

Resistance and Subversion of Traditional Social Construction of Gender in Gikuyu Narratives, Songs and Proverbs

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Abstract

This paper explores gender relations in Gikuyu oral literature. It focuses on resistance and subversion to male dominance in narratives, proverbs and songs. The study noted that proverbs depict women subordination in the Gikuyu community probably because they were a male genre. Although narratives presented women as subordinate, there were episodes in Gikuyu narratives that demonstrated resistance and subversion to the established patriarchal order. Songs on the other hand reveal that a new approach to gender issues is inevitable, evidenced in the way modern Gikuyu musicians use their lyrics to shed light on how to deal with gender relations; proposing new modes of behavior that help women to resist subordination. The study concludes that oral literature, which bound the traditional Gikuyu community together; provide a platform for resistance against the society's oppressive rules and norms that facilitate inequality in social construction of gender.

Keywords: Social Construction, Gender, Gikuyu, Oral Literature, Kenya, Subversion

1. Introduction

Oral literature among the Gikuyu was, and is still used as an important tool for gender socialization. Traditionally, Gikuyu boys and girls were socialized through oral literature on politics and aesthetics that shaped their consciousness of who they are and more often of who they are not. This study offers insights on the existing gender patterns and the emerging trends in social construction of gender as portrayed in Gikuyu narratives, songs and proverbs. The study focuses on how these genres are avenues of representation and resistance to traditional social construction of gender that brings male domination of the female in the community, hence hindering full participation of female in development, economic and political issues. According to Scholes (1985), texts are places where power and weakness become visible and discussable; where learning and ignorance manifest themselves; where structures that enable and constrain our thoughts and actions become capable to be touched and comprehended. An analysis of the three genres helps us to achieve the objectives of this study, therefore contributing to new understanding of the role of literature in social construction of gender in Gikuyu community.

According to Hay and Sticher (1984) the issues of male domination in Africa have been spoken about for centuries through an unbroken chain of verbal creation such as narratives, songs and proverbs.

The two further argue that the sweetness of African woman's voice in the singing has occasional mocking verses inherent in work songs, political songs and songs for women's groups and these verses have often expressed the aches particular to the female sex. In the Gikuyu community these kinds of expressions have been seen in ritual related performances in literature. For instance, Waita (2000) observes that during circumcision and marriage dances in the Gikuyu community, women had opportunities to sing about things which they could not talk about in normal speeches. The songs sang at such times expressed female solidarity and they were an expression of women's resentment of patriarchy and the cultural norms that defined them.

2. Objective

The main objectives of this study are to find out whether Gikuyu narratives, songs and proverbs contribute to social construction of gender, and how. In addition, the study aims to ascertain whether these genres depict resistance and subversion to norms and gender constructs that were understood, practiced and maintained in the traditional Gikuyu society.

3. Methodology

This paper is a part of an extensive research that was done within a sampled region in the Gikuyu community and therefore the data discussed here forms only part of the major research. The genre samples utilized here were collected through field research whereby the researcher visited the sampled region and witnessed the performances and recorded the data. In the case of songs the researcher also participated in some of the performances. The participants were men and women aged between thirty five (35) and sixty (60) who resided in the region. In this discussion the complete raw data on narratives and songs is not included but comprehensive explanations and reference to specific songs and narratives is made to make sure that the discussion is clear.

4. Resistance and Subversion

According to Graebner (1992), genders are not attached to biological foundations or basis and therefore gender boundaries can be breached. This fact is visible in the process of power change over in the Gikuyu myth of origin which narrates how originally Gikuyu women were more powerful than men and therefore ruled Gikuyu land. The myth further shows that at some point in life men were unhappy with women's leadership which was sometimes characterized by mistreatment of the men. The men therefore organized to have all their women pregnant and then overthrow their leadership during that particular time of their weakness. The plan was executed so well and men took over power which they have maintained to date. From this myth, it can be deduced that the fact that power moved from women to men (matriarchy to patriarchy) suggests that gender power can be shifted from one gender to another. From this power change over, the Gikuyu community became consistently patriarchal and the traditions henceforth justified patriarchy and male dominance as the preferred order. Gikuyu women in both traditional and modern set up therefore only attempt to exercise female power within the confines of patriarchy. These women also endeavor to develop a separate identity that enables them to resist and subvert patriarchal oppression which is often visible in their oral art as will be shown through songs later in this discussion.

Table 1 shows the list of narratives, songs and proverbs referred to in this study. It should be noted that proverbs are owned by the whole society so no ownership was assigned to them.

4.1 Narratives

The analysis done here acknowledges that while traditional oral narratives in the Gikuyu community presented women as subordinates, there was subversion to these patriarchal constructions that was embedded in the narration. The narrative, *Itumbi ria Nyaga* (The Ostrich Egg) by Wambui, tells of a girl who had hatched from an ostrich egg, to the consolation of the father whose wife did not have children. Out of the much love for the daughter, the man ordered that the girl should never be given difficult tasks to perform at home. One day, the wife waited for the husband to be away and ordered the girl to go and fetch water for her from the river. When the girl refused, citing her father's order, the woman mocked her calling her a mere proud ostrich egg. The girl in anger walked away into the plains where she turned into an ostrich, vowing never to come back. In this story we see resistance in that the woman refused to obey the husband's order as she could not understand why she spent the day working while the girl idled at home. Unfortunately for her, this resistance did not change her gender status because when the husband came back and discovered that the girl had disappeared, he bit the woman and sent her to her parent's home. It is clear from this narrative that the man is viewed as the head of a home.

For that reason both the daughter and the wife are expected to obey his orders and disobeying on the side of the woman comes with the said consequences. Mbugua (2013) seems to advocate this traditional prescribed role of the woman in the Gikuyu tradition in her article, "Do not fight your assigned role, just fit in", published in *The Standard Sunday Magazine* of 10th March. She says that "When we are told that men are from Mars and women from Venus, many of us especially those not in relationships laugh it off. Although Mbugua's outlook is that of equality between men and women, she projects that the marriage institution does not guarantee this equality. She adds that even if a woman is educated, has good job and claims to be independent, at home she will always be a wife. She admits that some roles were naturally made for men and others for women. In this case she refers to domestic roles as belonging to women. Such supposition by modern women then shows that the fight for women's equality with men may take longer to come by. In the above narrative, the fact that the girl defies the foster mother's order following the directive from the foster father, demonstrates that supreme authority comes from the male figure in this society. The fact that the woman's action is punished with a worse consequence further reveals that in the Gikuyu traditional set up, women's power was minimal. However, we can also argue that women in patriarchal societies did not accept all the rules put down by men, and neither were they dormant on the issues that hurt them as human beings; instead they attempted to resist what they thought was unrealistic. Their resistance has however not eroded their gender status in any way in the past and that is why the struggle to set themselves free from male dominance and oppression continues, especially through songs as will be shown later in this discussion.

The second narrative *Mutumia Uria Uteerikaga*, (The Disagreeable Wife), by Kamau Kibe, tells of a wife who always disagreed with her husband on all issues. One day when this woman goes to fetch water from the river, she falls into the stream and the speeding water pushes her downwards. When the people came to rescue her, they were surprised to see her husband running upward to look for her. Subsequently when the husband was asked why he was searching for his wife upward while the water had pushed her downward, he explained that his wife was a disagreeable and argumentative woman who could not be "persuaded" by the water to go downstream. The man swayed all the people to search for his wife upward hence the woman drowned and died. In this narrative, the disagreeable and argumentative character of the woman causes her death and this serves as a warning to other wives not to oppose their husbands' orders. It can be deduced that since the Gikuyu community had turned patriarchal at the point where power changeover took place, as mentioned earlier in the discussion, such narratives were certainly composed by men to warn women that even with their attempted subversion to men's order, women might not succeed. It should be noted that the narrator here (Kamau) is male, probably, showing that the choice of this narrative by the man was definitely to make a specific point concerning gender relations and the behavior of women in the Gikuyu community; which is that the power to make decisions belongs to the men and the work of women is to obey orders from men.

Mechaka (1992), argues that Women are traditionally portrayed as evil, subordinate to men especially on moral issues, but as purified figures, women are found as domesticated house wives confined to the kitchen and suitably governed by their husbands, while men are presented as having power even over women's death. In the above narrative the husband misleads the search team and causes the wife's death to make her pay for all the years she had disobeyed him. This however does not imply that women are not aware of the disadvantaged position they occupy in the patriarchal system and such knowledge contributes results to the attempts made to resist, just like the woman in the narrative.

The narrative, *Mbumbui na Warubuku* (Spider and the Hare) by Kamau Kibe, tells of the friendship between Spider and the Hare which lead them to share secrets. The spider always informed the Hare whenever he found a lover. He always took the Hare with him whenever he went to see the woman he loved and intended to marry. However, whenever the Hare was introduced to Spider's girlfriend, he could later go behind the Spider's back to tell the girl that if she married the Spider, she would spend the whole of her life fetching eight gourds of water each day to wash the Spider's legs. The girls could then change their mind about marrying Spider. The Hare did this for each girl that Spider wooed and therefore all those who refused to marry the Spider gave the reason that they were not ready to spend their lives fetching water to wash the Spider's legs. This narrative tells that women did not always enjoy doing domestic work the whole of their lives, especially the kind of work imposed by their male counterparts. They did not enjoy the domestic work prescribed by the patriarchal society because the work was tiring and degrading and at the end of the day it was not recognized as work but only a duty by the men.

Ogundipe (1994) argues that in most African societies, gender supremacy was taken for granted and in all areas affected modern day organization. She posits that women's work was often viewed as subordinate and unimportant with men wondering what made them (women) tired at the end of the day. Such societal structures that Ogundipe talks about, are the ones that caused problems to women and they needed to resist them, like the girls mentioned in the narrative above. Such resistance in traditional societies could be said to have paved the way for today's women empowerment. Aitken (1987) contends that throughout history and literature, woman has been portrayed as a time wasting creature whose whole value is chiefly ornamental, or one whose work consists of menial or non-essential tasks. He adds that women have been effectively cut off from decision making. Aitken's suppositions are evident in the narratives *Muturi Ugutura na Mutumia wake* (The Blacksmith and his Wife) by Kabura, which shows how women used to be left at home while men went out to do their professional work which was seen to be more rewarding. In the narrative, the husband leaves his pregnant wife and goes far away to do blacksmithing. When the time comes for delivery, she is helped by an ogre who never gives her food. Out of desperation, and at a point of death, the woman sends a dove to look for her husband, and the man arrives in time to save the woman from being eaten by the ogre. This narrative represents women as powerless; that even when women were left at home, they still need protection and providence from their husbands. This idea evident in some of the narratives collected in the study has been refuted by Gikuyu women singers, especially in their modern songs who feel that if women are given equal opportunities with men, they can eventually stand on their own. Such lyrics are read as a means of resistance and subversion, as will be demonstrated later in this discussion.

In the narrative *Muthuri na Airitu aake Atatu* (The Old Man and his Three Daughters) by Chege Kihoro, women's intelligence is revealed, contrary to many patriarchal suppositions about their foolishness. Here, the girls are told to lock themselves in the house while the father goes to look for food. Subsequently, they are tricked to open the door by unknown men [of course men are supposedly clever], who imitate their father's voice. For fear of being harmed, they accept to follow the strangers who make them their wives. As they begin their journey to the unknown, one of the daughters by the name Njiruini drops castor seeds on the side of the road all the way to her final destination with the men. These seeds later germinate and grow along the path. After the loss of his daughters the agonizing old man discovers the seeds growing in a line along the path starting at his gate and wonders where they were leading to. He then packs his few belongings and decides to follow the line of the seeds to where they could lead him. The line of the seeds ended up at a hut where Njiruini and her husband lived and the two welcome the old man to live with the family. While this narrative has gaps in that the man does not find his other daughters, it reveals that although women are perceived as naive by the society, they are intelligent because it is a woman's wisdom that helps the man to find her daughter. In addition, while on the one hand it might be argued that men succeeded in tricking the girls or rather intimidating them into marriage, the wisdom of Njiruini reveals women's hidden intellectual potential. Ahlberg (1991) shows this hidden potential within women in patriarchal societies when he argues that women's power and success should remain hidden because all too clear manifestations of female power would only provoke strong reactions from men. This hidden potential is what women employ to resist and subvert the patriarchal order, sometimes through cleverly appeasing and manipulating men. Ahlberg further posits that through the politics of deference women could achieve their goals silently, taking care not to offend jealous husbands and eventually doing things that gave them pride and satisfaction. Women's knowledge about power politics in patriarchal societies therefore enabled them to prevent male violence and punishment, therefore cleverly subverting the set male order of subordination and violence against women.

4.2 Proverbs and Songs

This part discusses proverbs and songs concurrently for the purpose of showing that many modern singers, especially female artistes are aware of the subordination that Gikuyu women went through in the traditional set up, and they are out to suggest avenues for liberation through singing. The proverbs are used in this part as a backdrop to demonstrate the kind of women subordination that was evident in traditional Gikuyu society which the said modern singers seek to subvert.

Odhoji (1992) argues that traditionally women are viewed as movable property of men and consequently occupy a lesser social position compared to men folk. Many fears of indoctrination have resulted in women becoming willing victims of male dominated set up. This is because women constitute the major force in the field of production and maintenance of human resources.

They work in the land; do most of the domestic duties associated with feeding respective households, in addition to their naturally assigned biological roles of pregnancy, child birth and lactation. In spite of these duties, women in many African societies do not inherit property. Such roles placed women at a lower level than men. In the Gikuyu oral literature, proverbs tended to exemplify the superior role of men in the society.

It is evident from this study that proverbs are predominantly a male genre which often evaluates the characteristics of women negatively. It is likely that Gikuyu men also feared strong and knowledgeable women who became a threat to them. It can further be argued that, probably, the Gikuyu men dreaded another power changeover and they therefore used all means possible to make women feel less important and subordinate to the male figure. For instance, the proverb *Cia Aka ciitikaagio ciarara* (Whatever women say is believed the following day) implies that since women are not intelligent and are unpredictable, their words are not to be trusted until they are verified since they might be useless and not helpful in any way. This perhaps explains why women were traditionally not allowed to participate in decision-making. Many proverbs recorded in this study portray women as worthless creatures who deserve little or no respect at all. Women are described as destroyers of peace and harmony, untrustworthy, cowards, outsiders, vulnerable and quarrelsome; often being put in similar categories with children. Intellectually and socially, women are portrayed as people who have no upright words but crooked ones; they are often weak and that they cannot do without men. Contrary to these negatives presentation with regard to women, proverbs are seen to enhance male dominance and to influence social gender construction negatively. Men are presented as superior while women are presented as inferior.

From this research, resistance and subversion of the traditional social construction of gender is seen in the Gikuyu songs sung by modern artistes. The role of songs is therefore not just to entertain but also to educate and promote the presentation of social norms relevant to the society's culture. The female artistes in Gikuyu community have come up very strongly to assert the place and the importance of female figure in a community, where patriarchy tends to submerge and make the female look less important. The song *Nyina wa Bururi* (Mother of a Nation) by queen Jane, says:

No one is more important than a woman
A man without a wife has no home
And a good home is a woman
And a woman is the pillar of a home

Queen Jane's song subverts the song *Mundumuurume* (man) by Simon Kihaara which in the second stanza, line 1, states that "a man is the pillar of a home because when he dies, everything in the home gets scattered ". Those who are left behind do not know how to manage the resources and if there is a debt the property ends up being auctioned. Kihara therefore views women as rather irresponsible. Contrary to Kihara's notion that men are superior and women are weaker. Queen Jane sees the alleged weakness as a source of family strength. Her song further praises a woman as a mother of nation, mother of Bishops, ministers, parliamentarians, rich and poor. For Queen Jane, motherhood is a source of praise than displeasure. Her song praises the power of women to reproduce, a task that men cannot do. She states that "a woman is the pillar of a home", which contradicts Kihara's position in his song. The composer here is therefore aware that the issue of motherhood has been used to subordinate women, and thus she uses her lyric to advise men so that they may notice the reality of the situation.

In the last stanza of Queen Jane's song, the singer shows that regardless of how patriarchy views a woman in the society, man cannot exist or survive without the woman because even in the Garden of Eden, it was only the woman who pleased man most:

All the animals were created for Adam
All the fruits of the Garden of Eden
And he was never satisfied or happy
But was satisfied when Eve was created for him

This song therefore warns the community that anything that affects a woman could affect the whole family because she is the pillar of the home.

Generally many of the songs by Queen Jane tend to subvert the bad qualities attributed to a woman by some Gikuyu Proverbs.

For instance, the proverb *Muici na Kihii akenage kiarua no muici wa mundu muka atigaga kieha aakua* (he who steals with uncircumcised boy remains anxious until he undergoes circumcision but he who steals with a woman lives in fear until she dies) implies that women are dangerous , unpredictable and evil and they are not capable of keeping secrets . The proverb *Giathi githaragio ni gaka kamwe* (a market can be dispersed by one small woman) shows that even a small woman is capable of doing a very destructive thing like dispersion of a market full of people, implying how dangerous and destructive a woman can be. Further the Proverb *Aka Matiri cia ndiro na cia nyiniko* (Women have no upright words only crooked ones) shows that women have no wisdom; their words are not upright and cannot build but only destroy. Queen Jane subverts this message by emphasizing the importance of a woman as the mother of a nation. According to her, a woman is "the joy of a home". Somehow Queen Jane creates a different image and identity for a woman in a way to free her (woman) from male domination and oppression.

In the song *Arume ni Nyamu* (Men are animals) Queen Jane portrays gender subversion by depicting men as liars, immoral and irresponsible, contrary to what is portrayed in many Gikuyu proverbs and some narratives . For instance, the proverb *Arume ti Aka* (Men are not Women) implies that men are different from women in that they are all that women are not. Men are portrayed as different in a positive way, which is further shown in the proverb, *Mbu ya arume itikagwo ni athamaki* (Men's alarms or shouts are answered by Kings), which denotes that men do not shout anyhow, and whenever they do, it is should be taken seriously. The proverb *Maitho ma Arume ti ma Irunga* (Men's eyes are not like the eyes of a small insect called Irunga), suggests that men are not short sighted and that they have lots of wisdom. In addition, the proverb, *Cia Arume ni thuranire* (men's issues are well sort) shows men's issues are important and organized. They do not just say or do things but they first get organized, think, reason and know what they want to say or do, of course also implying the opposite; that women's issues are less organized and less important. All the above proverbs and others not discussed in this article tend to be flooded with praises for men and enhance male supremacy in Gikuyu traditional set up. However, Queen Jane's song, *Arume ni nyamu* (Men are animals) disapproves the proverbs when she calls men "animals" and says that men cannot be trusted in relationships hence the woman in the song wants nothing to do with them. She says that a man will cheat a woman today and cheat another tomorrow; meaning men are not ashamed of cheating. She adds that a man can tell one woman that he has gone to Mombasa while he goes to see another woman to arrange how they will get married. She concludes that men cannot be trusted, which contradicts the traditional ideal man in the society, who protects his wife represented in the narrative *Muturi Ugutura na Mutumia wake*, discussed earlier in this article.

Traditionally women used to rely on men for providence despite working so hard to enhance their families' economic status. Their lesser position did not allow them to own anything. Supposedly, they were also a part of men's property, contrary to what is portrayed in Queen Jane's song. The woman in the song owns property because she tells the man "I want to tell you that from today, never step in my house". Such assertion is an indication that women are no longer accepting the traditional patriarchal order in its totality. Instead of the man being the one chasing the woman away as was the case in the narrative *Itumbi ria Nyaga*, discussed earlier, and/or as was the case in most traditional set ups, presently in the song, it is the man who is being chased away showing that things are changing as far as gender power relations are concerned. Such songs sensitize the female figure to be aware of the world around her and to take caution of what men are capable of doing. The song also shows that women have intensified resistance to male oppression and dominance.

The song *Guuka Nindarega* (Grandfather I refuse) by Queen Jane is a song of resistance. It talks of a man as old as a grandfather who wants to befriend and marry a young girl, the age of his own grandchildren. Even if this often happened in Gikuyu customs in the past, where young girls were married by old people as second wives, in the modern set up, it is being resisted. The singer advises girls not to marry old men. Such resistance was unheard of in Gikuyu traditions because girls were meant to marry rich people once they were of age so that their fathers would get much wealth and it did not matter the kind of men they married so long as they had property. The pride of a father of daughters in the Gikuyu community was getting dowry when they got married. The more daughters a man had therefore, the more wealth he got. The singer is therefore challenging those traditional set ups and opting for a different way of doing things. The girl in the song refuses to marry an old man qualified to be called grandfather just to give the father wealth completely disregarding the girl's happiness. The song also contests the continuity of olden traditions that had young girls as property and denied them the right to say no to forced marriages. By saying no, the singer breaks the norms that silenced women.

Song *Kunjoera Nindarega* (I refuse to be cheated) by Queen Jane portrays man as a liar and immoral. The singer shows that whether there is rain or sunshine the man is going out to look for other women. The woman in the song complains that she gives him all the love but he makes sure that he has a woman everywhere he goes. The woman says "I refuse to be cheated". The singer therefore warns other women that if they are not careful with men, they will get into problems. The singer shows subversion of the patriarchal stand by making reference to the Gikuyu proverb states *Gutiri Njamba ya mwera Umwe* (There is no cock that belongs to one hen), which gives men ticket to have as many women as they want. Kenyatta (1978) explains that: [in] the Gikuyu customary law of marriage man may have as many wives as he can support and the larger one's family is, the better it is for him and the tribe. The custom also provides that all women be under the protection of men and that in order to avoid prostitution all women must be married (167-168)

Modern Gikuyu Women are not willing to be herded like cows in a man's home. These women are working to protect their status by refusing to share a man in the name of marriage. Women solidarity is demonstrated in song *Mwaigua twarurungana* (If you hear us gather) by Monica Waithera. The song says that when they gather for their group meetings, every woman should carry her baby on her back and attend the meetings because any woman who remains at home does not belong to them. This song demonstrates that women should not view child bearing and rearing as an inhibition but that they should look for their voices within the same oppressive spaces that patriarchy has created by forming female bonds that empower them. Kinoti (1983) observes that women groups enhance sisterhood and men have tried to curb their wives' attention to the groups. Men fear that the groups make women more powerful and that women discuss them [men] when they gather.

Njogu and Maupau (2007) suggest that songs may be the principal channel of communicating for people who are denied access to the official media, and this is certainly what modern Gikuyu women are doing. Through music these women are communicating that they are not ready to bear any further male domination.

5. Conclusion

The forgoing discussion based on Gikuyu narratives, songs and proverbs has explored forms of gender power relations as well as resistance and subversions as depicted in these genres. The discussion has revealed that as an integral part of the society, Gikuyu oral literature served to epitomise the norm in the community. The study has shown that most proverbs portrayed the male figure as all powerful and the female as subordinate which has been attributed to the fact that the Gikuyu society was patriarchal and the fact that proverbs were mostly famous with men. Men were therefore bound to use proverbs to propose the social order. In narratives, the discussion has shown that although like proverbs, this genre tended to reveal female subordination, there were inherent twists in the narratives which portrayed women's potential, therefore resisting and subverting the traditional social construction of gender. This means that in the traditional society women and girls resisted male dominance and oppression though not overtly, for fear of being considered disrespectful to men. Songs, especially modern songs, have been noted in this discussion as the most powerful channel for giving women their voices as these songs tend to contradict traditional social order, and propose new avenues for women to discover and empower themselves. This is in line with the proposition put forward by Hey and Sticher (1984) that performances can shape individuals minds, bring them into lines with prevailing attitude, and by their lessons prevent social disorder.

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Table 1: List of Narratives, Songs and Proverbs Used in the Discussion

Narratives			
SN	Narrative Title	English Translation	Narrator
	<i>Itumbi ria Nyaga</i>	The Ostrich Egg	Wambui
2.	<i>Mutumia Uria Uteerikaga</i>	The Disagreeable Wife	Kamau Kibe
3.	<i>Mbumbui na Warubuku</i>	Spider and the Hare	Kamau Kibe
4.	<i>Muturi Ugutura na Mutumia wake</i>	The Blacksmith and his Wife	Kabura
5.	<i>Muthuri na Airitu aake Atatu</i>	The Old Man and his Three Daughters	Chege Kihoro
Songs			
SN	Song Title	English Translation	Singer
1.	<i>Nyina wa Bururi</i>	Mother of a Nation	Queen Jane
2.	<i>Arume ni Nyamu</i>	Men are animals	Queen Jane
3.	<i>Mundumuurume</i>	man	Simon Kihaara
4.	<i>Guuka Nindarega</i>	Grandfather I refuse	Queen Jane
5.	<i>Kunjoera Nindarega</i>	I refuse to be cheated	Queen Jane
	<i>Mwaigua twarurungana</i>	If you hear us gather	Monica Waitheera
Proverbs			
SN	Proverb	English Translation	
1.	<i>Cia Aka ciitikaagio ciarara</i>	Whatever women say is believed the following day	
2.	<i>Muici na Kihii akenage kiarua no muici wa mundu muka atigaga kieha aakua</i>	He who steals with uncircumcised boy remains anxious until he undergoes circumcision but he who steals with a woman lives in fear until she dies	
3.	<i>Giathi githaragio ni gaka kamwe</i>	a market can be dispersed by one small woman	
4.	<i>Aka Matiri cia ndiro na cia nyiniko</i>	Women have no upright words only crooked ones	
5.	<i>Arume ti Aka</i>	Men are not Women	
6.	<i>Mbu ya arume itikagwo ni athamaki</i>	Men's alarms or shouts are answered by Kings	
7.	<i>Maitho ma Arume ti ma Irunga</i>	Men's eyes are not like the eyes of a small insect called Irunga	
8.	<i>Cia Arume ni thuranire</i>	men's issues are well sort	
9.	<i>Gutiri Njamba ya mwera Umwe</i>	There is no cock that belongs to one hen	