweta*  
   *Tondū kiambūrīria kūrīra*  
   *Mwenā wa athuri ūgwatio tawa*  
   *Tūtigatukanirio njohi na mūthaiga*  
   .... Because King’ori has come let children be put on the backs  
   And the one who will cry soothe them  
   To stop I have something to say  
   Because when it starts to cry  
   The side of men be lit a lamp  
   So that our brew will not be mixed with charms

2. *Tondū ciakinya thinacara*  
   *Ūtatuite*  
   *mūriyo ni ethiīre*  
   *Tūtigīrwo ici nemakūhīa irī na wīra wacio*  
   .... Because if it reaches 6.00 o’clock  
   The one who has not picked  
   Sweet potato vines let them go  
   We be left with these hard cores  
   They have their own work
3. Waigua múthůri cůthů cůthů
Nůwa käng’ei akiuna ndůnyů
Atigire mbůri cia múrůme
itari na mirogo

....When you hear múthůri cůthů cůthů
It is for Käng’ei who is from the market
She left goats of her husband
without sweetpotato vines

4. Múthuri withambe ona yaitiio
nůnyů miředwo ni
Túrendi
Nůndů wa itina cia kahů na
ibuko ria bengi
Na wa twendi üti ütari múka
arůme mbembe
Akirůriie,
můaka yake nů míhiůku ya
kwaria na rendi

.... Man bath even though it is poured
It is you who are being admired
by the youngladies
Because of the coffee trees and the
bank book
And of 28 without a wife to
eat maize
He should be patient
His years of talking to
a lady is gone.

5 Tondu muraigwa gakimuna
Ndakoire ndungu
kagwite
Huhágůriie na tůnyama
Ngůriite o Gakindů
Ngůgatemania na twa nguthu
Kegaire andů ao

.... Though you hear her insulting me
I picked her from the market
when she had fallen
Resuscitating her with pieces of meat.
Which I bought at Gakindu
I will put her down
She leaves will to her relatives

6 Nůt King’ori tondů mwanonya
Ndacambůrůrůrwů Můrang’ů
Můng’ei ügůtůnůha maitho
Rendů múgůwanja ikihehana

.... Me King’ori even when you see me
I was attacked in Murang’ů
Ladies eyes became red
Ladies seven whispered
because of me

7 Kimwana watura Nairobi
wahenererio na thikati
Rendi ni ciagayanirĩo ũgakora
mathuro
Kimwana inũka ũkahikanie
Rangi wa mwiri ũtanathũka
Rangi wa mwiri nduguragwo ta
rangī wa iratu

... Young man you have lived in Nairobi
you were cheated by skirt
Ladies were shared you will find
leftovers
Young man go back home and marry
Before your polish gets spoilt
Polish of body is never bought like
polish of shoes

The song draws the attention of the members of the community because there is
something the singer would like to bring to their attention. He tells the story of a
woman who has abandoned her responsibility of taking care of her husband’s
goats. She has abandoned her husband, left and went to the market and she always
returns home late in the evening. On other hand, the song also draws the attention
of the people on how old men are lured by young girls into love affairs. The girls
run after them because of the coffee plantations they own and also because of the
fact that they have money in their bank accounts. He is pointing out that the girls
are no longer interested in the young men since they do not have the kind of
money they are looking for. The young men of 28 years are being warned that
their time for getting a lady to marry is going fast since the young girls are going
for older men.
The old man gets lured into marrying a young girl but is later heard complaining how the girl is insulting. He says that the girl has forgotten the state in which she was in when he picked her. He says that she was weak and emaciated but the old man has taken care of her until she is strong and looking beautiful. He is determined to discipline her since she is now his wife. The song also warns young men who have lived in Nairobi not to accept to be cheated by the girls living in towns. He encourages them to go back home before it is too late and marry otherwise they will find leftovers.

**Song 17 - Cokia Murango** (shut the door)

1. *Cokia Mürango na*
   - ühinge na itī
   - Cokia Mürango na
   - ühinge na itī
   - Kwanyu Njeri
   - Ndukanyoona ringi
   - Kwanyu Njeri
   - Ndukanyoona ringi
   - .... Return the door and you
   - close with seats
   - Return the door and you
   - close with seats
   - At your home Njeri
   - you will never see me again
   - At your home Njeri you
   - will never see me again

2. *Künyararithia kūri*
   - andū a itūra
   - Kūmenithania na
   - andū a maitū
   - Nikio ndoigire kwanyu
   - Ndigacoka
   - Nikio ndoigire kwanyu
   - .... You have made people in the
   - neighbourhood to hate me
   - you have caused hatred between
   - me and my siblings
   - That is why I said at your place
   - I will not come again
   - That is why I said at your place

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Ndigacoka

3. Cokia mūrango naihinge
   na iti kwanyu Njeri
   ndūkanyonya ringi
   I will not come again
   .... Return the doors and close with seats at your home Njeri
   you will never see me again

4. Ukimenithania na
   ciana ciitū
   Ukimenithania na ciana ciitū
   Nokimenyaga ni thakame yakwa
   .... you made me collide with my siblings
   And you knew that is my blood
   And you knew that is my blood

5. Reke njikare itari mūnyendi
   Reke njikare itari mūnyendi
   Munyendi wakwa no Ngai mūnyūmbi
   Munyendi wakwa no Ngai mūnyūmbi
   .... let me stay without a lover
   let me stay without a lover
   My love is only God my creator
   My love is only God my creator

6. Wakinya kwanyu ìthii wire
   andū anyu
   Wahika okūria úrũhika nyirũ
   kana mīrũ
   Nīi Mwangi ndigakūria
   kūria.
   .... When you arrive at your home tell your people
   Wherever you get married Nyiri or Miru
   I Mwangi I will not ask you any question

7. We ūrũ irigū ritarũ ikūrũ
   Kana ichungwā ritakeerua
   Itunda ūthī ūiyure ūgagatu
   .... You are a banana that is not ready
   Or an orange that will never ripen
   A raw fruit that is full of sourness

8. Icembe ríanakigĩa magecha
   .... A jembe if it becomes blunt

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In this song, the artist is singing about a man who is complaining bitterly about the conduct of his wife whom he has already chased away. He says that he will never go for her because she has embarrassed him and has also caused hatred between him and his siblings. He says that neighbours have hated him because of her character and behaviour. He vows that he will never go for her and complains that his wife has disregarded the facts that his siblings are his blood brothers and sisters. He says that he would rather stay without a lover than be with her. He compares her with an unripe banana or an orange that will never ripen to mean that she is of no use to him. He also says that she is like a raw fruit that is full of sourness. He gives the example that when a farmer uses a jembe that is blunt, he gets blisters on his hands but a bright farmer does not accept working with such a jembe. This is why the singer has decided he cannot continue staying with such a woman because she is a pain in the neck. The song is expressing the importance of a woman to accept her in-laws and the people she interacts with where she is married because if she does not, it causes conflict between her and her husband.

**Song 18 - Twagutuma ruraya** (We have sent you abroad)

1. *We kimwana*        .... You young man
   *twagutuma ruraya*     we have sent you abroad
   *Ugatugirire ndingirii ruraya* You get for us a degree abroad
Ya gukuria bururi witu Kenya
To grow our nation, Kenya

2. Wariganïirwo nïki we kïmwana?
... Why did you forget young man?
Twaðiï tene
When we went long ago we
twaðiïaga gïtaha
went to hunt
Mündï akainïkïa indo icïo kïrï
Somebody would take the things to
andï ao
his people

3. Ukihenererio nï mïago
... When you are lured by the joys
ya rïraya
of abroad
Ya múcheru ya aïrïtu a nyakeru
the white girls the white
Na ithuï aïtu a Kenya njerï
And us our girls of Kenya new
tïkamaroria kï
will take them where
Anyïkaru mena gïthomo na
Of the black have education and
ndïngirïíi nïyingï
many degrees

4. Ugïcïuka nïdege
... When you alighted from the plane,
tïwaruïngïi kïwanja
we were standing off the ground
Ndingirïíi yakï tïtïianona
Your degree we did not see
mïriï wa Wairïmïï
son of Wairimu
No Muïritu wa mbarï ya
Only the daughter of the house
nyakeru
of the white

5. Mwanyïtanïïte moko mïri naake
... You were holding hands with her
Mukiranaga haru haru
telling each other hello hello
donïri
darling
Mbere ya aciari ndariï ni
Before the parents darling
kuuga atïïa?
means what?
The artist is talking about a young man who was sent abroad for studies. The boy is being reminded that he has been sent there to get a degree for his country Kenya. He is reminded that the degree will be of benefit to his country. The song compares his going for studies with the way a member of the community and especially a man would go out hunting and at the end of the day, came back home with something for his people. The young man is told not to forget that he is going abroad to get education in order to finally use it to help his people when he
comes back. He is warned against being lured by the lifestyle abroad and by the white girls. He is told to remember that there are girls in Kenya who are waiting to get married to Kenyan men.

The song narrates what happened after the young man came from abroad. His people were waiting at the airport with expectations but to their amazement, they never saw the degree. They only saw him with a white girl holding hands telling each other hello hello hello darling. This was to their amazement being done in front of his parents. He reminds the young man that education is not education without the acceptable morals. Love is not love if it is given carelessly and to everyone because according to them, he was being careless. The song highlights how members of his community were disappointed by this behaviour and also the things he brought back from abroad. He is told to return the money they contributed for him when he was proceeding abroad with interest. The song is meant to warn the young men who proceed for further studies abroad to remember that the country looks on them upon their return to serve the country. Parents also expect that they will come back to the country to marry Kenyan girls. The song suggests to young men the importance of marrying back home and that the education they get is for the benefit of their people and their country.

Song 19 - Mami Wangari (Mother Wangari)

1. Mami Wangari mwikeneri .... Mother Wangari the happy one
   ndukarire don’t cry
   Tondu nii ngakuuma na thoome Because I will come by the gate
Mami Wangari uri ganirwo ni
Mathina

2. Twanyitirwo nį thigari nyingi
Cairi nyingi cioimite
na rūgūrū
Na iria nyingi ciacio ciumite
Kahuro-ini.

3. Nitwanyitirwo na tugikagio na
nja ta mabuthu
Mami Wangari ni anyitirwo nį tha
cia úciari
Akūria thigari kai
ciara ciaka atia
Waho ni mumu umite ruraya kwa
ngatha
nyakeru
Waho ugtite manyitwo na
mathamio

4. Twathiyanga ndehūgūra na thutha
Ngiona mami Wangari no ararīra
Ngihoya rūtha njarie nake
hanini
Ngirwo ndingiaria nake
ndī korokoro thī-inī

Mother Wangari you forget
problems

... We were caught by many policemen
They were many they had come
from the West
and many of them had come from
Kahuro-ini

... We were arrested and were
being throw outside like prisoners
Mother Wangari was caught by
mercy of giving birth
She asked the soldiers “what have
the children done?”
Order has been released it has
come from the virtuous woman
of the white
The order says they be caught and be
Detained

... As we went a bit I look back
I saw mother Wangari still crying
I ask for permission so that I could
talk to her for a while
I was told I cannot talk to her
I am in custody inside
5 Twaraire theero
  tükërökio
  igoti-ini
  Haïkoti thïni gü tài ri na kïëria
  Ni miaka mugwanja na iboko
  ikumi na inya
  Njeera naivasha ngïñïna
  miaka itano
  ....We slept in the cell
  in the morning we were taken
  to court
  High court inside was no question
  It was seven years and strokes
  fourteen
  Prison Naivasha I finish
  five years

6 Wa gatandatü ndanînïire Kamîtì
  Wa múgwanja ngïñïnïra
  kïng’ong’
  Njerekeire gwîtû
  Mûrang’a
  Njera icio ciothe
  ndiarîyaga kîndû
  No maaï ma cuumbi
  na mútî kîraikû
  .... The six one I finished at Kamiti
  The seventh one I finished at
  Kïng’ong’o
  As a was being taken back
  to our home Mûrang’a
  All those prisons I was
  not eating anything
  Only water with salt and
  a stick of snuff

7 Rûgano rûrû ngûkûganìra
  maitû
  Njera icio ciothe
  ndiarîyaga kîndû
  No maaï ma cumbî
  na mútî kîraikû
  .... This story I will narrate to you
  mother
  Prison all these
  I was not eating anything
  Only water with salt and
  stick of snuff

8 Hiti nî nyamu nono
  ciarie güthûgû
  Ciâmeririie tïrî wa
  bûrûri wa Kenya cikiûrïra
  .... Hyenas are animals but they
  can speak English
  They swallowed the soil of
  Kenya and finished it
Ikiuria ng’ombe ni yaii?
They asked whose cow is it?

Ciathiigiinire mütwe nginya
They ate from the head to the tail

mütong’oe

9 Tuoe mahindi
.... We take the bornes and put them together

tumacokaniririe
A miracle be performed

Kìama kìringwo mündü igwitwo
a person called ofsoil

wa tìiri
Be proud at ours we be calling

Eting’urie gwitu tìmwitage
him of Kenya

wa Kenya

Ndígu cia ngüiri
Brothers of the firewood is

nìguo Kinyattaaugaga
what Kenyatta used to say

10 Mìuhuhi coro ndooke
.... The coro blower should come and blow quickly

ahuhe na ihenya
We take the pot so that we can have a feast

Tükioe nyìngü nìguo tìgie
The white when they come

na iruga
they bite the fingers saying

Nyakeru mooka
Give us a small piece Kenya

makíríage twara makoiga

Tütígire Kenyìu Kanini Kenya

In this song, a son is telling his mother to take heart because he will come back and take care of her. He narrates how he and other young men were arrested by very many policemen who had come from the West. He says that they were treated like prisoners after being arrested. When his mother saw how the young men were being treated, she was struck by sorrow and asked the soldiers what
young men had done to deserve such harsh treatment. The soldiers said that order
has been released by the queen to arrest and detain the young men.

His mother watched in pain as the young men were being taken away. The young
man turned back and saw his mother Wangari still crying. He asked for
permission to have some time to talk to his mother but was denied. They were
taken to the cells where they spent the night and in the morning, they were taken
to court where each one of them was sentenced to seven years imprisonment and
fourteen strokes. The young man spent 5 years in Naivasha prison, the sixth in
Kamiti and the seventh in Kig'ong'o. He says that while in prison, he ate
literally nothing except salted water and snuff. He tells his mother that the reason
for him narrating the story is so that she may understand that hyenas are animals
but there are those who can speak English. This is meant to liken the colonialists
with the hyena. He says that the colonialists swallowed the soil of Kenya and ate
her cows from head to tail signifying how the colonialist destroyed this country.
He urges Kenyans that even though that happened, they can pick up the bones and
put them together and start afresh because a miracle has been performed and that
now they are able to rule themselves. They can now be proud of their country and
the colonialists will be amazed at the strides they have taken.

Song 20 - Kuraya ni kuru (Far is bad)
1. Kūraya nī kūru angikorwo nī nīī
   ndahuta āguo
   ....Far is bad if it is me who is
   hungry likethat

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It is me hungry like that and of my mother issmelling in the granary
It is me hungry like that and of my mother has no one eating

Chicken leaving muthaithi market and goes home to crow
Me I come from dancing at forty I go home to cry

The one that pick with a beak does not picks for another
That is why I am telling you when you catch do not let go
It flys with what it swallowed

What ate me that I went to be wooed and I accepted
I agreed and saw the sheet being cut the sleeve
I thought it was a joke the cloth of prophets as it came

Mother asked me if I have become mad? because you have come and committed a crime
And me I told her mother of mine don’t askme
A young man is narrating his suffering while he has been far away from home. He is lamenting that he is going hungry away from home and yet at home there is plenty to be eaten and since there is no one to eat it. He says that when a cock is brought from the market, it immediately starts to crow. Yet when he goes home after work, he goes to cry of hunger. He compares human beings with birds when he says that birds only pick for themselves with the beak and not for others. Likewise he says that when one gets a catch, he should not let it go because that is the only way one is able to get what belongs to him. He regrets why he had to go
far away from home but he now realizes that he has put himself in a problem. When he finally decided to go back home at the age of forty, he took a young girl whom he made his wife. He does not care whether she was much younger than him. His mother was really embarrassed by this action and his age-mates also wondered why he had decided to marry a young girl who cannot even carry water from the river. He says that he does not care about their opinion but he will stick to his choice and his decision to marry her.

Song 21 - Rugano rwa Agikuyu (The story of the Agikuyu)

1. Ruru ni rugano rwa
   miithiri wetagwo
   gikuyu na mutumia wakeumbo
   Nao maikaraga
   mukurwe-ini wa nyagathanga
   Nao maciarire airitu kenda
   .... This is a story of a man who was called Gikuyu and his wife Mumbi
   And they were living at mukurwe-ini wa nyagathanga
   And they gave birth to nine girls

2. Miithuri ucio wetagwo Gikuyu
   niiahikirie mutumia mwega
   Akumuciarira
   airitu acio kenda
   magiikara mendaine
   Gikuyu niaciarire Wanjiru,
   Njeri, na Wairimu
   .... That man called Gikuyu married a good wife
   She gave birth for him those nine girls
   they stayed loving each other
   Gikuyu gave birth to Wanjiru,
   Njeri and Wairimu

3. Miithuri ucio niendete kirma
   ona kuriithia mburi nyingi
   .... That man loved cultivating and also taking care of many goats
This is a story about the origin of the Agikuyu. The artist tells of Gikuyu and Mumbi, his wife who are believed to be the parents of all the Agikuyu. The song points out that the couple gave birth to nine daughters who are also believed to be the origin of the nine clans of the Agikuyu. Gikuyu and Mumbi lived together in peace and love. Gikuyu was a farmer who loved cultivating and herding many goats and was a hardworking man in order to provide for his family. When he gave birth to the nine girls, he named them Nyambura, Wangari, Wanjiku,
Wambūi, Wangūi, Waithīra, Wanjirū, Njeri and Wairimū. The artist is asking the Agikūyũ to always appreciate Gikūyũ and Mūmbi as their forefathers. The song is encouraging the members of the community to stay together in peace in their families and as they do that, they will be emulating their forefathers. The song brings out the importance of a family unit among the Agikūyũ and the fact that the man is the provider in a family setting. It also brings out the importance of family members living in peace and in love with each other as Gikūyũ and his wife Mūmbi did.

Song 22 - Mūthenya Ùmwe (One day)

1. *Mūthenya ūmwe ni kwaurire*
   - *mbura nene*
   - *Itura-ini rimwe mwena wa*
   - *Murang 'a*
   - *Kwa Mūthuuri wetagwo*
   - *Ndirangū*
   - *Ni gwaciariirwo kana ga kahiī*
   - *Njahi ikirīo na gikiugwo*
   - *Ithano cia kahiī gakīrathimwo*
   - *Gakīrwo konge na*
   - *makai merī*
   - ... One day it rain
   - heavy rain
   - In one village
   - in Mūrang’a
   - In a place of a man called
   - Ndirangū
   - It was born a baby boy
   - Black peas were eaten and five
   - were said of a boy to bless
   - He was told to suckle with
   - both cheeks

2. *Nayo nyakīnyua īrīa yakīrī ho*
   - *Ikiuga kūngū mūthamaki nīakīnyà*
   - *Gūtiri mūndū woī ati kahiī kau*
   - *Gagakua gakīrūira īrī witū*
   - ... And the old women who were there
   - They said praise a king
   - has arrived
   - Nobody knew that the boy
Kahī kau nī gakūrire na

gakigimara

Karī na ụcamba na ụgī mūngī

Njūgūma njega yumaga o ikihrīro

He will die fighting for our soil

The boy grow and

became mature

With bravery and wisdom a lot

A good club comes from the root

3. Nikwerirwo atī ndegwa ikīrīndwo

Ti itherī andī aitū ndiregaga

rworwo

Niinyirirwo na agīkio

njera

Emuohe moko na magūrī

Thūngū cia muonaga

ikahīria mitwe

Ikoiga atuirwo na

atuirwo narua

Ciamenyia ńrīa acionetie

nganga mbute

...It was said that bull whenfalling

Surely it do not refuse

to be tethered

He was caught and thrown into

prison

Being tied hands and legs

Europeans when the saw shock

their heads

They said he be sentenced

and sentenced fast

When they know how he had

shown them Nganga mbute

4. Tondū wa kuga atī ni

tūkwiyatha

Nīwekirirwo watho wa wīhūge

Na tondū wa Kwenda rūrīrī rwao

Andū makirutīra kwīgīīra

Mūthamaki nīatongoririe ita ciitū

Atarī na guoya na nīnundu ūcio

nimamwendete

Mamwītanga

njamba ya ita

... Because of saying

we shall rule ourselves

We were put instruction of be alert

And because of loving their tribe

People volunteered to defend

The king led thebattalion

Without fear and because of that

they loved him

They were calling him

cock of battle
This is the story of a boy who was born in one of the villages in Murang’a. People in that village celebrated the birth of this boy and as it is the custom of the Agikuyũ, they pronounced five ululations to bless and welcome the boy. Women praised him and said he would eventually die fighting for his country. As the boy grew up and matured, he became brave and had a lot of wisdom. Later in his life as an adult, he was arrested by the Europeans and thrown into prison for saying that his people shall rule themselves. They tied his hands and his legs and they said that he should be imprisoned. Members of the community volunteered to defend their country led by the said king after he came from prison. They loved him because of his wisdom and courage so they called him the warrior of battle. As a result, young men left their homes, parents and children in order to fight for their country. The song points out that the freedom that is enjoyed in the country was achieved through sacrifice and courage. The artist reminds members of the community the importance of being patriotic and that what the said young man did for his country should be a lesson to all.
1. **Riria müküría na mükünyua**  
   *Mukiguraga matoyota*  
   *Mucio nding'uri macindici*  
   *nyumba ya Mumbi*  
   *Hürira tindo magürü mayo*  
   yokire na Jomo kinya  
   *Harambee- eeh*  
   *Harambee- eeh*  
   *Ee harambee yokire na*  
   *Jomo Kínyata*  
   .... When you eat and drink  
   And buying toyotas  
   And the rich mercedeze house of Mumbi  
   Drive the chisel these footsteps  
   came with Jomo Kenyatta  
   Harambee-eh  
   Harambee- eeh  
   Ee harambee came with  
   Jomo Kenyatta

2. **Mikawa yaari ya Nyakerü**  
   *Migunda yaari ya Nyakerü*  
   *Mümenyage ati ní Kínyata*  
   *na mütiigairi' witü ti Dedani*  
   *Kimathi*  
   *Hürira tindo, Hürira tindo*  
   *mguru mayo mokire na Jomo*  
   *Kínyata*  
   .... Hotels were for the whites  
   Land was for the whites  
   Be knowing that it is Kenyatta  
   and late ours Dedan  
   Kímathi  
   Drive the chisel, drive the chisel,  
   the legs of came with Jomo Kenyatta

3. **Riria kimathi witü akuire**  
   *Akírúra wiýathi witü*  
   *Ngong 'u nginya ngaríbatura*  
   *Mwangi na Irúngü*  
   *Gíkíyü na Mumbi Makiuga*  
   *Hururu tindo, Hürira tindo*  
   *maguru mayo mokire na*  
   *Jomo Kínyata.*  
   .... when Kimathi ours died  
   Fighting for freedom ours  
   Ngong upto Galbatura  
   Mwangi and Irúngü  
   Gíkíyü and Mumbi said  
   Drive the chisel, drive the chisel,  
   the legs of came with  
   Jomo Kenyatta
4. **Twathii**

    *Renjikoo*
    
    *twerirwo afia*
    
    *Twerirwo makinya no meerë*
    
    *Nitüküheo mithenya üumwe*
    
    *Nyumba ya Mümbe*
    
    *türirikanage Kímathì*
    
    *Hûríra tindo, Hûríra tindo*
    
    *maguru mayo mokire na Jomo*
    
    *Kînyaata*

    .... When we went to legislative council we were told what steps are only two We shall be given one day House of Mümbe we be remembering Kímathì
    
    Drive the chisel, drive the chisel, the legs of came with Jomo Kenyatta

5. **Ngümûtiga na Kiugo gìkî**

    *Iragwo yarî iria*
    
    *yakua*
    
    *Mûririkanage kímathì na njamba ciitû*
    
    *gûtiri*
    
    *gitatûirie kìngî*
    
    *Hûríra tindo, Hûríra tindo*
    
    *maguru mayo mokire na Jomo*
    
    *Kînyaata*

    .... I will leave you with this word It is told that it had milk when it dies Be remembering Kimathi and heroes ours there is nothing that cannot support another
    
    Drive the chisel, Drive the chisel, the legs of came with Jomo Kenyatta

The song is a reminder to the members of the Agîkîyë community that as they eat and drink and buy cars, they should remember that these things were made possible for them by Jomo Kenyatta and others who fought for independence. The song reminds them that hotels and land were for the whites before independence.

The artist points out the fact that it is Kenyatta and Dedan Kimathi who fought for them. He says that Kimathi died while fighting for the freedom of his people. He
fought from Ngong up to Garbatura. He explained that that is why there is a day set for remembering those who fought for the freedom they now enjoy. He encourages people to be remembering Kimathi and all the other heroes.

**Song 24 – Uka ngūnie** (come I dance with you)

1. **Wanene niko kau goku**
   
   Mwangi nī ngenega mūno
   Wanene rūria gakūrūgwo
   Kamūruco nyendaga
   gakūnwo
   Kamūruco īī
   Mwangi ndūke ngūnie
   ūrerire nyukwa
   ndūinagio

   ....Wanene is there coming

   Mwangi I am happy very
   Wanene when it is being jumped
   Kamūruco I like when it is
   being sung
   A trouser īī
   Mwangi comedance with you,
   you told your mother
   that no one dances with you

2. **Wanene gūkei tūkaine**
   Kamūruco kendetwo ni
   andu othe
   Nginya twana natuo kamūruco
   No airtūt ungenagā makīna
   Rūu anake ūkai tūine
   kamūruco
   Mwangi ndūke ngūnie
   Ūrerirethoguo
   ndūinagio
   Ndirona ta ndarogirwo ngūna
   Mwangi ndikarogoreka
   Wandora ndarwarire mūrū
   Mwangi ngithīūrūka ta bunda

   ....Wanene lets come lets go and dance

   Trousers is lived by
   all people
   Even children also kamuruco
   But girls am happy when they dance
   Now young men come and dance trouser
   Mwangi come dance with you, you
told your father no one dances with you
   I see likel was cursed when dancing
   Mwangi no one will remove the curse
   When you see me lam sick bad one
   Mwangi I going round like a donkey

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I don’t know when I will get well.

3. **Wanene ndũnyũ ya wagura**
   *iraküigire nguku*
   iramakia andũ
   **Wanene rekei ndũ mwũre**
   kagamba mũraiga nũ cimba
   Marahingwo nũ ithukũ
   makiura
   No mũirũtu ūmwe araiga nda
   ngũra atige kamuruco gakiinwo

   ... **Wanene market of wagura**
   It crowed a chicken it 
surprised people
   **Wanene let me tell you**
   it crowed they said it is a lion
   They were trapped by stamps
   as they ran away
   But one girl said she cannot run away
   and leave kamuruco being danced

4. **Wanana nakuo kuu gwitu**
   kuronekanyoka ya inyanya
   **Wanana nay o ìkïmakia andũ**
   ìkïhûrwo na mahiga ìgïkũa
   **Wanana ìgîcinwo na mwâki**
   naguo mûhu wayo ìgïkio rũũ
   **Wanana rũũ nũ mwãkïgnu̩a**
   kamuruco

   ... **Wanene at that place of our was**
   seen asnake of eight
   **Wanene it also surprised people**
   it was beaten with stones it died
   **Wanene it was burnt with fire and its**
   ashes were thrown in the river
   **Wanene now you have heard**
   Trouser

5. **Wanana gwitũ kwĩ rendi ūmwe**
   ìnu nyondo inyanya ṭungimĩona
   **Namo maitho maigana ta**
   ndongu
   **Magũrũ mahana mũkwanjũ**
   **Wanane rekei ngamione**
   **Ndikenaga rũũa itamiỌnete**

   ... **Wanene at ours is one girl**
   Has breasts eight if you see her
   And the eyes are the size of a
   **ndongu**
   And the legs are like walking sticks
   **Wanane let me go and see her**
   Am not happy when I do not see it
This is a man who is inviting young men and women to join him in dancing *mwomboko*. He particularly invites a young lady called Wanene to go and dance with him because according to him, she told her parents and grandmother that no one ever invites her for a dance. He encourages the girls to get into the arena saying that whenever he sees them dance, he is usually very excited. He adds that his love for music is so much such that he compares himself with a sick man who does not know when the sickness will end. He also gives the story of a chicken which crowed on a market day and people thought it was a lion which had come to attack them so they ran away. A girl called Wanene who was there decided that she will not run away like the rest did. A big snake was also spotted in the same market and people were afraid. It was stoned to death, burnt and its ashes were thrown into the river. The singer praises Wanene for not being fearful and says that he admires her courage.
CHAPTER FIVE

MUSICAL ANALYSIS OF COLLECTED SONGS

5.0 Introduction

The chapter sought to analyse the musical structure and textual content of the songs recorded during fieldwork. First, the chapter discusses the musical structures of the 9 transcribed songs followed by the thematic analysis of the song texts of all the 24 songs translated in Chapter Four. The music was analysed in order to bring to the fore:

- The musical attributes of the mwomboko songs.
- The textual themes (content) inherent in mwomboko.
- The role mwomboko music plays within the socio-cultural setting among the Agĩkũũyũ.

5.1 Musical Analysis

The musical analysis of the transcribed mwomboko songs concentrated on the melodic, rhythmic and structural attributes of mwomboko.

5.1.1 Melodic Phrases

The study noted that there were melodic phrases which were repeated in the same way they appeared when they were first introduced. At times when a phrase was repeated, one or two intervals varied. This was likely because of the tonal change of different syllables in the new texts and the increase in the number of syllables in the new texts. Variations in speech-tone therefore, created rhythmic variations and melodic adjustment. Speech-tone had a coniderable influence on the mwomboko melodies since patterns of speech affect the melodies if they have to be intelligible. This means that for a melody to convey an intelligible message, it should as much as possible correlate with the speech-tone of its texts. It should as much as possible assume a motion similar to the tonal movement of the texts.
Melodic phrases tended to move stepwise and in ascending or descending movement. See Figures 5.1a bars 68-70 and 5.1b 188-190.

Figure 5.1a: Melodic Phrase

Figure 5.1b: Melodic Phrase

Certain syllables are omitted in some of the mwomboko lyrics in order to fit the lyrics into the rhythmic character of the song. The study noted that even though the syllables are omitted, the meaning of the word was not lost. This means that musical rules surpass linguistic rules in setting lyrics to music. Examples of this were identified in songs such as song 2 bars 48-50 Ḳ̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̣̅
5.1.2 Melodic Intervals

The choice of intervals greatly depended on the texts for which the melody was written. As noted earlier, texts melodically intoned wrongly can change the intended meaning of the words. Akuno (1977) notes that the natural tonal inflection of texts causes the melodic intervals to rise or fall in order to conform to the natural tonal character of the syllables in the texts. A rise or fall in speech-tone is largely accompanied by a rise or fall in melody. It is, therefore, possible that the melodic movement of the analysed songs has been influenced by the melodic contour of the texts that are in the songs. Nketia J (1963) notes that ascending or descending melodic movement of the Ghanaian music within a given phrase is guided by the pattern of low (\(\text{low}\)), high (\(\text{high}\)) or mid (\(\text{mid}\)) tone in the corresponding verbal text. Where a high speech-tone occurs, the accompanying melody generally begins on the high tone of the tone-row on which the song is based. In respect of Nketia’s observation the study noted that the ascending or descending melodic movement within the phrases of the transcribed songs dependend the patterns of low (\(\text{low}\)), high (\(\text{high}\)) or mid (\(\text{mid}\)) tone. Where the the pattern was low- high, high-low or mid- low in the verbal text, the melody reflected the same in its choice of melodic direction or interval direction. See Figure 5.2 from song 3 bars 37-40.

Figure 5.2: Melodic Intervals
The intervals in the songs appeared both ascending and descending. There is frequent use of small intervals between 2nd and 5th. Use of intervals of unison, a 2nd and a 3rd were much more prevalent in the songs and were used either ascending or descending. According to (Nketia 1963), the organization of intervals is guided by interval patterns or preferred melodic contour and the intonation pattern of words and phrases. Based on this observation by Nketia, the study noted that the intervallic ranges of analysed mwomboko songs agree with the speech-tone patterns of the texts necessitated by the adherence to the tonal inflection of the texts. The melodic contour of the analysed songs indicates that it was determined by the structure of the words as they are used in order to bring out the intended meaning. Other intervals used were 6th, 7th and Octave which were used sparingly. Table 5.1 shows the frequencies of intervals used in the analysed mwomboko songs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Unison</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>Octave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Frequency of identified intervals

5.1.3 Pitch and Melodic Range

Pitching depended on the singer's voice range. Most of the songs that the study analysed were pitched between A below middle C and the upper E on the treble clef. The songs start midway between the highest and the lowest tones and then move down or up in compliance with the tonal inflection of the syllables of the
texts and finally goes to the pitch at the end of the song. The ending notes are generally within the middle and lower range. The last notes of the final phrases are approached from the note a 2nd or 3rd below. Table 5.2 shows the beginning and ending tones while Table 5.3 shows the melodic range of the analysed songs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Starting note</th>
<th>Ending note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Beginning and ending notes of the analysed songs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Melodic range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Machi ndaihu</td>
<td>F-D‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ndongomothi</td>
<td>F-E‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gǐthĩna</td>
<td>A-C‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Machi ndogo</td>
<td>A-E‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Njeki</td>
<td>B-E‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rumba</td>
<td>D-B‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Machi Korathi</td>
<td>E-E‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mwomboko</td>
<td>E-E‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Matore</td>
<td>E-E‘</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Melodic Range

5.1.4 Melodic Embellishments

In the course of the analysis, the study identified a number of melodic embellishments. The following melodic embellishments were used:

1) A slur was used in the songs to connect pitches on texts with more than one pitch to them. An example of this was found in song 1 bars 13-18, song 5 bars 25-37 and song 6 bars 5-10. See figure 5.3 from song 1.
2) Ties were also used in the songs in both the voice and instrumental parts where one pitch note was held over long period of time. This was mostly used in the instrumental part where the accordion played a note and held the note over several bars. This was evident in songs such as song 1 bars 69-72, song 2 bars 19-24 and song 8 bars 124-126. See Figure 5.4 from song 2.
3) Ornaments like the appoggiatura were used to expand the melodic range of the song. An example of this was in song 6 bar 122. See figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5: Appoggiatura

5.1.5 Compositional Device

The following compositional devices were identified:

Sequence –This was identified in song 4 bars 40- 42 and song 6 bar 6. See figure 5.6

Figure 5.6: Sequence
5.1.6 Instrumental Accompaniment

Although the songs are sung in unison, they are accompanied by the accordion and karing’aring’a. The accordion creates harmony by playing chords. The accordion part is characterised by leaps and the use of both long and short notes. See figure 5.7.

![Accordion Your browser does not support inline SVG](image)

Figure 5.7: The accordion part

The karing’aring’a played a constant rhythmic pattern in most of the songs. Strict rhythm was derived from the presence of a fundamental pulse which was articulated by the karing’aring’a as shown below in figure 5.8.

![Karing'aring'a Your browser does not support inline SVG](image)

Figure 5.8: The karing’aring’a part

5.1.7 Scales and Tone Rows

The scale systems used in the analysed mwomboko songs are varied. Most of the songs used the pentatonic scale. The pentatonic scale was identified in song 2 with tone rows of B C F G A, song 3 with rows of A B C E F, song 6 with tone rows of A B D E F, song 8 with tone rows of E F G B C and song 9 with tone rows of A B C E F. See figures 5.9-5.13.
Hexatonic scale was used in song 7 with the tone row of A B C D E F as shown in figure 5.14.
Tetratonic scale was applied in song 4 with the tone row of E A B C as shown in figure 5.15.

Figure 5.15: Tetratonic scale – key note E

Heptatonic scale was used in songs 1 and 5 with the tone row of A B C D E F G as shown in figures 5.16 and 5.17.

Figure 5.16: Heptatonic scale – key note A

Figure 5.17: Heptatonic scale – key note A

5.1.8 Mwomboko Structure

The structure of the analysed mwomboko songs is made up of solo with an instrumental accompaniment consisting of kĩnanda kĩa múgeto and kaĩng’ang’a. Solo singing is characteristic of the Agĩkũyũ according to Mwaniki (1986), and so mwomboko utilises solo singing with instrumental accompaniment. The solo parts are separated by instrumental interludes in the songs. Repetition was used in the songs as a way of expanding the songs. The study noted that at times the solo part was shorter than the instrumental accompaniment and at times the accompaniment was longer. In most of the songs, the study noted that the solo part came in with different texts each time it was repeated. The melody remained the same only with slight changes but there was a considerable textual development in that new texts were brought in each time. In the structure, the solo parts interchange with the accompaniment.
5.1.9 Rhythm

Rhythm is the characteristic patterns of music involving the organization of time. It shows the durations of sound and silences contained in a piece of music. The rhythmic patterns of the transcribed *mwomboko* songs remained almost the same even when singers brought in a new melody. However, when new texts were introduced, rhythmic motifs changed depending on the word syllables. A variety of notes formed the various rhythmic patterns identified in the analysed songs. The rhythmic patterns controlled phrase lengths in all the songs. Most of the analysed songs consist of short notes basically quavers, semiquavers and dotted notes. Notes of shorter values were used where the texts is continuous. The use of notes of shorter durational values as the basis of movement enabled the songs to have metric organisation. The study noted that the use of short note values was given more eminence to that of the long note values. The most dominant rhythmic patterns identified were those given in Figure 5.18.

![Figure 5.18: Dominant Rhythmic Patterns](image)

Syncopated rhythms characterised most of the songs. This was because of the relationship that exists between text and music of the *Agíkūyũ*. The accented syllables in the text influenced the arrangement of the note values used in the songs. The position of the accented word syllables in the text influenced the arrangement of different notes. The rhythmic patterns in figure 5.19 were identified.
i) 

\[ \text{Figure 5.19: Syncopated Rhythms} \]

Singing alternated with the instrumental accompaniment specifically the accordion. The instrumental accompaniment at times played when the voice rested. The duration of each instrumental interlude depends on the discretion of the soloist who is also the accordion player. He brings in another section when he is ready to do so. This actually made the song longer. An example of this is in song 6 bar 13-18 as seen in figure 5.20

\[ \text{Figure 5.20: Vocal and Instrumental Alternation} \]
In other cases, the instrumental accompaniment played the first part of a bar and voice part came in after that. The reason would have been because of the natural accentuation of the lyrics used in the song at the part of the beat in the first bar. An example of this was found in song 7 bar 85 as in figure 5.21.

![Figure 5.21: Instrumental and Vocal Parts](image)

The analysis revealed that the phrase length differed from one song to another. Some of the songs had phrases of 4 bars throughout the song like in the case of song 3 (Githina) and song 6 (rumba). See figure 5.22.

![Figure 5.22: Phrase Length](image)

Other songs were found to have a combination of phrases where a song had phrases of four bars with occasional three, five or seven bar phrases.
Table 5.4 is a summary of phrase types identified in the analysed songs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase length</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 bar phrase</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bar phrase</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 bar phrase</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 bar phrase</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 bar phrase</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4: Phrase Lengths

5.2 Textual Analysis

5.2.1 Thematic Content

For any art work, language lies at the heart of effective communication of the intended message (Obaga, 2004). It is with this in mind that artists have poetic freedom to manipulate language in order to bring out the intended message sourced from the occurrences in society. Arising from this fact, it is imperative to mention that songs are arts works out of whose medium is language. Thus, the employment of language in song may mirror the daily activities in the society in a language that is rich in wise sayings.

Music among the Agikuyu is closely linked with social functions and activities. The songs are a means of expressing the community’s inner feelings and aspirations that result from daily experiences. Agikuyu songs centre on everyday life experiences, Agikuyu traditions, beliefs and customs. The songs are intended for entertainment, praise, warn, exhort or inspire the audience. The analysis of the song texts in the mwomboko songs revealed that each song was based on a single theme, which expressed the performer’s personal and social life experiences, Agikuyu traditions, beliefs and customs.
The analysed mwomboko songs revealed the presence of a number of themes. The themes tend to rotate around matters of common interest and concern to the members of the Agiküyü people. The songs portrayed themes based on the use of poetic images conceived in proverbs and wise sayings. One of the themes evident in the analysed mwomboko songs covered land issues like in song 1 where the importance of land ownership among the Agiküyü is brought out.

The theme on children and the importance placed on the birth of a baby was also evident. When a baby boy is born, the Agiküyü ululate five times to signify that mūthamaki (a king) is born and four times for a baby girl to indicate that mūtumia ngatha (a virtuous woman) has been born. The Agiküyü tradition placed a lot of importance in the birth of a baby boy in the family more than that of a baby girl. It was believed that the boy is the one who would carry on the family name after the death of his parents (song 6). Song 11 expresses the responsibility that parents have in bringing up and providing for their children. He especially points out that the Agiküyü men tend to leave that responsibility to their wives an issue which the singer discourages since the responsibility is for both parents.

Religious themes are also dealt with in mwomboko songs as in song 9. Belief in Ngai (God) and in the ancestral and departed spirits was the fundamental basis of life among the Agiküyü. Any person who lost his faith in the religious beliefs of the Agiküyü ceased to be a member of the community and became an outcast.
Religion held the families together, united the inhabitants of every village and gave them cohesion that was essential to them.

Social concerns are also dealt with in song 2 where the singer highlights the importance of working hard in whatever one does. The song encourages members of the community to work hard and gives as an example of a person who was rewarded after taking care of his parents without giving up. In song 3, a young man was cursed by his parents after stealing their title deed. The song warns against stealing and reminds the members of the community about their cultural beliefs and practices. In song 4, the importance of a man following the acceptable way of marriage rites is expressed.

Alcoholism, sex before marriage and abortion are themes addressed in the mwomboko songs. One such song is song 10 which warns the young girls against engaging in sex before marriage since it leads to abortion. They abort the pregnancies because they do not want the babies to suckle their breasts. Young men, on the other hand, are being warned against alcoholism because when they become alcoholic, they are not able to take responsibility of their lives. Songs 13, 10 and 14 address the theme of promiscuity among men and women. They point out how men are attracted to young ladies (tiichungwa) because of their beauty and not morals. They end up contracting HIV/ AIDS because of having many sexual partners. Young men especially those who work in the urban areas are being warned of this danger and are encouraged to go back to the village and
marry. Old men, on the other hand, are being cautioned against being lured into love relationships by young girls. Such girls are usually only interested in the money these men have in their bank accounts and the coffee plantations they own (song 17).

Theme on traditionally planned marriages is brought out where parents get wives for their sons. This kind of marriage is being discouraged since more often than not it does not work. The marriage is not founded on love and so whenever problems arise, the young man blames his parents. This theme has been addressed in song 15.

Adultery amongst the old men was captured in song 16 where young ladies lure old men into love relationships not because of love but the money and the coffee plantations the old men own. The men are cautioned since they end regretting having involved themselves with these kinds of women. They are reminded that these women will only drain them out of their money and then disappear.

The theme on women who are trouble shooters is brought out in song 17. These women are being compared with an unripe fruit which is sour or a blunt jembe that causes blisters on hands. She embarrasses her husband and causes hatred between him and the siblings. The husband is hated by neighbours because of her. The song abhors this kind of woman and says that one would rather remain a bachelor than marry such a woman.
The theme on the importance of education was addressed in song 18. Young men who go abroad for further studies are advised that the education they get should be used to build their country. The song warns the young men who proceed for further studies abroad to remember that the country looks forward their to return to serve it. Parents also expect that they will come back to the country to marry Kenyan girls. The song suggests to young men the importance of marrying back home.

The theme on the origin of the Agikuyū is dealt with in song 21 where the Agikuyū are being reminded that they originated from Gikuyū and Mumbi. The nine clans of the Agikuyū came from the nine daughters of Gikuyū and Mumbi. The Agikuyū are encouraged to live together in peace like their forefathers did, work hard in everything they do and remember that the man is the provider of the family.

The theme on the struggle for independence and patriotism is brought out in songs 22 and 23 where the members of the community are told about how the people who fought for their freedom were selfless. They were imprisoned by the colonial government but they never gave up since they were ready to fight for their people. Mzee Jomo Kenyatta and Dedan Kimathi have been cited as some of the freedom fighters who fought for independence. Members of the Agikuyū are reminded to always celebrate these people on public days set for the rememberance of the freedom fighters.
5.2.2 Idiomatic Expressions

The analysis of the text in the transcribed *mwomboko* songs revealed that there are songs whose meaning is oblivious to all as they refer to contexts in which they are sung. Other songs are intelligible to only a limited audience due to the use of a variety of stylistic devices. The following devices were identified in the course of the analysis:

1) **Repetitions**- This device was used for the purpose of emphasis in order to capture the listener’s attention. This was evident in song 1 *Thenga thenga mūhrīga norīa múhūthū ateng’ere auge* (let us move fast and let the one who can run faster than the others say). Song 2- the word *Ndongomothi* (a fool) is repeated throughout the song to emphasize the fact that a foolish person will always be misused by the rich.

2) **Hyperbole** is another stylistic device identified in the songs. Where the singers deliberately exaggerated some figures of speech for effect as seen in song 1- *ndakagīe ūkīngū* an over statement meant to exaggerate the crucial place the singer holds in family, *gūtheka igitūrūrīra* meaning laughing until one falls down an exaggeration of how they were happy. The whole of song 8 is an exaggeration how the player of the accordion is perfect in playing the instrument.

3) **Wise sayings** were also identified in songs such as song 1- *mbūri ya kīama nī ndīttīte* meaning I have done all I should have done as a member of the community. Song 2- *njagūti no rwambū* meaning that a rich man can only
accept your service as long as you are strong. Song 3-ymbūkaga na kīrīa īmeretie and mūndū wa kūra ndatūnga wa ndūgū. Song 7-cia thenge cierirwo ni hīa nacio cia andū nī rūthiomi meaning that people are recognised by their culture and language and8- mūnyaka ùthiaga na mwene meaning that a good fortune will always get to the intended person.

4) Proverbs have also been used in the mwomboko songs. Thcia thenge cierirwo ni hīa nacio cia andū nī rūthiomi meaning that people are recognised by their culture and language. Singers used well-known sayings that expressed a truth and offered advice. These sayings carry hidden information that requires analysis and interpretation to get the meaning. Examples of songs which had proverbs are song 1 where the proverb ūgwati ndūrī njamba. This proverb has the literal meaning that no one is able to avert an accident but the actual meaning is that one needs to be careful for one may not know an accident may occur.

5) Dramatic language- The use of dramatic language was also identified in song 1 where the words kamwenī gakageria (let anyone try) and song 2 Gīkīyū kiugaga njaguti no rwambū (Agīkīyū say that a servant must be strong) were used in form of oral presentation.

6) Soliloquy- This was evident in song 2 where the song made use of language that reveals what is in the speaker’s mind when the words ndaire ngīnyua (I drunk the whole night) were used.
7) *Satirical language* was also used where irony and humour interplay to produce a ridiculous effect. An example of this was identified in song 2 where it says *ndongomothi īkinyagwo īguo īguo* meaning a foolish person is stepped on like this.

8) *Pun* - This was identified where songs made use of humorous words that have more than one possible meaning. The use of some of the words in the analysed *mwomboko* songs can be interpreted in more than one way thus interplay of meaning. For example *ikīnūra* in song 3 which could mean to eat or to peel and *kūgucia* in song 8 meaning playing or pulling depending on the context.

9) *Ellipsis* - This was identified in song 2 where one word or more from a sentence were omitted, especially when what was omitted can be understood from the context. The song leaves out some words at the beginning of this line *cia Mūrang'a...* it is assumed that the meaning will be understood from the context.

10) *Use of dialogue like language*: A representation of dramatic features was used in song 4 where the song is presented in form of a dialogue between two parties. An example of this is *hūndi hūndi ...tonya ūingēre* (one knocks at the door and the other one responds by welcoming him in).

11) *Use of lexical deviation*: This was identified in song 4 where the song used language that deviates from the norm in terms of lexis. In this case, the lexical deviation is that of ‘Archaism’ where the use of words and
expressions are not in modern use *mbūrī yanyu ūrī gwitū* (your goat is with me referring to a daughter) to emphasize such times when these words were used.

12) **Use of tongue twisters**: This was identified in song 6 where a singer uses the following words *nyakinyua īnyue yanyua ya nyotoka* were used to add value to rhythm and humour in the song and therefore, espousing command of the language.

5.2.3 Socio-Cultural Role of **Mwomboko**

The analysis of the texts in the transcribed songs revealed a variety of socio-cultural roles played by mwomboko music. Mwomboko music plays the role of emotional expression among the *Agīkūyū*. The songs provide a vehicle for expressing ideas and emotions which may not be expressed in any other way. These may be either individual or collective, such as expressed in songs 1 and 3 which could be a reflection of the emotion shared by the whole community. They express issues which already exist in the experience of the community therefore confirming that they exist. They confirm certain norms of behaviour and bring members of the community together to express common sentiments. The messages embodied in the mwomboko songs are impressed more firmly in the minds of the members of the community.

The Agīkūyū used mwomboko music as a channel for social protest since the members of the community had been deprived of other avenues for expressing their emotions. The music represented an attempt by members of the community
to express their feelings about the colonial rule and the oppression that was experienced during the colonial rule as expressed in songs 19 and 20. The music was also used to ‘let off steam’ and also to articulate community sentiments. *Mwomboko* has, therefore, been used by the *Agikuyu* to release emotions when one finds himself in a particular situation.

*Mwomboko* music plays the role of entertainment and recreation. The songs are meant to remove people’s minds from worries and problems and instead feel relaxed. This way, the songs offer grounds for enjoyment; personal satisfaction and relaxation. The way the dancers do various movements is entertaining in itself. *Mwomboko* music is therefore performed during occasions such as public holidays, weddings, political rallies and social gatherings where entertainment is part of the programmes. *Mwomboko* also has aesthetic qualities which are brought out by the gracefulness of the various movements and the expressiveness of the music displayed by the dancers. Notable is the march style in which the dancers move in a moderate tempo in regular steps on the beat while their bodies are positioned upright like matching soldiers. One is able to enjoy, feel and appreciate various actions in the dance. This is because of the uniformity in the dance and the orderliness of the movements in terms of recurrence of the same or modified actions which are produced as a result of following some rhythmic patterns. *Mwomboko* communicates direct information to the community through the artists who are able to express community sentiments. The songs are used to communicate and educate the *Agikuyu* on political (song 22), social (songs 16, 17,
18) and emerging issues such as HIV and AIDS (songs 5, 13 and 14), girl-child education and the new constitution.

*Mwomboko* also plays the role of social control through direct or indirect warning to erring members of the community, teaching the *Agikuyu* about life and the correct way of doing things. Members are warned and instructed on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within the community. The singer tries to express to the members of the community what he cannot say to a member face-to-face. He chooses to express the social norms through song. This way, the singer has freedom to express thoughts concerning the dos and don’ts of the community and also comment on issues which could be going on among the members which are not acceptable. This was captured in songs 4, 10 and 11.

*Mwomboko* music also contributes to the continuity and stability of the *Agikuyu* cultural norms. The songs are used as a means of transmitting history through education and control of straying members of the community. The songs are meant to bring about change in the behaviour of members of the community. This is expressed in song 4 and 21. Justification of religious system is also done through *mwomboko* music where the *Agikuyu* articulate religious principles. Members of the community acknowledge God in all their endeavours. Worship is, therefore, part and parcel the *Agikuyu* social life. Song 9 expresses the use of *mwomboko* as channel of worship to Ngai (God).
CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction
The objective of this chapter was to underscore the main points emerging from the previous chapters and to have an overall summary of the statement of the problem, objectives, assumptions, literature reviewed and the methodology used in the research. Conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

6.1 Summary
The focus of the study was to analyse the content and style of mwomboko music genre to determine factors that have contributed to the survival of mwomboko among the Agikuyu. It featured an analysis of the song texts and the musical elements found in the mwomboko music. The analysis of the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko in context of the Agikuyu music traditions. The analysis of the textual content of mwomboko to expose the meaning of the messages it embodies. To determine the role mwomboko play within the socio-cultural settings among the community. To establish factors that have contributed the survival of mwomboko among the Agikuyu.

The assumptions were that Mwomboko is not a traditional Agikuyu music genre but has stylistic attributes that are associated with Agikuyu culture. The messages embodied in mwomboko are useful in establishing its significance among the
Agikuyu. As a neo-traditional genre, it has aspects of Agikuyu culture for it to be accepted by the Agikuyu. Mwomboko has important social cultural functions among the Agikuyu hence its continued existence within the culture. The continuous existence of mwomboko among the Agikuyu has been influenced by certain unique aspects that have distinguished it from other neo-traditional genre.

Literature review was done to obtain information on what has been expressed by other scholars on the issue under study. This involved a review of existing material on mwomboko and general indication of scholarly line of thought and statements about mwomboko music from proponents who have studied other aspects of mwomboko music and general information on African music. The study also reviewed literature that discussed traditional music found in the various Kenyan communities, the role played by new music genres that emerged during the colonial period, the fact that African music has borrowed aspects of other traditions either extensively or in small degrees among others. The review of literature enabled the researcher to make inferences in relation to the mwomboko music genre in order to determine the factors that contributed to its survival.

This study was based on the theory of syncretism as advanced by Manuel (1988). The theory of syncretism states that it is the process through which elements of at least two or more cultures are blended. The process of syncretism thus exhibits the borrowing and exchange of musical elements from a cultural group that a society is in sustained contact with. The study used this theory to analyse the
content and style of mwomboko music among the Agikuyu by examining the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko, the textual content. Determine the aspects of Agikuyu traditions that characterise mwomboko. Establish the socio-cultural roles of mwomboko. Determine the factors that contributed to the survival of mwomboko.

The field study was carried out in Murang'a County of Central Province. Murang'a as a field study was considered due to the fact that it is one of the earliest places where mwomboko began. The study involved data collection, transcription and analysis of mwomboko songs from Murang'a.

Descriptive design was used to obtain important information concerning the factors that contributed to the survival of mwomboko. The target population included members of the three dance troupes sampled, namely; Mukangũ, Kangema and Kamune. These dance troupes consisted of the soloists, dancers, instrumentalists. Key informants, elders versed with mwomboko history, cultural officers in Murang'a cultural office and former mwomboko dancers were among the target population.

The methods used in the study were qualitative and quantitative. The study used purposive sampling to pick key informants who had the required information and experience related to mwomboko music. Random sampling was also used to obtain equal representation of both men and women into the sample size and snowball sampling was used where the identified respondents helped in
identifying other respondents. Twenty-four songs were selected for analysis where 9 of them were transcribed in order to establish the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko. Data collection instruments included interview schedules, questionnaires and observation schedules. The questionnaire was used for obtaining important information. It contained questions appropriate for getting the desired responses from the respondents concerning the role played by mwomboko and the textual content. Interview schedule was used to collect information concerning historical and developmental aspects of mwomboko. The observation schedule was used in order to enable the researcher to record what was observed during data collection.

The research equipment used was a tape recorder, still camera and writing material. These enabled the researcher to record the data from the field. The song texts were translated from Agikuyū language to English and musical transcriptions were also done. The musical analysis included that of the melodic structure, rhythmic organisation, instrumentation and form. Textual analysis included that of thematic content, idiomatic content and social cultural role of mwomboko. This information was useful in discussing aspects of Agikuyū music that characterise mwomboko.

The structure of the analysed mwomboko songs is made up of solo with an instrumental accompaniment consisting of the accordion and karīng'ang’a. The songs are characterised by melodies which adhere to the speech-tone which had a
considerable influence on the melodies since patterns of speech affect the melodies if they have to be intelligible. The rhythmic patterns of the transcribed mwomboko songs consisted of short notes basically quavers, semiquavers and dotted notes and syncopated rhythms.

The study found out that mwomboko themes tended to rotate around matters of common interest and concern to the members of the Agikuyu. The themes evident in the analysed mwomboko songs covered land issues, children and the importance placed on the birth of a baby boy, worship, political issues, and especially importance of working hard, among others. The study also found that the songs played the roles of emotional expression, entertainment and recreation, informing the members of the community, social control through direct or indirect warning to erring members of the community and transmitting the history of the Agikuyu, among others.

### 6.2 Conclusion

Mwomboko soloists compose appealing tunes to convey contemporary issues which are relevant among the Agikuyu. The songs discussed embody messages which are important within the socio-cultural setting of the Agikuyu. The messages conveyed make meaning to the people and address issues which affect them such as HIV/AIDS, prostitution, patriotism, among others. The accordion is the most dominant instrument yet western, has been adopted and adapted not just to speak Gikuyu language but also the ability to speak to the Agikuyu in salient
ways. The metal ring is used in mwomboko performance to provide percussive accompaniment to the dance, to control the formations, pace and tempo of dancers.

The textual analysis of the various mwomboko songs revealed that mwomboko song texts are used to educate, warn, express community sentiments and enforce conformity to social norms of the community. The songs cover a wide range of both contemporary and cultural issues which are useful in maintaining the Agikuyu culture. Mwomboko songs survived among the Agikuyu since they are able to incorporate contemporary issues in their texts.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the summary and conclusion drawn from the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made for the purpose of further studies.

- A similar study of neo-traditional genres from other communities which emerged during the colonial era can be studied for purposes of comparison.
- The present study was conducted on mwomboko music in Murang'a County. Similar studies could be undertaken on mwomboko music in other districts in Central Province which have not been covered.
- There is need to study mwomboko music performed by the Agikuyu pop musicians.
- There is need for further study to be done on other aspects of mwomboko music which were not the object of this study.
• The adaptation of *mwomboko* music into the Christian church music.

• The development of *mwomboko* music since its inception.
REFERENCES


Bertok, B. & Albert B.L. (1951). *Serbo-Croatian songs*: New York:


LIST OF INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

King'ori wa Mwangi- Leader of Kamune dance troupe 20th June 2008
John wa Nyambura- Dancer Kamune dance troupe 20th June 28
Ndaiaga Muchiri- Dancer Kangema dance troupe 28th June
Mwangi Murefu - Dancer Kangema dance troupe 20th June 2008
Lazaro Maina- Dancer Kamune dance troupe 20th June 2008
Florence Wangari –Kamune dance troupe 20th June 2008
Julia Wangari- Kangema dance troupe 28th June 2008
Gaitho- Dancer Kangema dance troupe 28th June 2008
Mūrīthi- Dancer Kangema dance troupe 28th June 2008
Kihonge- Leader Kangema dance troupe 28th June 2008
Hunja - Dancer Kangema dance troupe 28th June 2008
Wangeci -Dancer Kangema dance troupe 28th June 2008
Kabura - Dancer Kangema dance troupe 28th June 2008
Wambugu- Dancer Mūkangū dance troupe 16th Nov. 2008
Elijah- Dancer Mūkangū dance troupe 16th Nov. 2008
Njuguna -Dancer Mūkangū dance troupe 16th Nov 2008
Waigwa -Leader Mūkangū dance troupe 16th Nov 2008
Wambui Maina- Dancer Mūkangū dance troupe 16th Nov 2008
Nellius Wa Mwangi – Elder 20th June 2008
Wanjiku- Dancer Mūkangū dance troupe 20th June 2008
Githaiga -Dancer Mūkangū dance troupe 18th May 2008
Waititu- Dancer Mūkangū dance troupe 28th May 2008
Wahome Dancer- Mūkangū dance troupe 12th April 2009

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Christopher Kariuki 10\textsuperscript{th} Jan. 2010

Charles Michigo 10\textsuperscript{th} Jan 2010

Wanjiru Wa Githere 16\textsuperscript{th} Jan 2010

Irene Ndang’atha 20\textsuperscript{th} Jan 2010
APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE MEMBERS OF DANCE TROUPES.

Dear Respondent(s),

I am undertaking a study on “The analysis of content and style of mwomboko music genre among the Agikuyu”. Please answer the following questions to enable me to reach a fair judgement. All information will strictly be treated confidentially and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Tick appropriate answers or fill in your opinion where applicable.

1) Name of the dance troupe

2) Sex of the respondent
   Male ( )   Female ( )

3) Number of years you have been performing in mwomboko
   - Up to 5 years ( )
   - 6 to 10 years ( )
   - 11 to 15 years ( )
   - 16 to 20 years ( )
   - 21 to 25 years ( )
   - Over 25 years ( )

4) What is your role in the group/ troupe?
   - Soloist ( )
   - Instrumentalist ( )
   - Performer ( )
   - Group leader ( )
   - Artist ( )
   - Other ( ) specify

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5) In your opinion do you think *mwomboko* incorporates any aspects of Agikũyũ music traditions?

Yes ( )  No ( )

a) If yes tick from the list below:

- Instruments
- Dance styles
- Traditional tunes
- Costumes
- Vocal techniques
- Style of performance
- Others Specify

b) If no explain

6) From the answers given above specify your answer in each category.

- Instruments - eg Kĩgamba, njingiri etc
- Dance style -
- Traditional tunes -
- Costumes -
- Style of performance -

7) In your opinion do you think *mwomboko* incorporates any aspects of contemporary music.

Yes ( )  No ( )

a) If yes tick from the following
Use of popular music tunes ( )
Harmonization of voice parts ( )
Use of instruments ( )
Dance styles ( )
Others ( ) Specify ________________________

8) What role does *mwomboko* music play within the Agikuyu community?

Entertainment ( )
Communication ( )
Enforcing social norms ( )
Political campaign ( )
Education ( )
Worship ( )
Others ( ) Specify ________________________

b) If no explain______________________________

9) On what occasions is *mwomboko* performed?

Wedding ceremonies ( )
State functions ( )
Political rallies ( )
Worship service ( )
National celebration days ( )
Administrative barazas ( )
Cultural music festival ( )
10) Why do you think the Agikuyu perform mwomboko and not any other community. Because it is: -

- Contemporary ( )
- Both contemporary and traditional ( )
- Traditionally Agikuyu ( )
- Its neither traditional nor contemporary ( )

11) In what setting is mwomboko performed more?

- Contemporary ( )
- Traditional ( )
- In both contemporary and traditional ( )

12) Why do you think mwomboko has remained a genre confined to the Agikuyu?

13) Who perform mwomboko?

14) What messages are embodied in mwomboko song texts?

15) Who creates the text for mwomboko?
APPENDIX 11

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

Date of interview -------------------------------------------

Time -----------------------------------------------

Place -----------------------------------------------

Name of informant---------------------------------

1) Briefly explain the origin of *mwomboko* under the following: -

   a. When did *mwomboko* emerge?

   b. Who started it?

   c. What was the reason for its emergence?

   d. Why is it called *mwomboko*?

2) In which traditional occasions is *mwomboko* performed?

3) For how long have you known *mwomboko* to exist?

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4) What are some of the contemporary aspects of music found in mwomboko?

5) What are some of the Agikuyu music traditions found in mwomboko?

6) In your opinion do you think mwomboko will continue surviving or it is dying?

7) What is the significance of mwomboko within: 
   a. The contemporary society
   b. The Agikuyu traditional society

8) What are some of the topics covered in the mwomboko song texts?

9) Why do you think the Agikuyu have incorporated mwomboko into their music tradition.
APPENDIX 111

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Date of observation __________________________

Place of observation __________________________

Name of dance troupe _________________________

1) Occasion being observed

2) Instruments used in the dance

3) Style of dancing

4) Costumes used

5) Instrumentalist

6) Elements of Agíkúyú traditional music in the dance

7) Time span for the dance

8) Role played by the music

9) Performers of mwomboko music
10) Elements of other cultures in mwomboko music

11) Style of performance

12) Role played by specific instruments
APPENDIX IV

MAP 1: CENTRAL PROVINCE BOUNDARIES

Source: Kenyatta University Library
APPENDIX V

MAP 11: MÜRANG'A COUNTY: ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES

Source: Kenyatta University Library
APPENDIX VI

MAP 111: LOCATION OF MűRANG'A IN KENYA

Source: Kenyatta University Library
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

JOGOO HOUSE "B"
HARAMBEE AVENUE,
P.O. Box 9583-00260
NAIROBI

M. O. ONDIEKI
FOR: PERMANENT SECRETARY

Copy to:
The District Commissioner
Murang’a District
MURANG’A

The District Education Officer
Murang’a District
MURANG’A

Follow ing your application for authority to carry out research on, ‘Content and Style Analysis of Mwomboko Genre among the Agikuyu: The Case of Murang’a District’

I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to carry out research in Murang’a District for a period ending 30th July, 2008.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer Murang’a District before embarking on your research project.

On completion of your research, you are expected to submit two copies of your research report to this office.

8th May 2008

Hellen Wangechi Kinyua
Ken yatta University
P.O. Box 43844
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Ref. MOST 13/001/ 38C 67/2

M. O, ONDIEKI
FOR: PERMANENT SECRETARY

Copy to:
The District Commissioner
Murang’a District
MURANG’A

The District Education Officer
Murang’a District
MURANG’A

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APPENDIX VIII

RESEARCH PERMIT

PAGE 2

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

Prof./Dr./Mz./Mr./Mrs./Miss. HELLEN
WANGECI KINYUA
of (Address) KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
P.O. BOX 43844 NAIROBI

has been permitted to conduct research in

Location, MURANG'A District,
CENTRAL Province,

on the topic CONTENT AND STYLE ANALYSIS
OF MIWOMBOKO MUSIC GENRE AMONG THE
AGI KUYU: THE CASE OF MURANG'A
DISTRICT

for a period ending 50TH JULY 2008

PAGE 3

Research Permit No. MOST 13/001/38C 67
Date of issue 8.5.2008
Fee received SHS 500

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
M.O. ONDIEKI

Applicant's Signature

FOR: Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Science and Technology

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