

**THE KAMBA POPULAR SONG: A STUDY OF PERFORMANCES BY BOSCO
MULWA AND KENNEDY WAMBUA.**

MUSYOKA ANNE NDUKU

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN LITERATURE**

University of NAIROBI Library



0478876 6

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI 2011

DECLARATION

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

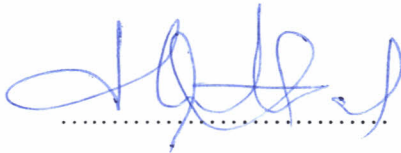
Candidate.....*AW*.....

Date.....*21/11/2011*.....

Musyoka Anne Nduku

This project has been submitted with our approval as University supervisors

1st Supervisor


.....

Date *21/11/2011*.....

(Dr. Alex Wanjala)

2nd Supervisor


.....

Date *21/11/2011*.....

(Prof. Wanjiku M. Kabira)

DEDICATION

To the memory of my dear Grandmother Priscilla Nduva who passed on during the course of this project (21.08.2011).

To Eunice for your love, faith and belief in me even when I doubted myself

To my parents, Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Musyoka, for your love, and constant support both financially and morally. Thank you and May the Lord bless you.

To my siblings Dorcas, Jared, Thierry and Stance, I treasure your love and your immense warmth glows in my heart.

And to

Elijah Walubuka, you planted the seed for this way back. Many blessings

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Board of Post Graduate Studies, University of Nairobi on behalf of the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund (Sylff) offered me a scholarship to undertake this course. I am very grateful for this.

I am greatly indebted to my supervisors Dr. Alex Wanjala and Prof. Wanjiku M. Kabira for their constant guidance and wisdom that saw the completion of this project. I am sincerely thankful for their informed directorship which helped me remain focused.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Alex Wanjala for his patience and understanding, constant encouragement and painstaking efforts to interpret and nurture my inspiration throughout this project. It is through his commitment and intellectual guidance that this project became a reality.

I acknowledge in a special way Prof. Wasamba and Prof. Kiiru for their insights and encouragement during my research. I particularly thank the above plus Dr. Rinkanya, Dr. Siundu, Dr. Tom Odhiambo, Dr. Muchiri, Prof. Chesaina and Prof. Wanjala for taking me through the entire course.

I am most thankful to my classmates, Daudi Rotich, Patrick Mutiso, Chesi Lumasia, Joanne Wanjala and Mikal Modi for their support throughout the entire course.

I am also grateful to Ezekiel Kaigai and Antony Wasena for their intellectual help, support and encouragement.

ABSTRACT

In this study I set out to examine the performance of the popular song in Kikamba by investigating through fieldwork research the elements of performance that the selected artists; Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua incorporate in their live performances. In addition, the present study examines the thematic issues that the performers address in their songs that are performed within different contexts.

The researcher also examines the language inherent in these songs. I look at the unique style that the performers use so as to address various issues within their society. This study also examines the elements of traditional Kamba performance that the selected performers appropriate and incorporate within their performances.

The study employs three approaches in its theoretical frame. This is necessary in order to meet the set objectives. Semiotics is used in order to interrogate how the performers use language and signs as a way of communicating with their audience during performance. Performance Theory on the other hand is used in analyzing the various performances staged by the selected artists. Ethno-poetics guided me in the transcription of the poems as well as helping in the analysis of the same.

The researcher came up with the following findings; different thematic issues are embodied within the performance of the two selected artists like love, marriage, relationships, controversy as well as culture. We also found out that the performance contexts determine the performance choices that a particular artist adopts in his performance. These performance choices are the kind of songs that the artist performs in a particular context and the improvisation techniques he employs depending on the audience present. That each of the artists performs in each performance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgement.....	iv
Abstract	v
Table of Contents	vi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Objectives	6
1.4 Hypotheses	6
1.5 Justification.....	6
1.6 Scope and Limitation	7
1.7 Working Definitions.....	8
1.8 Literature Review.....	10
1.9 Theoretical Framework	17
1.10 Methodology	22
CHAPTER TWO: FIELDWORK RESEARCH.....	24
2.1 Introduction.....	24
2.2 Performance In Nairobi	25
2.3 Perfomance Outside The City	36

CHAPTER THREE: THEMATIC ISSUES.....	42
3.1 Introduction.....	42
3.2 Bosco Mulwa’s Thematic Concerns.....	43
3.3 Kennedy Wambua’s Thematic Concerns.....	48
CHAPTER FOUR: STYLE IN THE POPULAR SONG.....	58
CHAPTER FIVE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PERFORMANCES.....	65
5.1 Cover Songs.....	69
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION.....	80
WORKS CITED.....	84
APPENDIX.....	89

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The song is the most versatile genre of oral literature as it pervades all walks of life. Play, work, rest, festivity are all occasions for songs (Chesaina 11). People sing to express themselves and to vent up their emotions as Daniel Avorgbedor observes

Man is ontologically an expressive being, and both actions and reactions consequently permeate our modes of life and living. Artistic diversity, which is distinctive and distinguishing work of all cultures, provides indisputable evidence of our basic human need for expression. The song mode is just one of the innumerable artistic avenues through which our latent response energies are released (208).

The prevalence of songs within our society serves to meet the need for people to express themselves and their concerns.

Popular song is a type of music genre that addresses a myriad of issues within the contemporary society, has a wide appeal among the people and whose copyright is held by the artist who creates it, or as Jane Nadwa states “songs taken from records and these are copyrighted as opposed to folk songs” (204). The traditional song/folk songs are songs originating from “the country folk and handed down from one generation to another generation and used as a group communication devices to focus the attention of groups on important issues to organize them for joint response and to produce consensus”(Lomax 218). The contemporary popular song serves a myriad of purposes because of its versatility- it fits in every social situation, be it in the entertainment places, political rallies, celebrations, every event where people are gathered. In this respect songs express people’s aspirations, desires and their

concerns, as Kimani Njogu observes, “the lyrics (of popular songs) explore cosmology, worldviews, class, and gender relations, interpretations of value systems and other cultural practices even as they entertain and provide momentary escape for the audience members [...] frustrations, disenchantment and emotional fatigue [...] have driven songs in East Africa”(xi). This implies that the contemporary society can be well understood by analyzing the songs of the respective communities within it, for they capture all aspects of social life. This is because songs are a means through which a society propagates and perpetuates its cultural practices and philosophy. Kimani Njogu adds that “songs reflect and shape social life...songs speak to composers and audiences in fundamental ways, and in the process shape perspectives, change attitudes, question authority, challenge human weakness, cajole and rebuke” (xii). Through a study of these songs one can identify the cultural elements that define these communities and in turn one is able to understand the society. By looking at the performances staged by Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua in this study we will be able to examine the society through an analysis of the issues they address in their performances.

Since the popular song is an important component of the contemporary society, the examination of its performance is warranted. This is because performance is crucial to any verbal work of art. It is the actual enactment of that verbal work, and no matter how faithful a performer adheres to the original text, improvisation is meant to occur in any subsequent rendition of the same text even if it is in the level of tone variations. Ruth Finnegan calls this aspect of performance “verbal variability” which is a characteristic of oral literature. Further She contends that “what might be called the ‘same’ poem or prose piece tends to be variable to such an extent that one has to take some account at least of the original contribution of the artist actualizing it not simply in terms of technique of delivery (8). “Verbal variability” therefore offers an

opportunity for the artist who is actualizing a work of art to improvise, and consequently an opportunity for “composition”. This kind of improvisation leads to a new (text) version of the original text. This complicates the question of an “original” performance. It leads us into treating each of the performances staged by the two selected artists as new “where the artist has an opportunity to improvise the texts”. The performer of the work of art is a very crucial component in the process of actualizing the work of art, as John Cawelti argues,

the physical presence of the performer reinforces the work of art and makes it more comprehensible, for it gives greater emotional impact... the performer adds the spice of uniqueness and difference to a highly conventional work... *for* (emphasis mine) one popular song is like the other; the individual style of the performer and his special ability to communicate becomes very important in creating some variety and complexity (7).

If the physical presence of the performer is an integral part of a work of art as a whole, then it is necessary to study the performance of the popular song to understand among other things, the special abilities/ skills/ personal uniqueness that the performer brings into the performance so as to enhance the understanding of his work.

Popular Music in Kenya functions as a social commentary on the prevailing social conditions. This music has been read as a form of political expressions of the populace (Nyairo and Ogude 2005). It has also been studied as a site of contesting alternative identities by the Kenyan young generations, as well as other groups of people within the Kenyan-nation state (Siundu 2010). It has also been read as a site of communication where different modes of engagement are employed and deployed. But a thorough scrutiny of performance of the popular song as an engagement with different contexts, where different expectations of the audience are to be met

by the performer therefore forcing the performer to make different decisions depending on the context of performance is lacking. The present study examines the totality of popular performances by investigating the elements of performance that the selected artists incorporate within their performances, the elements that the artists borrow from the traditional folksongs and in addition, the study takes a comparative look at the different contexts of performance that force the artist to make different choices for each new live performance.

THE ARTISTS

Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua are among the most celebrated artists who are very popular within the Kamba community. Their music has a wide appeal and consequently their songs feature among the top numbers within the weekly radio chart shows in the Kamba Vernacular radio stations.

Bosco Mulwa is a one-man guitarist who enjoys a huge following among the older generation. He is in his late fifties and has been in the music industry for over thirty years. He started his career as a vocalist with other prominent Kamba artists like Peter Muambi but eventually ventured out on his own. His music follows on the footsteps of Kakai Kilonzo, whose music and rhythms were highly influenced by Musicians like David Kabaka and Fadhili William. His music adopts a slow beat that allows the “twist” dance moves to be incorporated within it.

Kennedy Wambua on the other hand started out as a one-man guitarist but eventually formed a musical band-Yatta Orchestra international, which consist of about 15 band members all under his employment. His music adopts the fast-paced beats, but one can also discern heavy influences of the reggae beat within his music. He has cut out a niche for himself attracting thousands of followers across the country. Although his controversial lyrics have put him on a

collision path with fellow artists (something he refers to in his songs albeit not openly) and the more conservative members of the society he has formed quite a following within the younger generation. Having began as a factory worker in Athi River then working as a second hand clothes dealer in Gikomba market, his rise in music offers an inspiration to the present generation (Muendo C8). His music is fast paced with the lead guitar providing the pace for the bass guitar and the rhythm guitar. His music is also very controversial especially because of its sexual nuances but his ability to sing about every other happening in the society has ensured that he remains relevant to societal issues affecting the society.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study set out to examine the performance of the popular song as areas of interaction between the performer, the work of art (the song-text) and the audience within the framework of a live performance space.

The study set out to investigate the nature of the performances of the selected artists in order to uncover the various elements of performances that they employ in the actualization of their work. These elements include performance contexts in terms of venue, setting, instruments, dancing and improvisations that the performer does during live performances. It also examined the presence of any elements of the folksong that may have been transported, borrowed and incorporated into the performance of the popular song. The study of these performances will reveal information that enhanced our understanding of the Kamba community better; since a society is able to represent itself through its cultural productions.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

- To examine the various elements of performance that the selected artists incorporate within their live performances
- To investigate the thematic issues that the artists address through their performance which help in understanding the society
- To identify the traditional elements that the artists have borrowed and appropriated into their popular songs
- To explore how the artists help in our understanding of the Kamba Culture through the social world view they present in their works.
- To investigate whether there any “cover versions” within the artistic repertoire of the selected artists.

1.4 HYPOTHESES

- Performances are an integral part of the artistic repertoire of any musician.
- Artists address societal issues in their songs.
- The popular song has developed from the traditional songs.
- There are “cover versions” within the artistic repertoire of the selected artists.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION

Although academic research on the popular song as a literary genre has been done, for example, Thiong'o (2009), Gakuo (2004), Kiura (2006), Chiuri (1984) and Kieti (1988) Nyairo and Ogude (2005), Siundu (2010) and Nyairo (2004), none of these studies have examined performance as an integral part of the popular song that aids in the understanding of the song-texts as well as the society which the songs are drawn from.

In addition popular artists are part of a great oral tradition in our society. They use the song (an oral form) to comment and criticize their societies. As artists they are imbued with sensibilities that enable them to record and respond artistically to the changes that occur in their societies. These artists draw their art from the traditional idiom and the verbal mode of expression of their communities. In this respect they perpetuate the oral tradition of these communities but in addition they also comment and reflect on the social, political and economic matters affecting their contemporary societies. Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy draw their art from the Kamba community. Their songs therefore depict the nuances and the idiom of the Kamba language. There is a need therefore a need to study their songs so as to discover ways in which these artists 1) draw from the oral tradition of the Kamba people 2) how they use the Kamba Language in order to effectively depict their social concerns.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATION

We examine the performances of two selected Kamba artists namely, Kennedy Wambua and Bosco Mulwa. The selection of these artists is based on the performance of their songs within the weekly chart shows within the various Kamba radio stations. The selection of the two artists is also based upon the frequency in which they are featured within the Weekend entertainment pages of *The Daily Nation* on Friday. This study endeavours to critically analyze four live performances staged by the two artists- two of these performances are located within Nairobi city (urban space) and the other two are located outside the City (within Ukambani area). A total of twenty songs performed by the two artists during the four different performance occasions under study are analyzed for their thematic content and language use.

1.7 WORKING DEFINITIONS

The Popular song

The definition of popular song borrows from Ruth Finnegan's ideas of the lyrical poetry as a sub-genre that addresses broad social issues like love, hate, politics, everyday life issues like celebrations of weddings, work e.tc. (241)

The Macmillan Dictionary of English defines popular culture as types of entertainment that most people in the society enjoy for example, films television programs, popular music. It is safe to say that the popular song is a type of musical genre that has a wide appeal and typically distributed to large audiences. It is normally contrasted with art music (disseminated academically) and traditional music (disseminated orally) to smaller audiences.

In this case the popular song is a type of music genre that addresses myriad of issues in our contemporary society, has a wide appeal/ popular among the people and whose copyright is held by the artist who creates it.

The popular artist

This definition borrows from studies in popular culture. An artist or person engaged in the production of what Karin Barber in 'Popular arts in Africa' calls "African Popular forms" which are 'playful, dynamic, innovative and mutable' whose unofficial status allow them to 'accommodate the new and celebrate it'(81). In this study the popular artist is that person who produces and disseminates the popular song genre, who is also the sole owner of the copyright of the songs.

Performance

Performance can be defined as the doing of an activity by an individual or a group, mediation between work and audience, based on another work. It differs from the original work of art in that it is possible variations of that work and it involves a kind of co-operation/ confrontation between the imagination of original creator and the mind of performer or performances. It is a complex interplay of reality an abstraction from reality (the work of art) and the self of the performer (Cawelti 8). In this definition performance is a kind of a confrontation between the imagination of the artist (creator) and the performer who actualizes it. Although this definition is more suited to drama, the centrality of the performer, the audience and the work to the whole process of actualization cannot be ignored.

Richard Schechner on the other hand defines performance, as the doing of an activity by an individual or a group largely for the pleasure of another individual or group (Bert States 12) what he calls 'restored behavior'. In this definition there is an emphasis on the audience as an integral part of the performance activity.

Richard Baumann views performance as "a mode of speaking, of communication", an artistic event, a performance situation that involves performer, art form (e.g. song), an audience and a setting (291).

In this study "performance" encompasses an activity that is carried /done by another person or a group for the pleasure of another group or individual. That is the activity that is carried out by the artists –Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua in their attempts to communicate to their audience in the actualization of their works.

Cover versions

A cover version or simply ‘**cover**’ is a new performance or recording of a contemporary or previously recorded, commercially released popular song. It sometime implies that the original recording should be regarded as the definitive or "authentic" version, and all others merely lesser competitors, alternatives or tributes. Joyce Nyairo (2004) defines cover versions as the recording of an old song by a new artiste or group with little variations to the original tones and lyrics (86). She adds that “cover versions” are never neutral repetitions, they actually entail a whole act of re-interpretation that constitutes a shift of textuality and meaning since contexts of production and reception are no longer the same as those prevailed in the time of the original”. I agree with Nyairo’s assertion that a cover version includes a re-interpretation of the original. Although Nyairo’s definition suitable for her work in the sense that she is dealing with recorded “cover songs”, I borrow it in this study with the awareness that in this study I am dealing with “cover songs” done only by the artists when they are doing live performance. I recognize still the fact even within this context of live performance; the performance of the “cover songs” still entails reinterpretation of the original by the artist re- performing it.

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies that focus on form and content of the popular song have already been done but these overlook the aspect of performance as an integral part of the popular song as the following literature review shows. This literature review is two fold. First I look at the works that have been done concerning the popular song – those that examine both the form and content of the popular song as a sub-genre of oral literature. I also look at other works that deal with the politics of the popular song- which treat the popular song as a site where alternative identities are contested.

Kieti (1988) looks at Myali songs, examining how imagery and allusions help in enhancing the thematic issues raised in the songs. She argues that “language in Myali songs is highly figurative in the sense that names, places and events mentioned in these songs have symbolic hidden meanings-best explained through a close reference to Akamba life, beliefs and traditions” (71).

Although Kieti looks extensively at the political economic and social contexts surrounding the Myali songs and does a literary analysis of some of the selected songs, a performance aspect of the songs is lacking in her analysis. It is true that she describes the performance context in which the songs were performed in terms of time, place and participants, but she does not describe an actual performance not even an induced performance from the performers she interviews. This study looks at the performance of popular song in Kikamba to unveil the different contexts and the choices that the artists make depending on each context. It also looks at the themes that the artists address through the songs that are performed. Therefore this study builds on Kieti’s study by carrying an in-depth examination of the performance contexts of these popular songs which have become the norm in modern society.

Kieti argues that if research is not done, Myali like any other oral literature in Ukambani will disappear. Her argument is sound but it does not anticipate the evolvement of Myali songs into other song forms, like the contemporary popular song in Kikamba that serves the same purpose of social critique as well as a form of entertainment. This study treats the popular song in Kikamba as the heir to the Myali songs, because like the Myali songs they are not confined to one context or occasion of performance especially because of the new media technology that enhances its distribution and preservation.

Kieti observes that “with the banning of *Wathi*, the performance context of Myali songs, and the introduction of Christianity and formal education, the Akamba informal education ended” (23) and this signified the loss of Kamba creativity especially when it come to Myali songs, since young people were exposed to hymns and western music popularized through the radio. “Wathi was replaced by night dances (*tumandiko*) with performers using guitars to sing popular songs to the sound of a phonograph”. Here Kieti is very critical about the new changes within the society especially; the night dances, yet these night dances were the grounds that cemented the rise of the popular singer in Kikamba. Kieti also argues that even the night dances have been supplanted by “discos with strobe lights, blasting stereos and music with confusing and conflicting messages that are unrelated to the local audience.”(23) It is true that the primary performance context of the popular song is the disco with strobe lights, but to argue that the advent of the disco has contributed to the death of creativity is not right. The principle function of songs (oral poetry) as a social critique and a form of entertainment which was advanced by the Myali songs is still advanced by the popular song in Kikamba. Today we do not find “young people strumming a guitar to the sound of a phonograph”, but artists/ performers who compose and record their own songs that offer a critique of the contemporary society. Kieti’s argument that “today’s music has confused and conflicting messages which is unrelated to the local audience” is also wrong.

The present research aims at correcting the misconception that contemporary popular music has no relevant message. This is done by studying the performance of these songs in Kikamba by examining two selected artists-Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua. I therefore look at the performance contexts, thematic issues raised in these songs as well the choices that the performers make on which songs to perform on different occasions.

Thiong'o (2009) examines the form and content of songs by De Matthew. He looks at the themes and the stylistic devices that the artist employs at both the text and performance level. Although Thiong'o looks at aspects of performance in De Matthew songs, his examination of the issue of performance is subordinated to the form and content of the whole artistic work of the musician. He also concentrates more on the Video Compact Discs (VCD) performances of the artist therefore subordinating the live performance of the same artist. This study differs from Thiong'o's study in that it examines the nature of performances- the totality of performance- the context, the setting, framing of the performances, as well as the thematic issues that the songs performed address. It also looks at the elements of performance that these popular artists borrow from the traditional folksongs and incorporate within their performance of the popular song. This is especially done through language which is a carrier of culture.

Gakuo (2004) looks at alienation in Joseph Kamaru's songs and concludes that the artist uses the popular song genre as a way of coming to terms with the fragmentation brought about in the society by various alienating forces, while Kiura (2006) examines satire as an integral part of Newton Kariuki's artistry. He observes that the artist uses satire as a means to critique societal follies, wickedness by upholding them for ridicule. In addition to examining the language choices that the selected artists employ in their works, Chiuri (1984) makes a case for the study of the popular song as a contemporary subgenre of the song genre which has arisen from the demands of contemporary life as it addresses itself to a number of issues among them oppression, exploitation, dehumanization, disillusionment, poverty and materialism, all which are relevant to modern society.

Godwin Siundu (2010) offers an insightful postcolonial study of a popular artist among the Luhya community- Jacob Luseno and demonstrates how the artist employs the dynamics of

space and place with the aid of audio-technological interventions to reconfigure an Abaluhya ethno-nation within the emerging politics of competing ethno-nations. Siundu observes that Luseno does this by situating his music within a specific geographic locale- Western Kenya by using existing landmarks, as well as addressing familiar concerns of the wider Luhyia community- this is done through projecting his music to the wider Luhyia community- through the use of the various dialects of the Abaluhya community.

The artist (Luseno) blends different scenes- rural villages in Kakamega as well as urban places like the Carnivore restaurant in Nairobi as a way of “mapping journeys taken by the members of the Luhyia community”. Siundu observes that the Carnivore space in Luseno’s music is a site of ‘interconnections that records the aspirations of the Luhyia rural folks to go to the city and at the same time allows the urbane to experience a taste of the rural they left behind’.

Through his analysis Siundu brings into the fore issues that Luseno addresses like poverty, dispossession, marriage, excessive power of the state through the local representatives, all this articulated through the larger narrative of the Luhyia community- who are the target audience of the artist’s music. He demonstrates that through the use of the familiar trope of romance, power and the plight of the disposed, Luseno engages himself in discourses of locating himself within the larger Abaluhya community.

Siundu also observes that Luseno’s use of young dancers who combine new emerging dance styles that are being popularized by young urban musicians with the traditional shoulder shaking of the older generations. They also don tight fitting clothes which are now considered as currently in fashion. All these give Luseno’s songs a new lease of life as they make them appealing to the young listeners and viewers.

Siundu's study is innovative for it opens up new ways of looking at how contemporary artists working within the vernacular language realm negotiate through the issues of ethnic identities' within the larger competing nation-state identities.

Joyce Nyairo and James Ogude in 'Popular Music, popular politics: *Unbwogable* and the idiom of freedom in Kenyan popular Music', examine the politics that were involved in the production and the release of the song *Unbwogable* and its travel from the realm of entertainment into the public space of the transitional politics of 2002. Their study is an in-depth inquiry into the production, the moment of its creation and the circumstances of its existence within the artists life, the renaming as well as the migration and transformation of the said song mitigated by the scene in the music industry itself- piracy-, the issues it addressed that of determination and the larger politics of succession that were present at the time of the songs release. They argue that the politics of the music industry, timing as well as the political decisions- decision by the state controlled KBC to censor the song, as well as the decision by NARC to use it (*Unbwogable*) as their political anthem was instrumental in propelling the text to migrate across the different publics (from an entertainment song, to a political anthem and eventually to the official discourse of victory that it occupied in the aftermath of the 2002 general election).

They also illustrate how the NARC party appropriated other songs, Saida Karoli's *Maria Salome*, some gospel numbers, *Yote yawezekana* to woo voters as well as to augment *Unbwogable* message of resistance (in this case against KANU and all that the regime stood for) and perseverance (243). But more importantly they demonstrate how the song text *Unbwogable* provided the terms in which the Kenyan public could articulate personal emotions as well as wider political implications. It provided an idiom and harnessed the prevalent mood for change

and the rebirth in the nation. In their study they highlight the fact that ‘the meaning of a song text ‘does not always inhere inside the text, but rather it is negotiated, made, re-made as a text moves through a set of overlapping ‘scapes’ and ‘presences’”(239).

This study is informative especially where the author’s offers us an insight into the dynamics that the song text- *who can Bwogo me?* -call into play especially where the artists draw upon the common cultural repertoire of *pakruok* (self praise) among the Luo commonly found in musical performances (237), to show one’s social credentials and integrity.

Seleina Parsitau in ‘Sounds of change and Reform: The appropriation of Gospel Music and Dance in Political Discourses in Kenya’, on the other hand examines the appropriation of gospel music in social political discourses in Kenya. In the paper Parsitau argues that gospel music in Kenya has come of age, for it not only articulates the ‘gospel of good news’ but it also addresses social economic issues like HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse, ethnic clashes, corruption, drug abuse, poverty, bad governance, and economic hardships (69). Important to note is the author’s discussion of how Kenyan politicians have used gospel music to mobilize masses and drum up support as witnessed in 2002, 2005/2006 and in 2007, under the belief that music can usher in socio-economic changes. In this context the popular gospel songs ‘acquire new meanings altogether and strike a chord or evoke a different certain emotions in Kenyans’ (68). Parsitau also argues that gospel music, though heavily tinged with foreign influences-in tunes and styles- has borrowed from the traditional forms (has been culturally domesticated). This is in the form in which they are being rendered- in local Kenya languages, and some of the beats and rhythms resonate with Kenyan music and dance styles. She also observes that through the dancing styles, drumming and clapping contemporary gospel music has adapted to indigenous cultural dances to produce music that is Christian but also culturally relevant. She also observes that the Kenyan

gospel scene is shifting from hip-hop to embracing afro-fusion styles, dances and tunes especially with the Kenyans in the Diaspora who are looking for something different, something with an African touch. From this study we gather that gospel music is not rigid and so are all popular forms such that they have the capacity to borrow from other cultural spheres, and at the same time their meanings can be appropriated to suit other 'spheres' or publics. The present study hopes to build on these observations by examining how the popular artists of the popular song in Kikamba borrow from the folk songs to enhance their creativity as well as to enhance their material.

1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study uses semiotics, performance theory and ethno-poetics frameworks to interrogate live performance as an important component of the popular song.

In this study of performance, semiotics is employed in the premise that spectators process what they see actors/characters/ performers doing or saying on stage. Bruce McConachie observes that spectators "read signs", attempt to construct a possible meaning of the performance such that they are not just 'idle' spectators but are involved in a meaning making process (554). This implies that any utterance, gesture or facial expression made by the performer while on stage is liable to be interpreted by the audience in order to understand the performance. This assertion therefore helps us understand that whole performances are meaning making process where the audience is reading signs/made available by the performer, and the performer is in turn communicating something to the audience.

Semiotics can be defined as the scientific study of language as outlined by Roland Barthes. In semiotics, language is seen as a system of signs whose meaning does not inhere in the sign but in

the difference between one sign/code/binary oppositions and another. A sign is everything that can be taken as significantly substituting for something else (Eco *A Theory of Semiotics* 6).

In Roland Barthes conception of semiotics, “meaning develops through difference in all social contexts; including fashion, familial relations, dining and literature” (Bressler 112). All languages are based on self-enclosed system based on binary opposition (difference). The difference between the signifier (the word on the page) and the signified (the object in the world the word refers to) is arbitrary. Because it is arbitrary, differences between signs that give them meaning great emphasis is placed in oppositions and reversals of the signs themselves (Murkerji 60). The role of the analyst according to Chandra Mukerji is to find those systems of relationships among signs that give them their meanings, these systems is what Umberto Eco calls “semiotics of signification” which entails a “theory of codes”(Eco *A Theory of Semiotics* 4). In Umberto’s words “a signification system therefore a code” is present when there is a socially conventionalized possibility of generating sign-function. In this case the society plays a key role in the existence of a signification system. According to Roland Barthes the work of the analyst is to look for the specific codes within the text that allow meaning to occur. A reader should recognize these series of binary oppositions (systems of signification) in order to interpret the text. In this study the idea of signification is applied at the level of both the visual (non-verbal expressions present in the performance) and the verbal codes that help in the interaction between the performer and the audience.

Since the artists under study use the Kamba language, Semiotics helps us interrogate any kinds of signs that the artists project that help them to convey the Kamba culture to the audience. This can be discerned through the symbols, metaphors and figures of speech that the artists utilize in their songs in order to communicate to the audience.

This study also borrows from the ideas advanced by Richard Schechner on Performance theory. His theory views performance (which ranges from ritual, drama, play) from the performer stand point. For Schechner Performance means “never for the first time it means, for the second to the nth time...to put in personal(actors) terms restored behavior, is me behaving as if I am someone else, as if I am beside myself or not myself as when, I am in a trance” (Schechner, *Between Theatre and Anthropology* 36). In this case we assume that the performer of popular Song is acting a part if we go by Schechner’s definition of performance. This means that the performer is presenting the self as skilled in whatever they are doing, a skill mastered after many repetitions and rehearsals.

According to Schechner, behavior that is performed exists separate from the performer, therefore behavior can be stored, transmitted, manipulated, transformed (37). This means that performance exists separately from the performer, that the performer enacts certain behavior, what we see on stage. This is informative to this study for it enables us to conceptualize the recorded performances by the two selected artists as indeed performances which are mediated through technology. Although Schechner also holds out that recorded performances lose their immediacy, for original performances disappear as first as they appear, we hold that these recorded performances are still a vital part of the artist’s repertoire of artistic work. Restorations (of behavior) are immediate for they exist in space and time as wholes but the occasions are different, that is, the world view is different, the audience is different and the performers are different. (50). In a way every time an artist stands before an audience to perform, whatever actions he undertakes are restorations, of a previous behavior, an enactment with different set of expectations from his audience.

Performance Theory helps us to recognize that performances are actually performed before an audience. It recognizes that “whole performances sequence (training, workshop, rehearsal, warm up, performance cool down and aftermath is equal to restored behavior-twice behaved behavior” in Bert States words (States 16). The study therefore intends to discover whether there are any performance sequences when it comes to the performance of the popular song, whether the selected artists prepare/or go through any performance sequences before and after performances or their act is instantaneous.

Schechner’s theory emphasizes immediacy, ephemerality, peculiarity and everchangingness of performances. These are all characteristics or qualities of performances that delineate them from other processes. In a way each performance has an element of immediacy, it is peculiar, it is short lived and it changes. This might explain why people will strive to watch live performances even when there are recorded performances of the same. This is helpful in our study for it helps us see both recorded performances and live performances as variants of the artists work.

The present study also benefits from ideas advanced by Victor Turner on Ritual acts (Turner *The anthropology of Performance* 77). To Turner, ritual acts can be termed as “social dramas”, since they exhibit the same means of expressions employed on theatre stage. These modes of expressions are manual gestulations, facial expressions, body postures and stylized gestures in form of dance patterns (Komitee 5). In this research, the adoption of Turner’s ideas of the connection between social dramas and theatre helps us to conceptualize the performance of the popular song as also a performance itself, since it exhibits the same modes of expression as both theatre and ritual. Turner observes that “performances tend to be Liminal”, that is they are performed in privileged places and time set off from periods and areas reserved for work, food and sleep (Turner *The Anthropology of Performance* 101). In Turner’s view, Liminality is more

of a temporal space, “an in-between state characterized by heightened intensity”, which allows the “potential of behavior action and event to be achieved through gaining of new and transformative insight”. Therefore, Liminality helps in distinguishing between aesthetic performances from other kinds of performances. This means that performance of popular music being Liminal- having designated places of performance fits within what Turner calls “Cultural performances”. Following Turner’s argument, I would like to argue that the performance of the popular songs within entertainment places like bars and other public places makes them aesthetic performances and cultural performances.

Framing of performances is a very important aspect in performance theory for it helps us to recognise and discriminate performance from everyday life. In Victor Turner’s idea of performance, to frame is to discriminate a sector of socio-cultural action from the general ongoing process of a community’s life (Turner 140). In the study of performance, it is important then to investigate ways in which the artist frames his performance such that the audience knows that what they are about to witness is something different from their everyday interactions. This maybe in the form of opening formulas, or other ways that the artists interpellate their audience in a way that the audience is able to recognize that whatever the artist is doing is a performance.

This study therefore utilizes ideas advanced in performance theory so as to come in to terms with the idea of a performance as an interactive activity between the artist, his work and the audience.

Ethno-poetics focuses on the aesthetic component and the poetic structuring of oral art. Its methodology and theoretical foundation lies in the pragmatics, phenomenology, sociolinguistics, ethno-methodological conversation analysis, the ethnography of speaking and the performance

approach in American Folklore studies (Anttonen 113). There are two lines of perception within this framework advanced by Dell Hymes and Dennis Tedlock.

The Dell Hymes strand of ethno-poetics is based on the idea that works of verbal art are subtle organizations of lines and verses, and that lines and verses are “organized in a way that are not poetic but also a kind of rhetoric of action (sic) in that they embody an implicit cultural scheme for the organization of experience” (7). Therefore, these expressions are founded upon a socially constituted poetic structure that is presented both in the organization of experience as well as the organization of reports on that experience (Anttonen 113). The Dell Hymes strand focuses on the stylistics and grammatical features in order to find the formal poetic structure of a text and the underlying rhetoric form in the text.

Dennis Tedlock strand on the other hand places emphasis on the oral nature of texts and the dependence of the organization of the text upon lines. In the presentation each line is put forth in such a way as to render its fullest available charge of texture, rhythm, nuance phrasing and metaphors- factors which may depend on relation to the other lines by parallelism, redundancy, grouping (Tedlock 1983). It (approach) stresses that aural qualities in performance (variation, in pitch volume, vowel length) are central to the organization of speech and in the words of Mills (25) “they convey to the listener a sense of the relative importance of propositions and their connections with each other which are essential aspects of meaning”

1.10 METHODOLOGY

The present study aimed at collecting and studying performances staged by the two selected artists namely Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua. This was done through Fieldwork research, which entailed Field trips to the locations where the artists are performing live. The researcher

used participant-observation method of data collection to collect data for analysis. The researcher used digital recorders and cam-coders to capture both the audio and the visual aspects of the performances after obtaining consent from the artists to record and take pictures while they performed. Through participant-observation of both the performer and the audience, the researcher was able to: 1) discern the decisions that the performer makes in order to make the interaction with the audience more livelier, 2) discern the signs that the audience makes which enable the performer to adjust his performance accordingly so as to keep the interest of the audience high. These signs may be 1) verbal-communicated through an exchange between the audience and the performer or 2) non-verbal-in the form of the persona of the artist, gestures or facial expressions made by both the performer and the audience. These signs constitute an integral part in the understanding of the performance activity and through fieldwork research; we were able to understand the performance as a transformational and interpretive engagement.

In translating the material, the researcher was guided by Eugene Nida's insight into the dynamics of translations. Nida holds that there are no identical equivalents in translations- and one has to find the "closest natural equivalent". Nida identifies two basic translation orientations, the Formal Equivalence method, whose goal is to reproduce literally and meaningfully the form and the content of the original source whereas Dynamic Equivalence (functional equivalence) aims at "naturalness" of expression, by trying to convey the thought expressed in the original source. The researcher in translating the material tried to capture the thoughts expressed in the collected material.

CHAPTER TWO: FIELDWORK RESEARCH

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the fieldwork carried out by the researcher on the performances staged by the two selected artists. The researcher made a total of three field trips to the different venues where the two selected artists, Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua were performing.

These live performances are important avenues through which the artists get a chance to interact with their audiences face-to face. They are avenues through which artists propagate their social visions through the thematic concerns that they address within the songs that they perform. This chapter deals with fieldwork by looking at the structure of these performances in terms of the venue(context), the audience, costumes , instruments, the performer, framing of the performances, the incorporation of dance and any improvisations that the performer does in order to liven the performance

I set out to discover whether there are any differences that arise in the performances staged by the two selected artists, especially if there is a change in the venue of performance which ultimately translates to a change in the composition of the audience.

In this study I chose to examine performances in two different locations, so as to get a comparative angle on which to compare the data obtained in the field. The first location was within the urban space. The location was an up-market restaurant known as the Carnivore. It is located in the South Western part of Nairobi city. My aim was to observe and to document performances by the two artists within the locale of the urban space. The other location of my study had to be outside the city space. I therefore settled for performances staged in two locales outside Nairobi. The first one was at Kendas restaurant which is found along the Machakos-

Nairobi road in Machakos Agricultural showground. It is approximately 2 kilometers from Machakos town. The performance there was staged by Bosco Mulwa on the 17th July 2011.

The second performance was at Kangundo-Tala at the Broadway restaurant, along the Nairobi- Kitui road. Tala is a small town approximately 62 Kilometers from Nairobi. The performance there was staged by Kennedy Wambua on the 30th July 2011.

I will first examine the performances staged by the artists within the city and then proceed to analyze the performances staged outside the city.

2.2 PERFORMANCE IN NAIROBI

The performance took place on the 3rd June 2011 at the Carnivore Restaurant. This is an up-market restaurant located in the South western part of Nairobi city. Its location on the outskirts of the city offers convenience in terms of access. The venue is very popular especially for its theme nights dubbed “Cultural nights”, as Godwin Siundu observes in “The musical reconfiguration of the Abaluhya community in Jacob Luseno’s Music”

...the Carnivore space becomes a site of interconnectedness, recording the aspirations of the Luhya rural folks to go to the city and at the same time allowing the urbane to experience a taste of the rural life they left behind...the Mulembe night phenomenon is part of a wider project that has become common place in urban Nairobi in recent years, which entails an ethnic based regrouping occasionally to remind themselves of the rural lifestyle they had lost contact with, through sharing traditional food, music and dance. Such meetings invariably give participants a chance to momentarily; if not symbolically return to their roots [...] at the same time confirm their status as an uprooted lot in the quest for stabilizing roots. (73)

Thus these cultural nights offer an opportunity and a chance for the urban people to get to celebrate their cultural roots. The social event on the day of my fieldwork was a cultural Kamba night named “Musinzili Night”(Musical night) organized and facilitated by The Carnivore Restaurant, Safaricom Company (a mobile telephone company that sponsors such cultural events) and Mbaitu Fm, a privately owned radio station that broadcasts in Kikamba Language. This setting offered a good opportunity for me to observe the different performance styles of the selected artists.

The audience

The audience for this performance was constituted through language- Kikamba language. This means that the majority of the people attending the performance were those who understood the language used by the artists in their works. This was signified by 1) the artists invited to perform, chief among them Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua- both use Kikamba language as the language of their art. 2) The facilitator and co-sponsor of the event, Mbaitu Fm a Kikamba radio station which uses the Kikamba language for broadcasting. In addition, the audience was also constituted through the physical location of the venue. Richard Schechner in “Behaviour Performance and performance space” observes that “restaurant, sex and theatre belong to the same district [...] the type of location of a performance venue draws a certain class of people (102). This therefore means that a certain class of people will attend performances depending on the location of these performances. The audience present at the Carnivore performance was middle class, as the venue is located within a middle class area.

The researcher observed that the majority of the people in the audience were Kamba. This is because the majority spoke Kikamba language and when the artists were performing they sung

along with the artists. They also danced with abandon, and were careful to enact the gestures, facial expressions that the song text required. For example, when Kennedy Wambua was performing the song “**Who shaved me**”, the majority of the members of the audience would make those gestures that asks an imaginary third party the question that Kennedy Wambua raises in the song. He asks “Why are you lying that I shaved my dread locks/yet I see that they are fine”. The authentic Kamba fans on the dance floor pointed at that imaginary person. In addition they would touch their heads- which were of course shaved- in order to indicate that the said dreadlocks were still in place. Therefore, only a person who knows and understands what the song is talking about can carefully enact the facial expressions and gestures that the song calls for.

It was very difficult for the researcher to determine which audience was for which artist due to the fact that both artists were performing at the same venue. The only way to differentiate which audience belonged to which artist was by observing who left the dance floor when a particular artist left the stage. Even this did not work, for I observed that the same people remained on the dance floor once Bosco Mulwa finished his performance and Kennedy Wambua took the stage and the dance floor filled on both occasions when the artist’ were performing. This signified that the audience present identified with the artistic works of both the artists and they were there to listen to the two artists’.

The audience cheered wholeheartedly when the artists’ got on stage. They were ready to comply with the instructions which the performer gave as cues to his performance. This is true when Bosco Mulwa got on stage to start his performance. He strummed the first notes of the song “**Mother**” and he asked the audience whether they were ready. The audience responded to this with cheers and whistles- a sign of their readiness to participate in his performance. This

display of enthusiasm served as a cue to the performer that they were listening and thus the performance could begin.

In addition the researcher noted that the entertainment manager was careful to bring the two artists after all the other artists have performed. Bosco Mulwa performed his first session before Kennedy Wambua. This meant that after Bosco performed, the Master of the Ceremony took to the stage to invite Kennedy Wambua.

The audience was composed of people of varying age, both young people in their 20's and more mature people in their late 30's and early 40's. Most of the young people took to the dance floor when Kennedy Wambua was performing. The more mature people within the audience took to the dance floor when Bosco Mulwa went on stage and when he left, they immediately left the stage to stand on the sidelines and watch the more enthusiastic young people dance and gyrate to Kennedy Wambua's music. This implied that they identified more to Bosco Mulwa's music more than Kennedy Wambua's music.

Bosco Mulwa

Bosco Mulwa performed two sessions on stage. During the first session, he performed his own songs. These include: **“The Kamba Customs”**, **“Mukii”** and **“Lydia Wanzila”** and the **“Improvised section”**. During the second session he performed only one of his songs **“Mother”** and four **“Cover songs”** discussed in Chapter Five. These cover songs are popular songs by his predecessors-the first generation artists like Kakai Kilonzo, Sammy Kilunda, Peter Muambi and his Munyambu band. The artist (Bosco Mulwa) pays tribute to them by performing their songs. This also offered the audience a true cultural experience since these songs recalls an earlier period and mood, providing a memory of the nostalgic past.

The artist succeeded in establishing a rapport with his audience. He constantly engaged his audience in a dialogue. We see this dialogue in the improvised section, which reveals that he was aware that his audience might lose interest in his performance because his songs are lengthy. He also encouraged the audience to participate in singing, by letting the audience finish the lines to his songs. He first sang the first lines to his song, and then pointed the microphone to the audience. This gesture functioned as a 'frame' such that the audience interpreted it as a sign for them to finish the line to the song being performed. This was not set out in explicit terms but through an interpretive process, using gestures as Thiong'o states, "...performance is an interpretive process" (139) in this case both on the part of the performer and the audience. This was more explicit when the artist performed the song "**Mother**", where the audience joined him enthusiastically. The structure of this song renders it for a participatory exchange. The four lines in each stanza in the first four stanzas of the song ensure that the soloist can sing one line, then pause, and the audience takes the next one alternatively. These lines are very short which aid in memorization and the prolonged pauses ensure that the audience can join in before the singer can resume singing the next line.

Mother ii mother.../ I will never forget you.../ mother ii mother.../ you are my love.

Once the artist sung the first line the audience took up the next line and the participatory singing enriched the whole performance.

Bosco Mulwa's performance incorporated very few supporting Musicians. This is because he is renowned as a one-man guitarist -a phenomenon that is slowly fading out but which was very common with the first generation of Kamba popular recording artists. His band for the performance at the Carnivore consisted of himself, a drummer, and a guitarist. He is also

renowned as the lead vocalist among the Kamba Musicians. He plays the bass guitar and this means that his performance did not involve a lot of body movement as well as gestures. His only emotions came through facial expressions.

His costume consisted of a suit, which emphasized the seriousness of his work and the formal nature of the occasion. His costume can also be interpreted as a sign emphasizing his stature as an older, more dignified musician. This however did not impede his connection with the audience which varied in age. This was demonstrated through his rapport with the audience which was immense.

The Master of ceremony introduced each artist at a time. Bosco was the first artist to take the stage. He never spoke to the audience but he simply strummed the first beats of his most popular song “**Mother**”. This in my view was a way of framing his performance, by introducing himself indirectly through this song. He did not perform that song but after a few beats he performed the first song for the night which was “**The Kamba Customs**”. This reinforces the fact that those first few beats of the song “**Mother**” functioned as introductory cues to his performance.

When he got on stage the second time, he first performed his own song “**Mother**” and then verbally informed the audience that he would perform songs by his predecessors. This framed the performance such that the audience was aware whose work the artist was performing at what point.

Bosco Mulwa’s music is very slow, and follows the conventions of the “Twist Dance” in its rhythm such that the audience was forced to adopt it if they wanted to dance. The researcher observed that the young people within the audience were able to synchronize their dancing styles with the pace of the music. They also adopted new ways of engaging with the music like twirling

their partners around, or suddenly breaking into a vigorous dance gyration before resuming the slow dance movements.

The artist encouraged his audience to dance by uttering evocations that commanded and encouraged the audience to dance like,

Cheza ngoma dansi ya Bosco Mulwa/ dansi ya Makueni

Dance to Bosco Mulwa's rhythm/ a dance from Makueni

And

Here is a nice dance/feel the good feeling in the air/this baby is dancing well

These lines within the improvised section encouraged the audience to keep dancing.

During the first session of his performance Bosco Mulwa embarked on an improvisation mechanism- a mode of play where he simply strummed his guitar but actively engaged his audience verbally through a call and response technique. This exchange is transcribed verbatim and indexed as **“Improved section”**. Bosco Mulwa as a performer possessed an awareness that his audience which was diverse, might lose interest in his performance. He therefore used the technique of ‘Play’ in order to maintain the rhythm of the performance thus keeping the audience engaged. This improvisation, involved the performer prompting his audience to clap their hands, prompting them to repeat several times the name of a popular young stand up Comedian-Erick Omondi- who was not even present at the performance. Here Bosco Mulwa places himself within the larger discourse of urban entertainment through this reference to the popular comedian.

“Play’ offers a moment for, “creativity and invention” in the words of Henry Bial (Komitee 19). It is an important component of performance. It is often thought of as a spontaneous/unplanned aspect of a given performance, an element of surprise or freedom that cannot be prescribed. Play therefore makes a performance less static and more enjoyable on the part of the audience.

This can also be viewed as a moment of “composition” as Ruth Finnegan observes that improvisation offers an opportunity for composition (8). In this instance, Bosco Mulwa composed a totally new piece which is entirely within the realm of this performance which served the purpose of breaking monotony and therefore eliminating boredom. The audience response through cheers signified they accepted this act within the performance.

Through this exchange I conclude that Bosco Mulwa is an entertainer and a performer who is consciously aware of his audience and understands that the audience is susceptible to boredom if he performs his lengthy songs. Bosco Mulwa did not focus so much on how many songs of his own he performed (only four) but his focus was clearly on attracting and keeping his audience with him.

Kennedy Wambua

Kennedy Wambua also performed in two sessions. He came on stage after Bosco Mulwa’s first session at around 11.30 pm. He again took the stage at around 3 am after Bosco Mulwa was through with his second act. He performed a total of 28 songs (12 songs during his first session and 16 songs during his second session). He performed one song after another without any break and this ensured that he performed as many songs as possible in one night. The researcher

discovered that Kennedy Wambua performed his own music only. He did not perform any cover song from other artists.

As a performer, he did not engage his audience in any kind of audience participation. The audience participation was out of their impulse but not the performer's continued effort to engage them. Even though the artist did not actively seek audience participation, the audience was eager to participate in the performance. They enacted all the gestures that his songs called for (intentional gestures infused within the song-text).

Kennedy Wambua's on-stage persona was more luminary. He did not work hard at creating rapport with the audience. This is as a result of his public profile as one of the leading Benga artists in the country. In addition, his public persona is highly mediated through his own music. He addresses some of his personal controversies like: the shaving of his dreadlocks, flying the national flag on his car and his political ambitions in his music, and this works to reinforce his image as a "celebrity" or "a star". This works to his advantage such that his audience is already enthusiastic about him the minute he steps on stage.

He did not frame or introduce his performance in any specific way. Once the Master of ceremony introduced him, the artist got on stage and started performing. However the researcher found out that the artist started performing his most popular songs like "**Who shaved me**" and "**Doctor Mueni**". I conclude that by starting his performance with these songs, he indirectly introduced himself to his audience.

The artist was backed by his own band- Yatta Orchestra international band. It consists of 15 band members excluding him, who are all under his employment. The band was split into two groups. One group of 8 members performed early in the night at 7.30 pm before the official

program of the evening began. The other group consisting of three guitarists, a drummer and three back-up singers performed with the artist during the two sessions of his performance. The band members wore red Maasai print shirts and black trousers as their costumes. This can be interpreted as an attempt to create an authentic African look. This costume also sets the band members apart from the rest of the audience. The artist on the other hand donned a T-shirt and denim trousers as his costume. His casual attire cannot however be interpreted as a casual attitude towards his work. It could be interpreted as a mediated way of connecting with his young fans within the audience. He did not play any instrument on stage, and this gave him enough freedom to incorporate gestures and body movement, both intentional and unintentional within his performance.

Kennedy Wambua's music is fast-paced. It therefore demands a more fast-paced dance moves from the audience. Although it is very hard to pinpoint a specific dance style within the popular song in Kikamba that can be said to be entirely Kamba, observing the audience when Kennedy Wambua was performing, the researcher identified a particular dance move that is specific to the Kamba popular music.

This dance move involved the sudden break from whatever dance moves the dancer was making, then the dancer made a bow-legged posture, at the same time vigorously shaking the legs (the knees) to the rhythm of the guitar. This dance move was executed at the climax of each song where only the rhythm guitar and the drums were being played while the singer was silent or hailing greetings to his friends. This can be inferred from the photograph (Figure 1) where the two men on the foreground of the photograph are executing the same dance move.

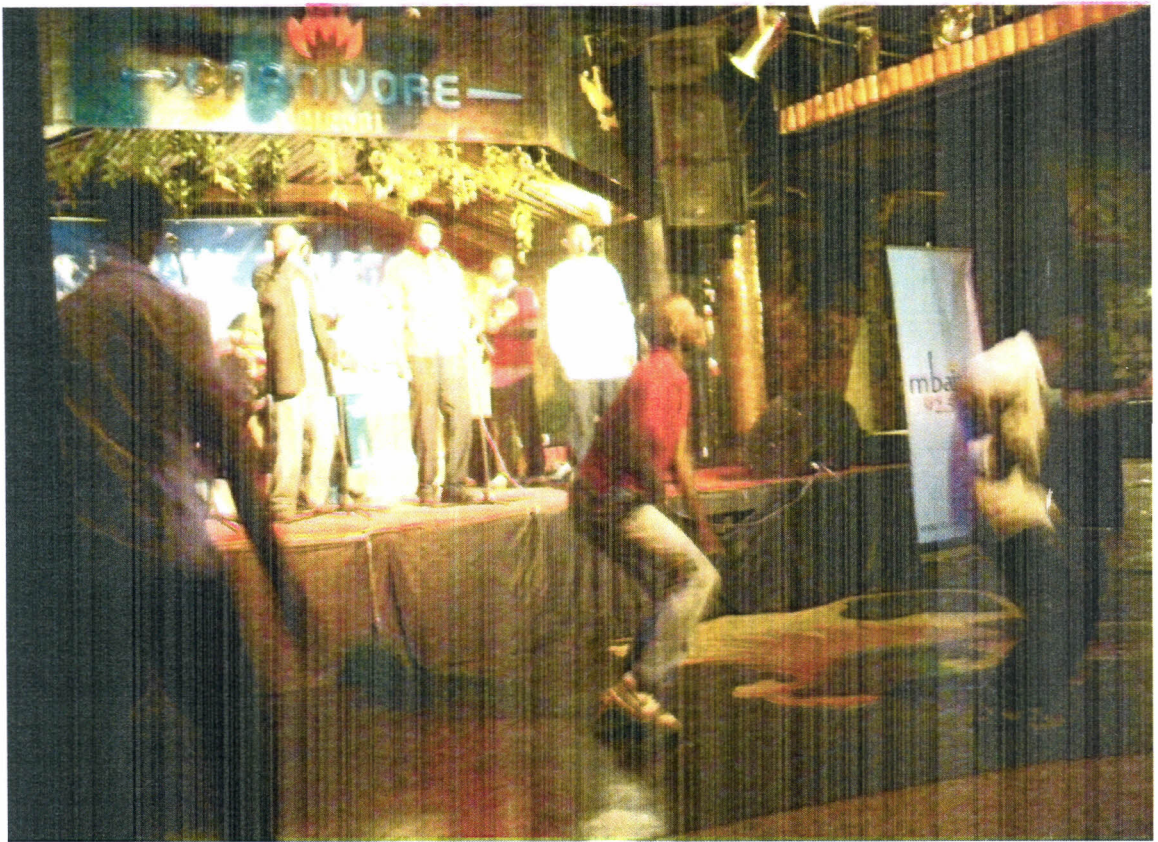


Figure 1 Dancers on the dance floor.

I argue that because of its (the above dance style) inclusion within the performance of the popular song, it can be termed as the popular Kamba dance. Although the Akamba are known for the shaking of their shoulders as their “traditional” dance style, the absence of shoulder shaking within the contemporary popular song performance in Kikamba signifies the new changes that have gripped the society. It also signifies the ability of the young people to create new dances that correspond to the new rhythms of the popular music.

The young in the audience seem to respond to his lyrics through dancing with a lot of vigor. His more bawdy songs were received with a lot of enthusiasm from the audience

2.3 PERFORMANCE OUTSIDE THE CITY

The researcher attended two other field trips to attend performances of the two artists as follows;

Bosco Mulwa's Performance in Machakos

The performance took place on the 17th July 2011 at Machakos. The venue is Kendas restaurant a subsidiary of Kendas group of hotels. There is a very low turn out of audience which can be attributed to the fact that it is on a Sunday in the middle of the month. The performer is Bosco Mulwa. The performance started early at around 8pm with a break after one hour. He later took the stage at around 10 pm and completed his performance at around 11pm. During the first act, he performed cover songs of the oldies or 'zilizopendwa'. During this performance he did only one cover song, "**I have spent many nights outside**". This song contains a chant that was incorporated within another cover song, "**Give me my stick**", performed at the Carnivore. I discuss both of these cover songs in detail in Chapter five.

It is only during the second act that he performed three of his songs- "**Mother**" and "**Mukii**" and "**Lydia Wanzila**". He did not perform the song "**Where are the Kamba Customs**". This is because this song was suited within the context of a cultural night, but within the performance at Machakos it was not relevant so the artist left it out. Therefore we can conclude that the context of performance influences the choice of songs that the performer performs in a given context.

Although Bosco Mulwa tried to engage his audience, they do not respond with so much enthusiasm as the researcher witnessed with his previous performance at the Carnivore. It was only when he embarked on some songs with lewd jokes especially the cover song "**I have spent many nights spent outside**", that they joined by clapping and cheering at him.

Like you my dear Mukony'o for breaking wind

{Cheers from the crowd}

I like you may dear Mukony'o for sweating

{Because of that}

Despite the restaurants theme 'as the popular entertainment spot in Machakos', the attendance was very low. The dance floor had less than 10 people at a time and towards the end there were no people in the dance floor but they were attentive to him when he was chanting the last part of the cover song "**I have spent many nights spent outside**".

The atmosphere was quite relaxed, more of a place for relaxation rather than a jam packed show-like the carnivore performance or Kennedy Wambua's performance at Tala. Bosco Mulwa was dressed in a T-shirt and a black trouser. There was an absence of the official aura that surrounded his performance in Nairobi. His band consisted of Himself and a drummer. He played the guitar and this restricted his freedom to make gestures and other body movements.

The audience comprised of middle aged people mostly couples and groups of friends. The young people were indeed very few. The small audience cheered enthusiastically, but turned to their companions once Bosco Mulwa started his performance.

There was no entrance fee but it was expected that whoever came in would buy drinks. While he was performing "**Mother**" Bosco calls his son on stage who he dedicates the song to. The son joined him on stage and sang alongside him gesturing with him about the mother's love and care and the gratefulness of the performer for her care and love.

At this venue a proscenium stage like the one at the Carnivore was missing. Therefore the performer was far removed from the audience which was sited at a much farther distance from him. Even the dance floor is at the center of the room which is not exactly a room but rather a semi- open rectangular place. Only the sitting areas and a small raised dance floor have overheard shelter- a roof. There are some areas which are in the open. I argue that this huge distance between the audience and the performer contributed to the low interaction between them. In addition the atmosphere of relaxation that permeated the setting could not allow any kind of interaction between performer and audience. This implies that Bosco Mulwa did not encourage his audience to dance or to sing along with him. He just sang his songs without attempting to engage them in the performance. The audience paid little attention to the performer, only occasional glances towards the performer and very few cheers at the end of the performance.

Kennedy Wambua's performance in Tala Kangundo

This performance took place 30th July 2011 on a Saturday night, the venue was Broadway bar and restaurant. It is the largest restaurant in the town and another popular artist John Muasa performed together with Kennedy Wambua. Although the setting was the same as Bosco's performance in Machakos- a bar, the atmosphere was not a relaxed one. This might be because of Kennedy Wambua's public persona, where by audiences usually flock the venue where he is performing in order to see him and hear him sing. The entrance fee was 200 shillings which is relatively affordable to many people. The place was packed even before the performance started.

The audience comprised of mostly young people in their 20's and 30's. There was a notable gender imbalance with most of the people in the audience being men. Women were not as many as the men. This might be because of the fact that, Tala is fairly removed from the capital centre

therefore the people are a little bit conservative when it comes to women going to night clubs, as compared to the urban dwellers who are more liberal. The audience showed the same level of enthusiasm as his Carnivore audience if not more. Kennedy Wambua took the stage at around 10.30 pm. But before he went on stage as usual half of his band had been entertaining the audience since 8 pm with some of the songs that he still performed on stage.

During this particular performance I observed that Kennedy Wambua did not restrict the audience from touching his dreadlocks or joining him on stage. He even allowed one of the fans to sing on the microphone while he (the performer) took a short break. This was very different from his Carnivore performance and the only explanation might be the fact that this was a much less formal setting compared to the one at The Carnivore which was surrounded by the glare of public media. Through this act, Kennedy Wambua in a way tried to dissipate the distance between him and his performers therefore encouraging a better interaction between the performer and the audience and the song text.

Kennedy Wambua performs at least 21 of his songs in each of his public appearances like his performances at the Carnivore performance. In other occasions he performs a lesser number of songs but the number is always above 15 songs. In this context (at Tala) he performed only 15 songs and again all the songs performed were only the most popular songs within the total collection of his artistic repertoire. This is without factoring in the songs that the other half of his band performed. The researcher decided to leave out all those songs performed by the band without its lead figure the artist himself because when it comes to Kennedy Wambua, as John Cawelti in "Performance and Popular Culture", observes "the physical presence of the performer reinforces the work" (17). Therefore the physical presence of Kennedy Wambua determined and in a way reinforced the way his live performances were received by his audience.

As a critical observer I noted that when the band that performs without him was on stage there were very few members of the audience on the dance floor. But when Kennedy Wambua takes the stage, the audience filled in the small dance floor such that even getting a glimpse of him was very difficult, one had to shove and push in order to get anywhere near him.

There were two songs that he performed at Tala which he did not perform at the Carnivore. These were “**The Hare and the Elephant**” and “**Simon Munyw’oki**”. The song “**The Hare and the Elephant**” is a symbolic criticism of people who are ungrateful. The song takes the form of a narrative and the artist narrates it to the audience. He starts with the warning that the elephant offers to the hare not to cross a deep river on his own,

The elephant said to the hare

This is a deep river

Do not try to cross it like an elephant

You will drown

Then singer talks of the elephant’s offer to take the hare on his back as they cross the river

The elephant said to the hare

Get on my back

But if you ever want to go back

You are on your own

and finally the mocking manner of the hare that prompt the elephant to walk away but also reminding the hare that he is on his own,

The elephant helped the hare

And they crossed safely

But when they reached the other end

The hare told the elephant that he has done nothing

The elephant did not mind he went away

The elephant did not mind he went on his way

If you ever want to go back you have to do it on your own.

The artist in this song offers the society with an example of ungrateful animal which represents some members in the society. He therefore illuminates the need for the people to show gratitude when they are helped.

The only political song that he performs is “**Simon Munyw’oki**” although in this song he expresses his desire to vie for a parliamentary seat in Yatta the song is about lasting friendship between friends. He appeals unto his long-time friend Simon Munyw’oki a business man to lend him support in his aspirations. He underscores the importance of his support and advice as the only thing that will ensure that he captures the seat.

CHAPTER THREE: THEMATIC ISSUES

“...all art is metaphor and form. Verbal arts such as poetry, songs sayings, proverbs and tales conform to this rule. They express the experience of contemporary situations or events, morals to be drawn from such occurrences or situations to express emotions associated with them” (Vansina, Oral History 11).

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the song-texts/ the lyrics of the songs that the artists performed on stage, on the four different occasions. First we examine Bosco Mulwa’s songs (his own songs) that he performed at the two venues namely, The Carnivore Restaurant (in Nairobi) and at the Kendas restaurant (in Machakos). This analysis leaves out the cover songs that Bosco Mulwa performed on these two occasions, because they will be dealt with in chapter four under the section of “cover songs”. After examining the thematic engagements in Bosco Mulwa’s songs we move on to analyze Kennedy Wambua’s Song, which he performed at The Carnivore (Within Nairobi city) and at Broadway Restaurant (at Kangundo, located at approximate 62 kilometers from the city).

Artists are able to articulate their concerns through the art because it offers them an artistic license to do so. As Kimani Njogu observes, ‘Songs are in addition to their artistic appeal, vital tools with which to explore how social events and political events are shaped and understood by the citizens’ (xi). Through their art- through their songs artists are able to transmit their propaganda, explore different issues that affect the society as well as capture the frustrations, joys, disillusionment and triumphs of the people.

3.2 BOSCO MULWA'S THEMATIC CONCERNS

The artist Bosco Mulwa's carefully selects the songs that he performs on stage according to the venue. His artistic repertoire addresses diverse issues like politics (mostly political propaganda), the HIV/AIDS epidemic, philosophical issues like morality, death and love. Here I discuss only those thematic issues that emerge from the songs performed during the two field events outlined above. Through this analysis we might see a connection between the context of the performance and the songs that a particular artist chooses to perform in that specific context.

During the performance at the Carnivore restaurant - which is a cultural themed performance- night, Bosco performs only three of his songs. These are: '**Kithio Kya Mukamba**, "**The Akamba Customs**", "**Lydia Wanzila**', and "**Matha**", "**Mother**".

The song "**Kithio kya Mukamba**", "**The Akamba Customs**", is an appropriate song for the occasion- which aims at exposing the Kamba urban dwellers and any other curious person - to the cultural roots of the Kamba community through Kamba music and food. This song is a critique of the Western influences of Christianity that contributed to the destruction of the traditional way of life- the customs of the Kamba people. He deploys different signs that work connotatively to refer / link to this traditional life which no longer exists. He uses images of food (fermented porridge, sour milk, ghee, honey, millet cake, sweet potatoes and ground cassava), herbal medicine, and shrines to point at specific way of life that has been lost. Here the artist tries to deal with History- he validates the authenticity of the Kamba community by highlighting some of the prominent people within the history of that community, he refers to prophets like Syokimau and Mwatu wa Nzuma, whose role in the history of the Kamba community and the

larger Kenyan nations apparent, for example Syokimau- a prophetess prophesied about the coming of the white man and the railroad.

The artist also engages in what can be termed as “eco-activism” (the advocacy of healthy co-existence between man and the environment). He talks of the destruction that was wrought on to the environment with the destruction of Shrines (forests) with the coming of the Whiteman. It is a veiled criticism of the inability of Man to co-exist with nature and the consequence of this is the lack of rain and a persistent drought that characterizes most of sub-Saharan Africa.

When the Whiteman came

He burnt down our shrines

And rains stopped coming

Although this might be termed as a nostalgic yearning of the past, a past that cannot be recovered, the stark reality that he paints, the absence of rains and the persistence of drought is a very pertinent social reality. The mention of “Africa”, the artist makes a veiled connection to the idea of pan-africanism and discourses of “African Unity” by implying that Africa suffers the same affliction of drought, famine and lack of rains.

The song, “**Matha**”, “**Mother**”, is a celebration of ones Parents especially Mothers because of their nurturing care and love that they bestowed unto us from our infancy to maturity. This song alludes intertextually to other popular songs that celebrate the love of a mother. First this song alludes to “**A song for Mama**” (1997); by the American R&B (Rhythm and Blues) group Boyz II men. It also alludes to the song “**Dear Mama**” (1995), by the American Hip Hop singer Shakur Tupac. Through intertextuality the influences of other Music genres like the Hip Hop and

R&B are implied with the underlying idea of “cultural flows”, through “Mediascapes” as outlined by Appadurai (28).

This song celebrates the role of the parents in our upbringing; chief among them is the provision of food, clothes, education and good health. The artist reflects on the values that parents instill in their children by using himself as an example. These values include self reliance, perseverance and the need to respect other people’s property. These are values that not only enhance the growth of an individual but they ensure a peaceful co-existence between individuals in the society.

The artist as the voice of moral agency admonishes the young people to respect their parents- something that should be done as an obligation and second as a commandment from God. The artist offers a word of to those who move to the urban areas and forget about their parents in the rural areas. He says;

Our parents must be respected

They should not be taken for granted

When we are in Nairobi, we should remember our mothers

If it were not for your parents, where would you be my love?

During the performance of this song, the artist deploys a mode of participation where he sings the first part of a line, and the audience completes the line for the artist. This active engagement ensures that the audience participates fully in the rendition of the song.

In the last stanza, the singer adopts a playful tone that might imply the celebration of alcoholism, through repetitive use of the idea of a drunk (person). Although the artist does not overtly distinguish between the traditional brew and the contemporary alcoholic drinks, his criticism of young people indulgence in alcoholism implies the conservative traditional view of

“drinking of alcohol” as a mark of respect within the society. The artist uses the word “drunk” not as a signifier of ‘too much alcohol’ but as a praise name that designates maturity and respect, in the traditional point of view. This can be deduced by looking at the people he names/points as drunks. These are people who exercise some form of influence in the society (Engineers, artists like himself). He says,

Father of Jimmy I want to call you a drunk

Engineer Muange, I want to call you a drunk

Mwangangi wa Kyama, I want to call you a drunk

Even me I want to be called a drunk

Bosco Mulwa I want to be called a drunk

In the song “**Mukii**” the artist uses the trope of love to critique the nature of male- female relationships. He uses images like “fruits of a tree” to symbolize the love and respect that should exist between couples. Their shared love will be their happiness as they will enjoy their children in the house. Bosco Mulwa- the artist argues that “Marriage should be based on love”, and the ability to reap the fruits of the marriage bond is only possible if the partners remain faithful and take care of the love. The contemporary society has been gripped by a rush for materialism and the fundamental values that held the marriage unity are slowly eroding. Bosco Mulwa’s message therefore seeks to reassure and remind his audience of these fundamental values. He says,

I want to marry you because I love you

Please take care of our love So that we can harvest its fruits

The fruit of our love

When we are in the house happy with our children

The artist uses metaphorical words to caution his audience against Greed. He uses a Kamba saying “huge scoops will break a spoon” to demonstrate that greed leads to destruction. This

implies that love might be destroyed by lust (which is greed). He would prefer that they enjoy their love in small amounts (spoonfuls, small amounts of like prescription) than rushing into marriage consent or sexual relations that will destroy the relationship. At the level of ideology, this can be understood as a way of advocating abstinence within the contemporary context of HIV/AIDS epidemic.

A prescription that will heal my beloved
Is not taken in large amounts
A nice body lotion my beautiful one
Is not used in large amount, you use it sparingly like medicine.

In the song “**Lydia Wanzila**”, the artist admonishes the society against excessive pride. It also cautions against the dangers of materialism especially when it comes to love relationships. The poet laments that:

I proposed to you but you abused me and said no
You said you were unavailable to me for I wear sandals
With a tobacco beard like a goat and patched trousers
I should step out of your way
Please be humble lady Wanzila

The song also invokes the cultural belief that the place of the woman is within the marriage institution. This is indirectly invoked by the assertion that

Lydia Wanzila, Lydia Wanzila
You are a beautiful lady
But stop being haughty
Because you will end up with children and unmarried

The artist asserts that excessive beauty is dangerous if it leads to the destruction of other peoples' relationships in the society. The virtue being emphasized here is humility which can only ensure healthy relationships within the society.

In conclusion, Bosco Mulwa articulates the positive elements of human character that help build better relationships within the society. These are love, care and respect of one's parents, love and fidelity within marriage, humility and restraint against greed. On the other hand he points at the weakness of the human character that lead to problems within marriages and other relationships in the society. These include greed, lack of respect for ones parents, excessive pride and also the abdicating of responsibility towards the younger people in the society.

3.3 KENNEDY WAMBUA'S THEMATIC CONCERNS

Kennedy Wambua's uses the trope of love to criticize the weaknesses inherent within the society. The majority of his songs deal with love. This can be seen in the variety of the songs that he performed at, the Cultural night staged at The Carnivore restaurant within the city. As I have earlier observed, he performs almost the same songs in each occasion. Here I discuss the thematic issues raised in the songs that he performed at the two separate contexts of performance under study, that is, at the Carnivore restaurant and at Kangundo- Tala.

Kennedy Wambua's Music repertoire addresses a lot of issues among them love and Marriage, politics – especially his own political aspirations, entertainment mostly the business of singing and entertaining people as well as leisure. His music explores and exposes the “desires” of the individuals living in a materialistic society. Most of his songs therefore celebrate this desire- desire for leisure, desire for money, desire for beautiful women, desire for political position and consequently prestige. But this artist also addresses issues like HIV/AIDS, poverty (especially in lower Eastern province- Ukambani). The artist makes a conscious choice of the songs that he performs in one context (at The Carnivore), these are mostly songs that deal with 1)

desire for the female body (and this is organized as love), 2) entertaining-songs that celebrate the fame of his Yatta Orchestra band, the places they have taken their music and 3) songs that deal with the controversy in his public persona. Consequently there is a deliberate avoidance of songs that deal with politics and songs that address the situation in Ukambani (the lack of water and the recurring Drought in the region). This is in line with Jan Vansina's observation that 'the occasion of performance determines the intent and the frequency of the performance' in this case the occasion should be appropriate to the piece being performed' (34). In the popular song performance, the artists seem to choose their pieces depending on the venue which directly determines the function of the performance. The analysis of the songs is done following the sequence of Kennedy Wambua's songs as they appear within the appendix.

The song "**The Hare and the Elephant**" is a criticism of ingratitude. This criticism is brought out through the binary opposition of Big/Small as signs the function to criticize and represent the presence or absence of power. Through the folk-tale narrative mode the artist is able to talk about power and ability versus powerlessness and ingratitude. This is a moral song that functions to warn the audience against ingratitude. The Hare symbolizes the powerless, yet ungrateful people in the society while the elephant represents the powerful but forgiving people. The deep river represents the perils and tribulations of everyday life that human beings within the society have to endure. The artist underscores the need for peaceful co-existence within the society. The signification in this song is metaphorical. Due to the anonymity of both the addressee and the addressor, the song offers a collective voice and this is led credence by the fact that it is drawn from the oral tradition of the community.

In the song "**If they do not sing about me**", again the artist becomes the subject of his own Music. It is a song about self aggrandizement. The artist casts himself as the King-maker, not

because he wants to but because other artists want to exploit his name so as to make money. This song fits well within the capital economy where money can be made from anywhere. The artist adopts a sarcastic tone that is directed towards those who exploit his name for profits. He exposes the irony of how the artists who make him (Kennedy Wambua) the subject of their art, “build” him/ enhance his visibility within the community as an artist, instead of enhancing their own visibility, thus their foolishness. He says;

Because they are fools/they have been lied to

To sing about me

The big question is/ for how long will you sing about me

My fools

You are building me/ continue singing

Because you are stupid/ just sing

In the song “**Germany by Foot**” the artist addresses the issues of migration. This is expressed through the idea of the desire for a woman who is in another continent. In this song the performer tackles on issues of class difference. The class distinction hence social status between the persona and His lover (who has immigrated into another country) is underscored through the means he intends to use in order to see her- walking to Germany. The presence of the code /foot/ which exists in binary opposition with the codes airplane/ship functions as signifiers that can be understood within the social context of class, and thus implied social status. The artist laments;

I go to the airport with intent

Of boarding a plane

I am told there is no free travel

I must pay for an air ticket

I think of taking a ship

At Mombasa port

Still I am told there is no free travel

I must pay for it

But he juxtaposes this lack of means with his determination by declaring that

I will come by foot

Germany Munich my sweet lady

I must see you

So that my heart is at rest

For now I cannot endure your absence

I cannot wait until you come

Just wait for me

I will come by foot

Of importance in this song is the reference to the woman as “my property” that connotes ownership and consequently validating the male ego. We also notice that the female voice (the addressee) is not accorded any space to talk about themselves, in this song or any other song By Kennedy Wambua that deals with the issues of women. The women are viewed only as either

“property” or “objects of pleasure” due to their beauty. This ‘objectification’ of women signifies the ideology of patriarchy that is present within the community.

In this song “**Lady Ngemi**”, the issue women as “property” suffices here the artist becomes sexist especially when he asserts that “women were created for men”. Materialism as a means of positioning the male as a ‘desirable’ among the women is also present. The persona feels that with his money he can be able to make the woman love him. This connotatively implies that the woman will be impressed by the money aspect. This therefore brings to the fore the discourses of ‘commodification’ of women within the society.

The song “**Dr. Mueni**” alludes intertextually to Isaac Gregory’s “**Night Nurse**” (1988). In this song the artist borrows a line from the songs done by the first recording Kamba artists. This line “I love you for coming so fast”, which is repeated six times before his part own song starts, is very important in the interpretation of the rest of the song. The issue that the artist addresses in the literal sense is care/ concern but symbolically the song has a sexual connotative meaning, “the portrayal of sexual desire as a disease”

This song has double meaning, taken at literal value it can simply mean that the persona has a favorite doctor who takes care of him. But the song also lends itself to be interpreted as a song that deals with sexual desire. This occurs within the context of the borrowed line that Kennedy appropriates to his own song. Depending on the performance context, this line can mean sexual desire, especially when there is a substitution of the word *Kuka* (coming / rushing) with the words *Kukya/ Kumya* (erection). The latter is the word we find within the ‘Cover’ song performed by Bosco Mulwa at Carnivore “**Give me my Stick**”, which I discuss in the next chapter.

But in Kennedy Wambua's version as long as he maintains the word *Kuka* (Coming) that specific line on its own does not refer to sexual desire, but when it is taken into consideration with the other lines in the song like

Doctor Mueni when you come to me I get well

All my sickness heals when you come to me

Then the sexual aspect of the song is revealed connotatively. When Kennedy Wambua performs the song live, the sexual aspect can also be discerned by the reaction of the audience who imitate a sexual act in their dancing. It is important to point out that the Video Compact Disk performance depicts simply a female doctor taking care of the singer in a hospital bed thus implying the literal meaning of care/ treating a patient. This ensures that his music does not offend those who watch the Video Compact Disk.

In the song "**The leader's property**", the idea of women as commodities "property" is revisited. The use of the term "property" connotes ownership both in sexual term and in the literal sense.

Ndanu you are alright for the leader's taste

The leader will show you a good lifestyle

The leader will show you good lifestyle

As for you take care of the leader's property

See take care of the leader's property

The song also points to the materialism and consumerism nature of the contemporary society. This is seen through the artist's claim that he will offer the lady Beer, food (French Fries and roast chicken) and a "membership", to the Leader's club (inclusion within the man's circle of important people). The woman has to only "take care of the Honourable member's "goods", that is she should belong to him alone, other wise when the "goods" are spoiled even his honour is tarnished. Here the honour of the man is tied to the purity/ and faithfulness of the woman, making it a very unequal relationship where the social status of the man is validated by the sexual purity of the woman.

The song '**A Warning to you Kisangula**' does not have any deeper meaning or any symbolic meaning. The song explores the ideas of ownership, territorial claim of "woman" ownership by men. The persona claims that, a certain woman is his, and warns another interested man that the girl is already taken. Here the voice of the woman is not given any agency so we interpret the song from the viewpoint of the persona who is a male. The idea of the 'commodification' of women resurfaces again in the sense that, the woman is viewed as a commodity that can be owned, where territorial claims can be made.

The song, "**I will go for my bride price**", addresses the issue of broken marriages, due to infidelity and betrayal by one partner. It intertextually alludes to Okot P' Bitek's poem "Return the bride price". The song emphasizes the importance of cultural practices like paying of bride price, but at the same time, the persona exposes this practice as sometimes exploitative. The persona feels that he has been cheated out of his property for after paying such huge amounts for bride price and buying property, his wife as left him. This fuels his anger and the violence he swears to display when he goes for his bride price. Again the discourse on the "woman as a commodity" is revisited. The woman has a monetary value attached to her such that once she

leaves her husband “her monetary worth” has to be returned to the husband. This exposes ways through which culture and the money system oppresses the woman even in our contemporary society. Again we encounter the voice of a male person. The voice of the woman is erased completely. The conveys his bitterness and sadness in the following lines;

This journey is full of sadness and tears

There is a report that is very distressing

Just know that I am very sad my friend Muia

This is too much Carlos

The persona confesses that he will use, “thugs” and ‘violence’ implied by the use of the words “fire” which alludes to guns depicts the lack of peaceful redress of the conflict. This therefore is a bitter critique of the society that places high monetary value on bride price yet it does not offer a peaceful means of solving conflicts arising from the same issue of bride price.

I observed in Chapter two that Kennedy Wambua as a performer mediates his public persona as a musician and as a “star” through his own music. This public persona can be understood in terms of what Erving Goffman calls “a personal ‘front’ meant to convince someone else of something or to earn a social standing, which in essence is a kind of performance” (68). Thus Kennedy Wambua constructs this public persona in his music by addressing the very controversial issues in his life within it (music). The first controversy surrounds his dreadlocks, and thus the song ‘**Who Shaved Me**’. This song is a rejoinder to rumors that purported that he has shaved his dreadlocks. In the song he warns people against peddling lies about him. The idea of “Shaving” can be taken metaphorically to mean ‘diminishing importance’ or being “over taken by competition”. Either way the artist positions himself as a victim of malicious rumor.

Although it is hard to establish whether in reality there were such rumors, on the other hand, it is also hard to accept his words that, there were indeed such rumors. As a researcher I consider the song to be a creative work that helps create a certain public persona of the artist that helps in his publicity. Also I consider it as a strategy that he uses to endear himself to his audience.

The artist dismisses the entire “alleged” rumor concerning him as mere talk that is meant to destroy his name. The other rumors include, having been jailed for flying a flag in his car (like a Cabinet Minister), being denied a permit to sing and shaving his precious dread locks. He says in the song

It has been said that I was arrested at Mutito and I cut my dreadlocks

You say that police officers arrested me for flying a flag in my car

Through direct observation of the reaction of the audience when the artist performs this particular song, I conclude that the song served the purpose of endearing him to his audiences. This is because the audience participate in singing the song, and they make the necessary gesture- asking the question ‘who shaved me?’ as well as touching their heads to indicate that the dreadlocks are still in place- even though they have no dreadlocks.

I argue that as one of the few artists who are in the limelight as a public figures, singing about his dreadlocks is one way of creating an image of himself within the “public” such that when people picture Kennedy Wambua the mental picture they have is of someone with dreadlocks. He therefore creates his own unique public persona (front) through his music.

In the song “**Yatta We are Famous**” talks about what his own Musical band is doing. This song is a form of self praise. He positions his band doing a lot of good within the community.

This is through providing new opportunities like employment, through the performers they stage, they help other people economically. This is a way of legitimizing his art as a form of economic venture that helps lift the community and the society at large. He says;

I saw signs of things to come

Yatta Band will bring good things

Many families benefit

When one Band succeeds

Many Families benefit

When one band succeeds

The last stanza of this song “Raise your hands/this side that side, alludes intertextually to two gospel popular songs namely Shammar’s “Ukilyai Moko”/raise your hands (2001) and Henry Mutuku’s Nakuhitaji/I need you (2002). Through this allusion, the artist validates his music /and its message as important. It also reinforces the common cultural heritage (in form of the common Kamba language used) of the Kamba music whether gospel (Shammah’s and Henry Mutuku’s) or secular (his own Music). In conclusion, Kennedy Wambua’s songs functions as social commentaries on what is happening in the society. The artist does not appear to criticize some of the ills in the society, like consumerism and materialism. In deed he seems to celebrate them by embracing them. He also appears so reinforce and endorse some of the gender stereotypes (especially the view that women are a property for men). As an artist he still captures the contradictions of the modern society Kamba society.

CHAPTER FOUR: STYLE IN THE POPULAR SONG.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o in 'Dismembering Africa', observes "Language is a communication system and carrier of culture by virtue of being simultaneously the means and carrier of memory" (15). This observation is true because without language there can never be memory and without memory there can never be culture. The selected Kamba artists use Kikamba language to articulate their concerns. By using the language that the Kamba people identify with as their means of communication, they are at the same time transmitting the culture of the people. Their songs cannot be effective by the virtue of the issues they address (their thematic concerns) alone, but the effectiveness of these songs also depends on the how the artists use the language at hand to communicate their message. If we want to look at the connection between the Contemporary popular song in Kikamba and Oral poetry in traditional Kamba community, our only way to see this connection is to look at the language that the artists use in their work. The artists strive to effectively use the language such that it serves their purpose to the maximum. Again the connection between culture and language via memory is at play. I therefore argue that within the artistic repertoire of the selected artists we find elements of language that link it to the folk tradition of the Kamba people. This occurs via the use of stylistic features like Sayings, Similes, Metaphors, use of folk tales and proverbs within the songs as well as symbolism(both implied through signification or overt) , which work to enhance the idiom of the Kikamba language. This result in effective communication of the message embodied within the songs since the audience have a common reference point - a common language and idiom that they understand. In this chapter we look at some of unique styles that the artists use in their popular songs in order to effectively communicate their social vision.

Metaphor

In the song “**Mukii**”, Bosco uses the following metaphors to refer indirectly to his love for the woman. He equates lust within a love relationship to huge scoops/ spoonful that are likely to destroy the spoon.

Huge scoops/spoonfuls

A huge scope will break my spoon

On the surface this implies greed, which is present in the society. On a deeper level (semantic), the persona refers to lust that drives young couples such that they do not have the patience to wait for their love to blossom. By the metaphor of the desire to scoop again with the same spoon” implies a willingness on the part of the persona to exercise patience within the relationship.

“The fruits of our love”,

This metaphor implies a successful marriage with children as the testimony of that marriage bond. Children are referred to as “the fruits of our love”.

Kennedy Wambua in the song “**Yatta we are famous**”, “**Yatta Nituvumite**”, uses the metaphor “the Tortoise and Young men are dancing” to refer to the young girls who attend their performances. If taken literally the line “tortoises and young men are dancing creates” a hyperbole of the artistry of the band such that even creatures like tortoise are dancing.

Sayings

Within the Kamba community, wise sayings are used as ways of offering undisputed wisdom or offering a warning. In the song “**Mukii**”, Bosco Mulwa uses the following sayings

“The night is for animals”,

This saying serves as a warning and caution against being late especially during the night. It functions as a way of reminding the people that “danger always lurks in the dark. The word ‘Animal,’ can be taken as a sign that represents not only wild animals but also people with bad intentions.

“A dog from far places has no strength for bones”, the metaphor of ‘a dog from far places’ underscores the idea of an outsider/ a newcomer. The saying helps in concretizing the concept of strangeness/outsider therefore functions as a reminder to exercise caution all the time especially in new environment.

“A prescription that will heal is taken in small dose”

This saying is used to inform people about, the need to take care of the good things that they have. Again within this saying is the implied meaning of moderation.

Similes:

In “**Lydia Wanzila**”, the persona compares the aging of once a beautiful girl to the wrinkles of a monkey. Apart from creating a mental picture of the woman once she has aged, it also enriches the cadence of the Kamba Language through the alliteration of the words age, bent and wrinkled, as shown below.

Ukakua ukumbale ukunzane wikumbe ta inani

You will age until you are bent and become wrinkled like a monkey

Proverbs

In the cover song “**Give me my stick**”, the persona says

“A calabash becomes smooth by being passed around”, this is a proverb that emphasizes the need for collective effort in any kind of activity. The activity might be bringing up the young people- especially correcting the way ward children or working or any other activity that requires unity and the collective effort of every member of the community.

Rhetorical devices

The artists' uses rhetorical questions that create suspense. In “**Where are the Kamba customs**” Bosco poses the question “where are the Kamba customs?” to no one in particular. This creates suspense as well as prompting the listeners and the audience to ponder more on the issue that is raised by the question.

Kennedy Wambua in “**Who Shaved Me**”, the artist uses a rhetorical question to expose the malicious nature of the people who are bent on tarnishing his name. The fact that he counters the question by displaying the opposite of it, showing that his dreadlocks are still in place, the rhetorical question serves to reinforce his public persona in which the dreadlocks are part of this image.

Use of oral folk tales

In “**The Hare and the elephant**” the artist borrows from the oral narrative of the community where the Hare is depicted as a trickster who tricks the other big animals especially the elephant to do his bidding. But in this song the Hare does not use any tricks but begs to be assisted in crossing a deep river by the elephant , only to mock the elephant once he (Hare) is on dry land , by telling the elephant that he has not offered any assistance. Here the artist is using the two animals to symbolically illustrate how some people within the society are ungrateful. It offers a moral teaching that those people who are ungrateful should not be helped in the future. This is an

example where the artist borrows a story from the oral tradition of the community and appropriates it within the song mode in order to articulate his concern. The song progresses as a narrative starting with the elephant's advise to the Hare not to risk crossing the river on his own, to the Hare asking help, then their safe crossing to the other side where the Hare mocks the Elephant.

The use of Child Singing Games

In the cover song “**I have spent many nights outside**’ Bosco Mulwa incorporates a children singing game at the end of the song but with improvisations. This is a very simple rhyme that is used to instruct young children on the importance of good personal grooming. In this instance the song provides a simple refrain that ends the whole performance on a very light note.

Mundu utesi kuthamba a person who does not know how to bathe

Asuanie kuthamba should think of bathing

Mundu utesi kuthamba a person who does not know how to bathe

Asuanie Kuthamba should think of bathing

Mundu utesi kuthamba a person who does not know how to bathe

Ni ndia yi kithingo he is a dirty fool

Mundu utesi kuthamba a person who does not know how to bathe

Ni ndia yi kithingo he is a dirty fool

Journey motif

This is used in the cover song “Teresia”, whereby the persona narrates using a journey motif (from Kalawa-in Machakos to Mombasa via different towns) the perils of his relationship. This is used symbolically to depict the different stages of courtship. The journey towards Marriage is

like a journey, moving from one stage to another, it is also full of compromises and negotiations that the two parties should be willing to make and enter into.

Imagery

Through the use of a series of images the artist achieves symbolism that is highly effective in conveying his message of an awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

In Kennedy Wambua's song "**Be careful**" we find the following images are deployed in an attempt to emphasize the need for caution.

Fish: This emphasizes the portrayal of people in the society as naïve, for like a fish is lured into a bait, if people are not careful they are likely to contact the virus. Fishing is used as imagery for the act of ensnaring /cunningly luring young girls into sexual activities. The artist cautions that this is dangerous for the chance of becoming infected is still possible.

Buffalo: the artist uses this image of an aggressive animal to refer to women. This image inverts the myth of the woman as a weak/helpless/susceptible, instead she is to be feared, and she is a potential danger to those who venture out hunting for women. The image of the buffalo corresponds to the idea of the woman as dangerous and cunning who is capable of destroying the men.

The image of hunting, presupposes courage, braver and determination qualities better attributed to the male, yet the artist inverts it through the image of the Buffalo destroying the hunter, to depict the "Hunting game" as a dangerous activity.

Soup: (healthy soup from Githeri) this image of a healthy food with a potential of causing death through Diarrhea also serves to emphasize the need for caution when it comes to relationships.

Mangoes: the artist uses an image of fresh juicy mangoes that are enticing to symbolically refer to young girls. The irony is that even those fresh mangoes have potential of being infested with worms. Thus the image of the worm connotatively represents the HIV virus.

The artist finally uses the metaphor of “eating ugali form the sides” to connote the use of protection, exercising care in everything one does. Through the use of images that function as objects that represent and mean something else, hence the use of a system of signification is achieved, and as Umberto Eco observes in “Semiotics of Theatrical Performance”, a sign ‘is a physical presence that refers back to something else (Eco 109)... all signs /objects beyond the immediate denotation, all behaviors, objects and words used in theatre have additional connotative power (116). It is through the connotative power of all the images used above that we can discern the real meaning, the message that the artist is communicating. The fact that these signs / images are culturally understood by the society they are drawn from, our understanding of their connotative hence signification is enhanced.

CHAPTER FIVE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PERFORMANCES

In this chapter we examine how the performances discussed in Chapter Two differ from each to other. Also we look at the choices that the performer takes depending on the performance context. This study also set out to discover whether any of the selected artists perform any cover songs of any kind be it folk songs from the community or cover songs of other artists. The researcher found out that one of the artists –Bosco Mulwa does perform songs from other artists especially the first generation recording artists like Kakai Kilonzo, Peter Muambi and Sammy Kilunda. I therefore examine these “cover songs” under this section by looking at the issues they address , their appropriateness in relation to the context in which they are performed and the role they play within the specific performance context where they are performed.

The performances staged outside Nairobi city are relatively cheap- in terms of monetary value as entrance fees, compared to the Cultural night performance staged within the more up-market entertainment venues like the Carnivore Restaurant. This is because the location of the venue of performance determines the kind of the audience to attend the performance. If the location of the venue is within a middle class neighborhood, then the audience in attendance will be middle class, the opposite is true. This is in-line with Richard Schechner observation regarding the location of a theatre (Schechner 102). The performance within the city-Carnivore performance attracted an audience which was constituted through language and the location of the venue. It is possible that some members of the audience did not belong to the Kamba community, but because of curiosity or their social standing they attended the performance hence became part of the audience. The Audiences for the performances in Machakos and Tala were constituted primarily through Language, they were people who understood the language, and were members of the Kamba community. The Location of the venue played a lesser role in

constituting the audience in these performances than the performances that the artist's staged in Nairobi. This is because outside the city, there are fewer demarcations in terms of social stratification.

The function or the social event under which the different performances occur contributes to the difference between them. For example, the primary function of the Carnivore performance is to expose the urban dweller to the cultural roots he/she left behind in the rural areas. The function of the Machakos and Tala performances is just entertainment. Therefore, the performers adopt different modes of delivery that are suitable within the function of the performance as Jan Vansina argues that the function of the performance should be appropriate to the context and occasion of the performance, (34).

The varied gate charges that are charged for the performances can be read as signs of differences within these performances. The Performances outside Nairobi city are relatively cheaper than those within the city. The Culture themed performances are expensive compared to the no-fee charges of a performance like the one Bosco Mulwa staged in Machakos. This is because the Carnivore performance is part of a commercial enterprise that seeks to expose the urban dweller to the cultural roots of the various Kenyan Communities, the Kamba being one of them. The event is co-sponsored by other Private enterprises (like The Safaricom Company and Mbaitu FM radio Station) which have vested interests. These sponsors contribute to the high profile nature of the event hence the gate fee is very high. The performances outside the city are relatively cheap because the issue of corporate sponsorship does not come into play. Again the target audience of both events (within Nairobi and outside the city) is very different in terms of their social classes and this explains the difference in pricing of the events.

The researcher observed that while performing in an official venue, (the Carnivore Context) Kennedy Wambua does not interact in any way with the audience. He makes less gestures and movements that are not intended as part of the performance. He did not invite or allow any member of the audience to get on stage with him, except when that person came to give him money as a token of appreciation for his performance. But the researcher discovered that in a less formal occasion especially in performance at Kangundo, Kennedy Wambua allows some of his fans to participate in the singing by ceding the microphone to them. He also allows his fans to touch his dreadlocks especially when performing the song ‘**Who Shaved me?**’ which is a song that was composed as a way of countering supposedly rumors that he had shaved his dreadlocks. Through reading of all the gestures and activities the performers’ engage in while on stage, we can conclude that Kennedy Wambua adopts different attitudes in different performance contexts; being aloof in a formal context but adopting a friendly attitude in a less formal context.

Another stark difference between these two performances is that, in the formal performance context, money is offered as an appreciation to the artists by the audience. This takes the form of fans getting on stage one by one and giving the money to the artist without any exchange of any dialogue. This seems to be a practice that happens only within the performance at the Carnivore. The researcher observed that this does not happen during Bosco Mulwa’s performance at Machakos nor at Kennedy Wambua’s performance in Tala- Kangundo. I argue that this difference is brought about by the type of audience that each event attracts. The euphoria surrounding the Cultural night can be seen to work on the audience such that they feel that because the artists are doing a favour to the urban dwellers by giving them a taste of the Music and the roots they have “left” behind, it is only natural that they offer them a token of appreciation in the form of money. The audience that attends the other events (outside the urban

locale) has not been wholly deprived of their cultural links because they are within the vicinity of the rural areas. They do not feel obliged to offer any tokens of appreciation to the artists.

I argue that when it comes to the choice of the songs to be performed, the artist makes the decision based on the context of the performance. For example Bosco Mulwa in Machakos, does not perform the Song “**Where are the Kamba Customs**”. This is because the context of this performance does not allow for issues that have anything to do with culture to be brought out. The performance context in Machakos is a relaxed one where Bosco as an artist is supposed to entertain and make the people feel relaxed, as opposed to the Carnivore context where the message of this song “**Where are the Kamba customs**” is more appropriate. Within this context therefore decides to perform only those songs that deal with love and relationships between individuals. These songs are “**Lydia Wanzila**”, “**Mother**”, and “**Mukii**”, which are more appropriate within the context at Machakos.

The researcher made the same observation about Kennedy Wambua. At the Carnivore performance the bulk of his songs that he performed deal with love and relationships between men and women. Although he performed the same songs in Tala-Kangundo, he deliberately eschewed any songs to do with politics at Carnivore yet he performed the song “**Simon Munyw’oki**” at Tala. He also did not perform the song “**The Hare and the elephant**” at the Carnivore but he performed it as the first Song at Tala- Kangundo. This again supports my argument that the performer makes a decision on which songs to perform depending on the performance context. Kennedy’s decision seems to be majorly influenced by a conscious consideration of the performance context and the audience he performs for. At the Carnivore the audience is quite mixed and the songs which contain messages of love, respect, enjoying life are more appropriate, The Song “the Hare and Elephant” is a song of social criticism of friends who

are ungrateful. The song has another dimension that it symbolically talks of his break up with one of his back up vocalists who went on and formed his own band. This song therefore becomes appropriate within the context like Tala where his audience understand about the feud being talked about. Again within the Carnivore context the presence of the media influences his decision, the performance of this song can negatively impact on his public persona. Therefore his decision to leave it out and perform songs that deal with common themes like love and marriage and relationships.

5.1 COVER SONGS

These are new performances or recordings of previously recorded songs. This implies that the original song is regarded as the “authentic” version and all other versions lesser competitors or tributes. Joyce Nyairo sees cover versions as “accessible ways of evoking remembrances of earlier songs, periods and moods... and as they recall the old performer, they also demand we overlook the original artistes’ interpretation and accept the new one (184). This therefore entails looking at “cover versions” within the context of their new contexts of existence.

The researcher discovered that only Bosco Mulwa did cover versions of songs done by his predecessors- most of who were great vocalists and one- man guitarists like him. His performance within the City- at the Carnivore restaurant, he explains to the audience the reason he does cover songs of his fellow artists, as a way of paying tribute to them and pay respect to them. Some of these artists have departed while others are still alive (The younger brother of Kakai Kilonzo who did the song “**Osa uvoo Rose**”, “**Greetings Rose**”. Kakai’s younger brother now performs these songs).

During the Performance at the Carnivore, Bosco did the following three Cover songs: “**Osa uvoo Rose**”, “**Greetings Rose**”, “**Teresia**” and “**Nongi nenga Muti**”, “**Give me my stick**”. At Machakos he only did one cover song, “**Matuku Maingi Ngomete Nza**”, “**I have spent any nights outside**”.

These songs embody different thematic concerns and some of them are actually a combination of different song segments brought together as one song such that each different stanza talks about a different idea. These songs have parts that are sung and other parts that are chanted. Related segments express an overall idea but the chanted segments express complete ideas from the rest of the song. This is true of the songs “**Matuku Maingi Ngomete Nza**”, “**I have spent many nights outside**”, and “**Nongi Nenga Muti**”, “**Give me my stick**”. But the songs “**Greetings Rose**” and “**Teresia**” are complete.

In the song “**Greetings Rose**” originally done by Sammy Kilunda, the artist talks about a conflict arising out of a broken promise that resulted in a broken heart of the persona. The song is an attempt to close that past by way of a resolution, which can happen if the lady (Rose) returns the symbols of their covenant which she broke. These symbols are a wrist watch, a ring and a wedding dress. The persona adopts a narrative mode as a way of telling the story. He outlines the beginnings of their covenant of love, the reason for their separation (the conflict) and then offers a way of resolving that conflict, by closing the past. Through the evocation of the name of the original artist (Sammy Kilunda), Bosco Mulwa acknowledges him and this signifies the interconnectedness of the artists.

The artist (Bosco Mulwa) uses repetition to emphasize the intensity of the loss. This part is definitely an improvisation done by Bosco Mulwa in order to acknowledge Sammy Kilunda. It

also functions as a reminder to his audience that the song is not his, but he is merely paying tribute to the original artist. Thus towards the end he sings;

Since you left me Sammy I am very sad

Kilunda I am very sad

Sammy Sammy I am very sad

Mulwa yes Sammy I am very sad

Sammy yes hear me

Sammy Kilunda I am vey sad

This compels us to interpret the new piece that Bosco Mulwa creates differently from the original. We have to take in his additions like the above part as an important part in the song.

The song “**Teresia**” is about prostitution especially when taken literally, but symbolically, it is a song about marriage and the tribulations that are encountered by a couple as they go through life. The artist uses the journey motif to chronicle the perils of the journey towards the ideal marriage. The persona outlines the need for compromises and negotiations just like when two people are on a journey they have to make compromises. The towns mentioned chronologically can be seen to symbolize the important points in the journey towards an ideal marriage. This demonstrates that marriage is a step- by step process. Mombasa town symbolizes the ideal, a happy marriage state on one hand, but it can also connotatively symbolize the ultimate place of leisure and pleasure therefore, the evil site where loose morals like prostitution abound. Important to note here is the *Djinn* concept, which resonates strongly within the Kamba cultural belief such that anything that cannot be explained reasonably is attributed to *Djinns* or water spirits.

Bosco Mulwa improvises in this song in order to keep/retain his audience. He engages then in a shared dialogue (question answer) situation in the second last stanza. As he finishes he says

{Teresia went with my phone, it was not a nokia phone, and what was it called? Audience (Penis)
no it was not a Nokia phone what was it? Audience (Penis)}

This exchange apart from being humorous through the suggested hyperbole of what the performer lost with the disappearance of his woman, it also shows the creative capacity the performer in his manipulation of language while on stage. He achieves this by using a familiar object like a phone (Nokia model) whereby with the deletion of the first two letters leaves you with a Kikamba word that means Penis. The performer transfers the burden of having to utter a potential impolite word to the audience by engaging them in a dialogue thus escaping a moral censure. This exchange also illustrates the culture clash between the Western culture and the traditional modes of life (the juxtaposition of the notion of technology with a body part). The body part represents the traditional mode of life where face-to-face communication between people was possible, which has been supplanted by the new technology driven impersonal communication modes. By suggesting his woman disappeared with his Mobile phone, the persona actually laments her embrace of this new technology that supplanted the old personal face-to-face interaction.

The song “**Give me my Stick**” has the overriding theme of the sexual desire more specifically the sexual encounter of a woman and her husband through the voice of the woman. I have already mentioned that this particular song embodies different song segments. The song as a whole consists of two parts where one part is sung and the last three stanzas are chanted.

The song can only be actualized within the context of a night club performance. Bosco Mulwa performs it at almost Midnight and I attribute the time of its performance as a signifier of its explicit sexual language use. It evokes a discourse of sexual activity and with the use of plenty of images that connote both the phallic symbol and the female sexual organs, like “stick” “cock”/fowl, food, denoting sexual activity etc. Although the song might appear to encourage sexual immorality, because of its explicit reference to it, it also denotes assertiveness on the part of the female voice, but it also be viewed as a castigation of people within the society who cannot control their sexual desires.

In the second segment (The Chant) the artist offers some of the observations and insights about human nature. He first claims to be the voice of the people that can be trusted. “I tell you with a voice that can be trusted, Mbaitu Fm”, in this respect the artist positions himself as an authoritative voice within the society that can offer wisdom, educate and inform just like (the radio- media) which serve the same purpose of informing and educating the people.

He then uses a proverb from the community “A calabash becomes smooth by being passed around”. This underscores the need for people to share wisdom among themselves in order to forge unity. In the second stanza he points figure at individuals whom the person thinks have wronged him and are a bad influence in the society. He warns them against greed “You are a bad person Musongolo Wa kawai you hid tea in a coat until people saw it steaming” implying his greedy nature, and also cautions the people against idle chatter “I say Kyome wa Nthenge I overheard you talking about me you are a dog”.

In the last stanza he warns people against internal divisions. He claims to have made an observation that a journey of many people is rife with internal divisions and disagreements over petty issues. This is a criticism on the society's lack of unity he says:

A have seen that a journey of many people has a lot of issues/ a lot of issues, lots of issues
But there are those who oppose our idea, saying lets sleep.

The song "**I have spent Many Nights Outside**", is also a combination of three different song segments. The first five stanzas (which are a part of a song segment by an artist known as Munyambu- a one-man guitarist) are sung while the middle section of the song is a chant. The last segment that talks about the importance of bathing and grooming is sung (and this is drawn from children singing games and appropriated within this song). The first segment addresses the theme of sexual desire, where a male persona laments about his suffering after being thrown out of his own house by his angry wife because of promiscuity. The persona displays mixed feelings of regret on one hand and jubilation/ celebration of his sexual conquests. Through the use of the paradox of Salt and sugar to refer to the sexual activity, as both sweet and dangerous, the persona captures his own ambivalence towards his predicament.

The second part of this song (the chanted segment), each stanza expresses its own idea. Thus forming getting an overriding theme is very difficult. The persona speaks various subjects like; dancing- requesting his favorite dance partner to dance with him, informing his listeners that he has heard of a person with the two praise names. He also warns the president (a metaphor for someone who chairs a meeting) not to destroy his reputation within their circle because he has the audacity to voice his opinion freely. It demonstrates the extend the Kamba language can be stretched to cover diverse issue, especially the adoption of jesting through abuse in order to point

out human weaknesses, the persona's constant use of the word dog, to simultaneously abuse the referents as well as the audience.

The last segment that begins with the lines "A person who does not know how to bathe/Should think of bathing", is a case of improvisation on the part of the artist, Bosco Mulwa. The artist takes a children's singing game meant to teach the young children the importance of personal grooming and through the use of just one word (Kuthambya/ Washing (it-which is implied), the child rhyme is converted into a sexually connotative song. When he talks of "let us think of bathing (it)", the audience responds with humor by asking him "What". Through this exchange signification is achieved. Through a common understanding between the audience and the performer of what the Implied (it) signifies, the genitalia. The artist uses the children rhyme to offer moments of light humor that ends the performance process.

The language used in these songs these is sexual connotation such that under "normal" contexts some of the words are almost a taboo. By "normal", I mean that if these words are used in everyday conversations they are actually offensive. But within the context of the popular song performance, they are acceptable. This is as Daniel Avorgbedor in "The preservation transmission and realization of song texts: a Psycho- Musical Approach", observes that "it is not enough to say that 'art... prescribes polite ways for saying impolite things, it provides ways of expressing the inexpressible" (218). This means that the artistic license offered by the song mode allows singers to transcend moral boundaries such that they can use language and talk about issues that would be considered offensive in other contexts. The song as an artistic creation therefore "removes normal, immediate responsibilities from the singer and consequently leaves the singer blameless" (Avorgbedor 219).

The language used in these songs contains a rich idiom with words having connotation meaning such that even the researcher had difficulty approximating their exact equivalent in English.

The researcher discovered that when the artist, Bosco Mulwa started performing these songs at The Carnivore, the audience was highly delighted. The mood of the performance changed from that of abandoned gaiety to a nostalgic one immediately the performer started singing the first song such the songs evoke the mood of another period and another time that it lost to the present. In Machakos, when the artist started singing the “**I have spent many nights outside**”, the audience became quiet and listened quietly only breaking the silence when the artist mentions humorous words like the line “I like you my dear Mukony’o for breaking wind”.

In the songs “**I have spent many nights outside**” and “**Give me a Stick**”, we see some sections that resemble each other. These are the sections where the artist chants invoking abuse towards absentee referents like Kyome Wa Nthenge (the idle gossip), Musongolo wa Kawai (the greedy one) and Mukony’o (the woman he claims breaks wind), with an aim of exposing human weaknesses. During their Chanting the Performer just sporadically strums his guitar to keep the rhythm going.

This observation justifies my argument that these (two) songs are made of different song sections belonging to different artists that are (sections) brought together by the artist Bosco Mulwa. This act attests to his creativity such that what connects the different song sections is the rhythm which is aided by the guitar, the end result is that the creation (the songs sound fresh and new as well as interesting).

These two songs (“**Give me My stick**” and “**I have spent many nights outside**”, are also important because they support my assumption that there are some elements of traditional performance that have been appropriated within the contemporary popular song performance.

The artist, Bosco Mulwa performs these two songs during two different occasions. The first instance is at the Carnivore Restaurant performance, and then at the Kendas Restaurant performance in Machakos. Both appear at the very end of his performance. The performer does not just sing the songs but there are segments which involve Chanting. The *Macmillan English Dictionary* defines chanting as “the singing of a musical piece with very limited range of notes”. This Chanting is reminiscent of traditional Kamba performance, where a singer would simply chant out songs in solo. Therefore chanting is one of the traditional elements that the artist Bosco Mulwa borrows and appropriates within his performances. The others of course include costumes, dancing (although the dancing involved in the performance of the popular song has borrowed heavily from Democratic Republic of Congo), costumes and instrumentation. The costumes, instruments may not be similar to those which were used in traditional performances but they serve the same basic principle as accompaniments (instruments) and aesthetics (costumes).

We found out that the two songs (“**Give me my stick**” and “**I have spent many nights outside**”) are the last songs that the artist performs. When the singer starts chanting the audience is aware that the performance is almost coming to end. Therefore these songs act as sign posts/signifiers that signify that to the audience that the performance is about to end. They (the songs and Chants in particular) “frame” the completion of the performance.

In addition the researcher noticed a common line that appears in both Bosco Mulwa's cover song, "**Give me my Stick**", and Kennedy Wambua's "**Dr Mueni**".

In the former the line goes like this

Ngwendaaa kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki / I love you for getting an erection so fast

And in Kennedy Wambua's song the line appears as

Ngwendaaa Kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki/ I love you for coming so fast

The versatility of this line lies in its ability to take the substitution of only one word (Kumya/ Kukya) to another word (Kuka/coming/ rushing responding). This substitution slightly changes the meaning from an entirely sexual meaning (hence offensive in every day usage) to an acceptable everyday meaning 'rushing /coming hurrying to aid some one because you care'. Even though in the second instance the sexual meaning is connotatively retained, the entire line is no longer offensive therefore an Artist like Kennedy can perform and release the song in a Video Compact Disk without the song being offensive to the audiences.

I hold the position that due to the fact that the line has been appropriated by Kennedy Wambua in his own song without his acknowledging it as having been borrowed from another artist, this implies that the line has its origins within the Kamba Folk songs and therefore it is part of "collective communal knowledge"(Lomax 285).

In conclusion, the artists possess awareness that different contexts of performance are a made up of different audiences with diverse attitudes, that is the different contexts of performance have different audiences which are constituted differently, and this calls on the part of the performer a careful selection of the material to be performed in these different contexts.

Therefore the choice of the songs to be performed depends mostly on the context of the performance as well as the audience. This is what the comparative analysis revealed to us.

The cover songs that Bosco Mulwa performs are essential components of his performance for they depict his creativity as an artist. They also function a moments of recalling the past (paying tribute to the original artists), the mood of a different periods (especially a nostalgic mood that has been lost). But as much as the prompt our memory of the past, they also demand that we interpret them within the current contexts of their performance. The chanting found within these songs function as signposts pointing to the end of the performance.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This study set out to discover the following, the various elements of performance, the thematic issues, any indigenous elements of performance that have been borrowed and appropriated and any “cover songs” in the live performances of both Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua.

The present study was conducted on the assumption that there are some folk songs that the popular artists perform within their live performances. The study made the following observations about the live performances of the two artists Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua.

The songs that are performed articulate various concerns ranging from love, marriage, entertainment, migrations, gender, class, consumerism and materialism as well as culture (call to a return to our roots). I found out that love songs emphasize the need for respect among couples and fidelity so that the relationship works. Kennedy Wambua’s love songs try to depict the materialism and consumerism that has come to define the contemporary society. Even within this challenging environment the artist calls for fidelity as it is the only virtue that will ensure successful marriages and relationships between men and women. Bosco Mulwa’s songs offer new insights and sensibilities on the right way of living.

The study also discovered that although the artists have a large collection of political propaganda songs, these songs are not performed neither within the formal contexts (cultural night performance) or informal contexts (like disco club performances). The researcher concluded that these songs are meant for the home audience those who purchase the Video Compact Disks of these artists. This means that the artists have different target audience for the different categories of their songs.

In addition this study found out that the artists' choice of the songs performed in different occasions depends on the context of the performance. Both Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua select their songs such that the content of their songs resonate with both the social event and function of the performance taking place and with their live audience so as to keep them interested in their performances. The researcher also discovered that Bosco Mulwa as a performer is capable of engaging actively with his audience by initiating dialogue as well as improvising on stage such that his audience does not lose interest in his performance. Such improvisations enable the performer to break the monotony of his performance therefore adding to the effectiveness of the performance. These improvisations are also instances of innovation and creativity usually resulting into new compositions.

Kennedy Wambua on the other hand does not engage much with the audience especially within a formal context like the Carnivore performance context. But within an informal context like his performance in Tala-Kangundo, the artist allows some degree of interaction with his audience. For instance, he allows his audience to touch his dreadlocks and also allow some members of the audience to sing on the Microphone, taking turns with him. The artist- Kennedy Wambua does not work at engaging the audience to actively participate in his performance as Bosco Mulwa does. His public persona as a "star" already casts him as a celebrity thus the "stardom" effect works to his advantage. There is very minimal dialogue or exchange between Kennedy Wambua and his audience, but this does not mean that his audience is dormant, the audience is very active and their level of engagement with his music is very high. The enthusiasm of his audience is maintained by the love they have for him and by the fact that his public persona is highly mediated through his songs and through media (being cast as a star or as a celebrity) such that the audience is simply enthusiastic about him by the virtue of whom he is.

The researcher discovered that there were no songs that the selected popular artists performed during their live performances that could be effectively classified as a Kamba folk song, according to Alan Lomax's definition of a folk song as a 'piece added down from one generation to another'. Instead the researcher discovered that one of the artists Bosco Mulwa performs "cover" songs of other artists especially the first generation recording artists like Kakai Kilonzo, Peter Muambi, Sammy Kilunda and Munyambu. These cover songs contain a language and idiom that is unique and different from the language the present artists use. It is rich in images and sayings that provide humor as well as wisdom that is deep and rich and this signifies their link through the Kamba Language to Traditional folk culture.

In addition, the researcher also discovered that Bosco Mulwa does not just perform these songs but he actively and creatively blends them together creating a new kind of experience for the audience as well as creating a new composition. He does this by combining different song segments (of the other artists) to produce a new piece that is fresh.

Moreover, the researcher discovered a particular song- line, "Ngwendaaa kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki/ I love you for coming so fast", which featured in the two artists' performance repertoire. Kennedy Wambua has appropriated it to his music without acknowledging any artist yet the same line appears within the Cover songs performed by Bosco Mulwa. The researcher concluded that this line forms part of "communal Knowledge" of the Kamba People.

The language that the artists use in their songs is very rich that reflects the vitality of the Kamba language. The artists use a language that is rich in symbolism, paradoxes, sayings, metaphors, and similes that help to crystallize the ideas in the songs. Kennedy Wambua also borrows from the traditional wisdom especially using common animal tales to point at the

weaknesses of the people in the society; While Bosco Mulwa uses Nursery/children rhymes as structures of improvisations. This helps in continuing the vitality of the oral genre within the contemporary society.

Lastly, the researcher found out that the artists employ different means of framing their performances. Bosco Mulwa strums his guitar before beginning the performance of his own songs for a couple of seconds and this functions as a sign to the audience that he is about to begin his performance. Before he begins performing the “cover” songs, he tells the audience that he is not performing his own music. The researcher found out that the chants/chanting, which Bosco Mulwa incorporates within the “cover” songs that he performs; functions as signals to the audience, in that they signify the completion of his performance, therefore once he starts chanting the audience is already preparing for the end of the performance.

Further research is necessary because research on the popular song is minimal. Further research should be done on female performers. I recommend that a gender perspective to be adopted in a research to investigate whether female performers adopt different choices due to their gender. I also recommend that further comparative study examining both the male and female performers should be done. This will reveal new insights on how the performer inscribes gender relations within their own material. In addition the present study on the two selected artists under study is not exhaustive. I therefore recommend further studies be made on the two selected artists in other areas like gender, in the songs of Bosco Mulwa and Kennedy Wambua, as well as the autobiographical voice in the music of these two artists.

WORKS CITED

- Anttonen, P. "Ethno-poetic analysis and Finnish oral verse", in Sikala A.L and Vakimo S (eds) *Songs Beyond the Kalevala: Transformations of oral poetry*, Tampere, 1994
- Appadurai Arjuni. "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy", *Modernity at Large, Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Pp. 27-47, University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
- Avorgbedor Daniel, "The Preservation, Transmission and Realization of song texts: a Psycho – Musical Approach", *The Oral performance in Africa*, Ed. Isidore Okwepho, Ibadan: Spectrum, 1990 pp 208 -227
- Barber Karin. 'Popular arts in Africa', *African Studies review*, 30.3 (Sept, 1987) pp 1-78, African Studies Association, www.jstor.org/stable/524538
- Bauman, Richard. "Verbal art as Performance", *American Anthropologist, New series 77.2* (1975) pp 290-311, Blackwell publishing www.jstor.org/stable/674535
- Bressler Charles. Ed. *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*. 4th ed New Jersey: Pearson, Prentice Hall, 2007.
- Cawelti John, "Performance and popular culture", *Cinema Journal*, 20/1 (autumn 1980) pp 4-13
University of Texas Press www.jstor.org/stable/1224967
- Chesaina C. *Oral literature of the Kalenjin*, Nairobi: Heinman, 1991.
- Chiuri J. *Popular Music as a form of oral literature*, M.A Thesis, University of Nairobi (1984)
- Eco Umberto. *A Theory of Semiotics*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976.

- Eco Umberto. "Semiotics of Theatrical Performance", *Drama Review*; TDR, 21/1, Theatre and Social Action (Mar 1977) pp 107-117 www.jstor.org/stable/1145112
- Gakuo K. *Study of Alienation in selected songs by Joseph Kamaru*. M.A Thesis, University of Nairobi (1994).
- Goffman Erving, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday*, Carden: Doubleday, 1959
- Kieti Mwikali, *Myali songs: A social critique among the Akamba*, M.A thesis UON (1988)
- Kiura, Moses. K. *The uses of Satire in Selected songs by Newton Kariuki*. M.A Thesis University of Nairobi (2006)
- Komitee Shana. *A study guide to performance studies* web.
- Lomax Alan. *Folk song style and culture*, New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1978
- McConachie, Bruce A. 'Falsifiable Theories for Theatre and Performance Studies', *Theatre Journal*, 59.4, December 2007, pp 553-577 The John Hopkins University Press.
- Mills, M. *Rhetorics and poetics in Afghan Story telling*, Philadelphia, 1991
- Muendo Stevens, "King Ken rules Ukambani", *East African Standard* 11th November 2008, C8
- Murkeji Chandra and Michael Schudson, 'Popular Culture', *Annual review of Sociology*, Volume 12 (1986) pp 47-66, Annual Reviews www.jstor.org/stable/208319
- Nandwa Jane, Austin Bukenya and Muigai G. *Oral literature: A Senior Course Nairobi*. Nairobi: Longhorn, 2001.

Njogu Kimani and Herve Maupeu *Songs and politics in East Africa*, African Books Collection

2007

Nyairo J and J.Ogude 'Popular Music, Popular Politics: Unbwogable and the idioms of freedom in Kenyan Popular Music', *African Affairs*, 105/415 pp 225-249 Oxford University Press.

Nyairo Joyce. "Reading the referents": (inter)textuality in contemporary Kenyan popular music. PhD Thesis (unpublished) University of Witwatersrand 2004.

Parsitau, Damaris Seleina, 'Sounds of change and Reform: The appropriation of Gospel Music and Dance in Political Discourses in Kenya', *Studies in World Christianity*, 14, 1, 2008, pp 55-78 University of Edinburgh press.

Ruth Finnegan. *Oral literature in Africa*, Nairobi, Oxford University press, 1970

Schechner, Richard. "Behaviour, Performance and Performance Space", *Perspecta* 26, *Theatre, Theatricality and Architecture* (1990) pp97-102

Schechner, Richard. *Between Theater and Anthropology* "Restoration of Behavior", Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press 1985.

Siundu, Godwin 'The Musical Reconfiguration of the Luhya Community in Jacob Luseno's Music', *The Nairobi Journal of Literature* No 6 (July, 2010) pp 67-79 University of Nairobi

States Bert O. 'Performance as a Metaphor', *Theatre Journal* 48.1(1996) pp 1-26

Tedlock, D. *The spoken word and the work of interpretation*, Philadelphia, 1993

Thiong'o, Joseph. *A critical explication of selected songs by John De Matthew* M.A Thesis
University of Nairobi (2009)

Turner, Victor. *The Anthropology of performance*, New York: PAJ Publications, 1988.

Vansina J. *Oral Tradition as History*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin press, 1985.

Wa Thiong'o Ngugi, "Dismembering Practices: Planting European Memory in Africa",
Remembering Africa, Nairobi: EAEP, 2009

Wa Thiong'o Ngugi "Remembering visions", *Re-membering Africa*, Nairobi: EAEP, 2009

Discography

Bosco Mulwa, Mother, Jomwa Records, Vcd 1 (2011) Kamba Night Jomwa records Vcd 3 (2010)

Boyz II Men, A song for Mama (1997)

Gregory Isaac, Night Nurse (1988)

Henry Mutuku, Nakuhitaji (2002)

*Kennedy Wambua, Yatta production, Various CD's

Shakur Tupac, Dear Mama, Def Jams (1995)

Shammah, Ukilya moko/raise up your hands (2002)

*The years of the releases of these compact disks are not indicated within the jackets of the Compact disks

The Discography for the original songs covered By Bosco Mulwa during his performances are not available especially because most of them are combinations of different song texts which the researcher could not establish the original songs.

APPENDIX

BOSCO MULWA'S SONGS

KITHIO KYA MUKAMBA

Nyie Mulwa ni ngwinaa

Na nina ikulyo

Tene Kiithio kya mukamba kyaendie naku

Mulwa ni ngwina

Na nikulya ikulyo oo

Tene Kiithio kya mukamba kyaendie naku?

lia ithuke mauta ma ngombe usuu wa ikie na uki
wa nzuki

Ngima ya nzenga kiteke kya manga ngima ya

Wimbi na kinaa kya mwee

(Maliu ala mai vinya maisawa ni mukamba akekala
myaka maana atatu ta nguu maendie ku?)

Musungu atanoka kwai mathembo

Kwai athani Syokimau na Mwatu wa nzuma

Musungu atanoka kwai mathembo

Kwai athani Syokimau na Mwatu wa nzuma

lia ithuke mauta ma ngombe usuu wa ikie na uki
wa nzuki

Ngima ya mwee, kiteke kya Manga, Miti ya

Kithekani ndawa ya Mukamba

(ndawa ila syathiawa ni Usuu ethw'aa na ndawa
nzeo ya kavaso, na ngondu na kiusya)

Musungu amina kuka

Avisisye mathembo nayo mbua ikaeka kua

Musungu amina kuka

Avisisye mathembo nayo mbua ikaeka kua

lia ithuke mauta ma ngombe usuu wa ikie na uki
wa nzuki

Ngima ya Muvya kiteke kya manga Kalamba na
mongu malenge na makwasi

(mbua ya mukamba yathembawa kiimani
mathemboni nikana liu ukethiwa na kukethwa na
mumo)

THE KAMBA CUSTOM

Mulwa I sing

I have a question

Where are the customs of the Akamba people?

Mulwa I sing

And I have a question

Where are the customs of the Akamba people?

Sour milk, ghee, sour porridge and honey

Ground Cassava, cake made of sorghum and millet
cake

(Where is the different foodstuff that had good
nutrients, eaten by the Akamba people such that
they lived for 300 years like a tortoise?)

Before the white man came, there were shrines

There were prophets like Syokimau and Mwatu wa
Nzuma

Before the white man came, there were shrines

There were prophets like Syokimau and Mwatu wa
Nzuma

Sour milk, ghee, sour porridge ad honey, ground
cassava, cake made of sorghum and millet

And herbal medicine

(medicine that was prepared by grandmother to
treat the diaphragm)

When the white man came

He burned our shrines, and the rain disappeared

When the white man came

He burned our shrines, and the rain disappeared

Sour porridge, ghee, sour porridge and honey

Millet cake, ground Cassava, pumpkins, and sweet
potatoes

(the Akamba sacrificed for rain in the shrines and
on the mountains so that crops)

if asked, I would say

Ngakulw'a nasya tuisye nesa tuikese utwika
 Ngombo ya Musungu
 Mulwa Ngakulw'a nasya tuisye muno tuikese
 utwika Ngombo ya Musungu
 Mukamba sisya nesa wi mundu mwiu
 Mukamba sisya nesa wi mundu mwiu
 Kuthi Ulaya kuituma witwa Musungu
 Kuthi Ulaya kuituma witwa Musungu
 lia ithuke mauta ma ngombe usuu wa ikie na uki
 wa nzuki
 ngima ya nzenga, kiteke kya manga ngima ya
 wimbi ona kinaa kya mwee
 (umau Musembi niwanikaa myatu, twaisaa ngoyoo
 nginya tukakua nginya na mawa
 nundu wa mindo)

Musungu amina kuka
 Avisyise mathembo nayo mbua ikaeka kua
 Musungu amina kuka
 Avisyise mathembo nayo mbua ikaeka kua
 Inthi sya Africa kutuaa sua, kutua yua na kui mbua
 Inthi sya Africa kwakanaa sua kutua yua kuyoneka
 mbua
 lia ithuke mauta ma ngombe usuu wa ikie
 Malenge na makwasi
 Ngima ya nzenga, kinaa kya mwee ngima ya
 Nzenga malenge na mwakwasi
 Uki wa nzuki na miti ya kithekani
 Uki wa nzuki na miti ya Kithekani

Kalimandu nyie we wi mwendwa wakwa
 Kalimandu nyie we wi mwendwa wakwa
 Kwooka tuthi tukakatike umunthi kwi ngoma
 Kwauma tuthi tukasunge umunthi kwi ngoma

Wathi nuu one man ukwitwa mindo
 Ndikoma ngalikwa ndakethetye Mulwa
 Ndikoma ngalikwa ndakethetye Mulwa
 Bosco Mulwa na Mziki kamata ngoma
 Bosco Mulwa na Mziki kamata ngoma
 Twisunga tunyale na tuyinywa uki

let us be careful so that we do not became the
 white man's slave
 Mulwa if I somebody asked me
 I would say, let us be careful so that we do not
 become white man's slaves
 You Kamba be careful, you are a black person
 You Kamba be careful you are a black person
 Going abroad does not make you a white person
 Going abroad does not make you a white person
 Sour milk, ghee, sour porridge and honey
 Millet cake, ground cassava and sorghum cake
 (My Grandfather, Musembi, was a beekeeper, we
 would feast on the honey, because of it)

when the white man came
 he burnt all the shrines and rain disappeared
 when the white man came
 he burnt all the shrines and rain disappeared
 in Africa we have sun, there is famine and there is
 no rainfall
 in Africa we have sun, there is famine and there is
 no rainfall
 sour milk, ghee, porridge, pumpkins and sweet
 potatoes
 millet cake, pumpkins and sweet potatoes
 honey and herbal medicine
 honey and herbal medicine

Kalimandu you are mine, my love
 Kalimandu you are mine, y love
 Come let us go and dance, there is a dance tonight
 Come out let us go and dance, there is a dance
 tonight
 There is a new dance, one man, called IT
 I cannot sleep soundly before greeting Mulwa
 I cannot sleep soundly before greeting Mulwa
 Bosco Mulwa the Musician
 Bosco Mulwa the musician
 We will dance until we sweat
 And we will drink beer

Twisunga tunyale natuyinywa uki
Bosco Mulwa kamata ngoma
Ndukamate ngoma
Mwa kata ngoma.

MOTHER

Mother ii mother aa...
Mwa ndikolwa nue...
Mother ii mother aa
We mwendwa wakwa...

Mother ii mother
Mwa ndikolwa nue
Mother ii mother
Wanziaie

Mother ii mother
Mwa ndikolwa nue
Mother ii mother
Wanziaie

Wanziaie ni munini mother Susanna aa
Wandea nginya neanaaa
(Niwaa muyo nalilikana mathina ala waaona ni
kana)

Wendo wa Musyai sherry mother ndwaambata

Mother ii mother Wanziaie
Wendo wa musyai sweetie mother ndwaambata

Mother ii mother wanziaie
Liu ngua na kisomo wandeie nesa
Mother ii Ngai akuathime
Liu ngua na kisomo wandeie nesa
Mother ii Ngai akuathimae- wiwakwa
Wandeie ni munini mother Suzanna

Wandea nginya neana

Wandeie ni munini mother Suzanna aa

We will dance until we sweat
And we will drink beer
Bosco Mulwa hold of your guitar
Dance dance.

MOTHER

Mother, mother...
I will never forget you
Mother, mother
You are my love...

Mother, mother
I will never forget you
Mother Mother
You bore me

Mother, mother
I will never forget you
Mother Mother
You bore me

You gave birth to me mother Suzanna
You nurtured me until I matured
(I am happy when I remember the tribulations you
went through when I was young)

You never withheld your parental love sherry
mother

Mother Mother you bore me
You never withheld your parental love sweet
mother

Mother, mother you bore me,
Food clothes and education You raised me well
Mother Mother may the lord bless you
Food clothes and education You raised me well
Mother Mother may the lord bless you You are
mine

You took care of me since I was little, mother
Suzanna

You nurtured me until I matured

Wandea ngianya neana
(Ngai akuathimae mwaitu Susanna wina nau
Musyoka)

Mauwau mathuku ta mukambi kana polio
Wandwaiie nzanzoni na mayaangwata

Nundu wi inyia wakwa na nue mwendwa wakwa
Mother ii mother Ngai akuathime
Nue inyia wakwa na nuwe mwendwa wakwa
mother Ngai akuathimae wi wikwaa
wandeie ni munini mother Susana aa

Wandea nginya naena
Nue inyia wakwa na nuwe mwendwa wakwa
Mother Ngai akuathimae wi wikwaa

Wandeie ni munini mother Susanna aa
Wandea nginya naena
(Brother Kithome na sister Monthe Nomo
tusaaniwe, Mumbua athumue nesa)

Nililikana undu wandavasya yila nai kana
Yu ningukwona Mami
Nililikana undu wandavasya yila nai kana
Yu ningukwona Mami
Wambia sonny nthi yusuite thina
Iyumiisye sua umwe nukona nesa
Nye wambie mboi nthi yusuite thina
Keeyumisye sua umwe nukona nesa
Mwana-aa kwa

Wanziaie ni munini mother Susanna
Wandea nginya neana
Wanziaie ni munini mother Susana
Wandea nginya neana
(Nau Musyoka ambiie ndikaoose kindu kya mundu,

You took care of me since I was little, mother
Suzanna
You nurtured me until I matured
You took care of me since I was little, mother
Suzanna
You nurtured me until I matured
{may he lord bless you mother Suzanna and Father
Musyoka}

Deadly diseases like measles and polio
You took me to vaccinations, they never attacked
me
Because you are my mother and my loved
Mother, mother May the lord bless you
Because you are my mother, my beloved
Mother may the lord bless you for you are mine
You took care of me since I was a child mother
Suzanna
You nurtured me until I matured
Because you are my mother, my beloved
Mother may the lord bless you for you are mine

You took care of me since I was a child
You nurtured me until I matured
{Brother Kithome, sister Monthe are siblings, let
Mumbua Rest in Peace}

I remember what you told me when I was young
And now I see clearly
I remember what you told me when I was young
And now I see clearly
You told me Son, the world is full of problems
Persevere and one day you will succeed my son
You told me, my boy, the world is full of problems
Persevere, and one day you will succeed my son

You took care of me since I was a child
You nurtured me until I matured
You took care of me since I was a child
You nurtured me until I matured
{My father Musyoka told me never to take

niyuumisye na ngakwata)

Asyai ma mundu nimailwe kunengwa heshima
Mayailwe kwosa ta small people
Asyai ma mundu nimaiile kunengwa heshima
Mayailwe kwosa ta small people
Takeka ti asyai Habiba wuma va?

Yila twi ilovi tulilikanae mami

Takeka ti asyai kindu wakwa wuma va?

Yila twi ilovi tulilikanae mami

Takeka ti asyai Mwangangi wuma va?

Yila twi ilovi tulilikane mami

Takeka ti asyai we Muange wuma va?

Yila twi ilovi tulilikane mami

Takeka ti asyai Mwongela wuma va?

Yila twi ilovi tulilikanae mami

Takeka ti asyai Sanzana wuma va?

Yila twi ilovi tulilikane mami na Tata

Twasyaiwe twi anini sana
Twaewa nginya tweana
Twasyaiwe twi anini sana
Twaewa nginya tweana

Nitungia Ngai muvea nundu wa umbumba
Mother ii mother wanziaie
Nitungia Ngai muvea nundu wa umbumba
Mother ii mother wanziaie

anything that does not belong to me, the old me
to persevere and I will have my own things}

Our parents must be respected
They should not be taken for granted
Our parents must be respected
They should not be taken for granted
If it were not for your parents, Habiba where
would you be?

When we are in Nairobi, we should remember our
mothers

If it were not for your parents, where would you
be my love?

When we are in Nairobi we should still remember
our parents

If it were not for your parents where would you be
Muange?

When we are in Nairobi we should still remember
our parents

If it were not for your parents where would you be
Muange?

When we are in Nairobi, we should remember our
parents

If it were not for your parents where would you be
Mwongela?

When we are in Nairobi, we should remember our
Mother

If it were not for our parents where would you be
Sanzana?

When we are I Nairobi let us remember our
mother and Father

We were born very little
We were nurtured until we matured
We were born very little
We were nurtured until we matured

I thank God for creating me
Mother, mother you bore me
I thank God for creating me
Mother, mother you bore me

We niwe inya wakwa, nouwe mwendwa
mother ii Ngai akuathime
mother ii Ngai akuathima wi wakwaa

Wanziaie ni munini mother Susana
Wandea nginya neana
(Ivuku ya Ngai yaasya taia au na mwenyu ni kana
matuku maku mongeleke, nundu wa mindo)

Uki mwalekelya syana
atumia menywa kyau
mwalekelya syana atumia menyw'a kyau

Uki mwalekelya syana
Aumia menywa kyau
Mwalekelya syana atumia menyw'a kyau

Baba Jimmy nienda ukwita Munyw'a uki
Baba Jimmy nienda ukita Munyw'a uki
Engineer Muange nienda ukwita Munyw'a uki
Engineer Muange nienda ukwita Munyw'a uki
Ngethesya Mwongela, no yamba umwita Munyw'a
uki
Ngethesya Mwongela, no yamba umwita Munyw'a
uki
Mwangangi wa kyama nienda umwita munyw'a uki
Mwangangi wa kyama nienda umwita munyw'a uki
Onakwa neinda itwa munywa uki
One man guitar nenda itwa munyw'a uki
Bosco Mulwa nienda itwa Munyw'a uki

LYDIA WANZILA

Lydia ii Lydia ii Lydia Wanzila
Lydia mwa wimumbe nesa, Lydia Wanzilaa
Indi ika iyona madam Lydia Wanzila
Miyono ikatuma usyaiya kwenyu kana Wanzila
Miyono ikatuma ukuia kwenyu sister Wanzila aa
Oo oo Wanzila
Eka iyona muno
Wiiyona na kyau iiwe

You are my mother, my beloved
Mother may the lord bless you
Mother may the lord bless you You are mine

You took care of me since I was a child
You nurtured me until I matured
{God's book says that you should obey your father
and mother and your days may be increased}

When you let children drink alcohol
What will elders drink?
After you leave it to the children what will elders
drink?

When you let children drink alcohol
What will elders drink?
After you leave it to the children what will elders
drink?

Father of Jimmy I want to call you a drunk
Father of Jimmy I want to call you a drunk
Engineer Muange, I want to call you a drunk
Engineer Muange I want to call you a drunk
Greet Mwongela, and call him a drunk
Greet Mwongela and call him a drunk
Mwangangi wa Kyama, I want to call you a drunk
Mwangangi wa Kyama I want to call you a drunk
Even me I want to be called a drunk
One Man Guitar I want to be called a drunk
Bosco Mulwa I want to be called a drunk

LYDIA WANZILA

Lydia Wanzila , Lydia Wanzila
You are beautiful lady Wanzila
But stop being haughty Lydia Wanzila
Because you will end up unmarried
Because you will end up unmarried
Oo Wanzila
Please stop being haughty

oo oo Wanzila
(Miyono ii yaku naku ti mbingi kowithwaa na kila
kindu tutetwaa nakyo

Watumie Mwana wa Musembi athi Jela Kamiti
Musyi wa Jimmy wa Makovo wianangika niki
Imwana sya Sukulu Masii mwiika mikomo niki

Watumie mwana wa Musembi athi jela Kamiti
Musyi wa jimmy na Makovo wi anangika niki
Imwana sya sukulu Masii mwiika mikomo niki

Lilikana Susu waku kana ai mwanake muno

Lilikana Susu waku kana ai mwanake muno

Indi umunthi ayumaala aumalaa na ndata
Umunthi ayumala aumalaa na ndata
Wonany'o museo vyu kana ukakuaa
Wonany'o museo vyu kana ukakuaa
Ukakua ukumbale ukunzane wikumbe ta inani

Ukakua ukumbale ukunzane wikumbe ta inani

(Ukakua wikale malai angi nakomanie namo
Congo maendaa maungy'e ta andu metawa
chimpanzee)

Nakwivaisye ukanuma na ukandea Wanzila
Waisye we ndwoneka kitumi niikia mikalya

Kingee kya mbaki, na mbui na sulwali wi ilaka
Ngwathukie

Tata wuole miyono kana Wanzila
Sisya wikie speed governor Wanzila

Lilikana Susu wake kana ai mwanake muno

Lilikana Susu waku kana ai Mwanake muno

Why are you like this

Oo Wanzila

(Why are you so haughty, do you have what we do
not have?)

Because of you Musembi's son is in Jail
Why is Jimmy Makovo's family is falling apart
Why is that Young Boys at Masii School are on
strike

Because of you Musembi's son is in Jail
Why is Jimmy Makovo's family is falling apart
Why is that Young Boys at Masii School are on
strike

Remember that your grandmother was very
beautiful

Remember that your grand mother was very
beautiful

But today she walks with a cane

But today she walks with a cane

A good indication that baby you will age

A good indication baby that you will age

You will age until you are bent and become
wrinkled like a monkey

You will age until you are bent and become

Wrinkled like a monkey

(you will age and you will look like some monkeys
I saw at the Congo which walk like people they are
called chimpanzees

I proposed to you but you abused me and said no
You said you were unavailable to me for I wear
sandals

With a tobacco beard like a goat and patched
trousers I should step out of your way

Please be humble lady Wanzila

Please have a speed governor Wanzila

Remember that your grandmother was very
beautiful

Remember that your grandmother mother was

Umunthi ayumaala aumalaa na ndata
Umunthi ayumaala aumalaa na ndata
Wonany'o museo kana kana ukakua
Wonany'o museo kana kana ukakua
Ukakua ukumbale ukunzane wikumbe ta inani

Ukakua ukumbale ukunzane wikumbe ta inani

MUKII

Mbumaasye Mukii, Mukii
Mbumaasye Mukii ndienda isa uvuiwa
kwenyu
Vai maana Sheri aii kindu wakwa
Maisa uvuiwa kwenyu nasye maeo to wasa

Ngiti sya kuasa aii we kindu wakwa
li vinya kwa mavindi eka ninuke nikwatuka

Asanta mukii ii Mukii ii
Ninenuka tiwa nesa
Asanta mukii ii mukii ii
Ninenuka kindu wakwa

Itava inene mwaitu ndivata nayo
Tondy yindulila kisiko na nongwenda utava keli

Itava inene mwaitu ndivata nayo
Tondy yindulila kisiko na nongwenda utava keli

Ndawa ya kuvosya mumbe kindu wakwa
Ndinyusawa mbingi eka ninuke nikwatukaa
Mauta maseo mumbe kindu wakwa
Mayivakawa maingi no kutombola ou ta ndawa

Mauta maseo mumbe kindu wakwa
Mayivakawa maingi no kutombola ou ta ndawa

Kutombola ou ta ndawa
Kutombola ou ta ndawa
Kutombola ou ta ndawa
Kutombola ou ta ndawa

very beautiful
But today she walks with a cane
But today she walks with a cane
A good indication that baby you will age
A good indication baby that you will age
You will age until you are bent and become
wrinkled like a monkey
You will age until you are bent and become
wrinkled like a monkey

MUKII

Say goodbye Mukii as I go home
Please Mukii say good bye for I do not want to be
beaten
there is no need my love
to be beaten in this place I might lose my teeth like
my friend
dogs from a far place my dear
have no strength for bones I should be on my way
it is getting late

Thank you Mukii
I have to go home stay well
Thank you Mukii
I have to go home stay well

I do not like huge scoops/spoonfuls my dear
For it will break my spoon and I still want to scoop
again

I do not like a huge scoops/spoonful my dear
For it will break my spoon and I still want to scoop
again

A prescription that will heal my beloved
Is not taken in large amounts

A nice body lotion my beautiful one
Is not used in large amount, you use it sparingly
like medicine

A nice body lotion my beautiful one
Is not used in large amount, you use it sparingly
like medicine

You use it sparingly like medicine

Kwitu ni kuasa muingo wa Kaiti
Na ndikwenda utukiwa kwenyu nundu kwi mikola
Mbumaasye ninuke kindu wakwa
Noivoya Ngai nivike nesa tukoonana
Akamba nimaisye utuku niwa nyamu
Nienda sua yiithua nithiwe nivikite nyumba

Asante Mukii ii tindilitindili Mukii
Ninenuka tiwa nesa
Asante Mukii ii Mukii ii
Ninenuka tiwa nesa

Nikwivasya nundu wa kwithiwa ngwendete muno
Suvia wendo witu nikana tekethe matunda

Nikwivasya nundu wi kindu wakwa
Suvia wendo witu nikana tukethe matunda

Matunda ma wendo mwingi wakwa ni naku
Tuiye nyumba tuitana na syana situ

Kutombola ou ta ndawa
Kutombola ou ta ndawa
Kutombola ou ta ndawa
Kutombola ou ta ndawa aa

IMPROVISED SECTION

Kana kaa kesunga nesa
Nundu wa sekete
Kiti kitimba kii kinyunga nesa
Nundu wa sekete
Wathi tuu museo wiitwa sekete
Kana kaa kesunga nesa nundu wa sekete
Carnivore enyunga nesa nundu wa sekete
Kiti kitimba kinyunga nesa nundu wa sekete
{ambatya sulwali mama}
ambatya sulwali Sammy Mulinge na Lilian Muli}

You use it sparingly like medicine
You use it sparingly like medicine
You use it sparingly like medicine

Our home is far the other side of Kaiti river
I do not to be late here for there are thugs
Plases say goodbye my beloved
And pray that I arrive safely until next time
The night belongs to animals so says the Akamba
I want to be in my house before the sun sets

Thank you Mukii ii
I have to go home stay well
Thank you Mukii ii
I have to go home stay well

I want to Marry you because I love you
Please take care of our love So that we can harvest
its fruits

I want to marry you because I love you
Please take care of our love So that we can harvest
its fruits

The fruit of our love
When we are in the house happy with our children

You use it sparingly like medicine
You use it sparingly like medicine
You use it sparingly like medicine
You use it sparingly like medicine

IMPROVISED SECTION

This baby is dancing well
Because of the feeling in the air
These buttocks smell well
Because of the feeling in the air
Here is a nice dance
Feel the good feeling in the air
This baby is dancing well
Because of the good feeling in the air
These buttocks smell very nice
{hike up your trousers lady, hike up your trousers
my friend Sammy Mulinge and Lilian Muli}

Ai kutalama kutalama talama
Chenza ngoma dansi ya Bosco Mulwa
Dansi ya Makueni
{wapi duru ya Lilian Muli, ni kuhama}
{wapi kule Carnivore, twende twende}
{sema double double}
Audience:Double double

li iii my lord is good oh
Audience: li iii my lord is good oh
li iii my lord is good oh
Audience: li iii my lord is good oh
li iii my lord is good oh
Audience: li iii my lord is good oh
blessing double double
Audience: blessing double double
Everything double double
Audience: everything double double

{asya aiiee Audience: aiiee}
asya aiiee Audience: aiiee
aiiee audience:aiiee
aiiee audience:aiiee
aiiee audience:aiiee

Sema mitungi mizito mizito
Mitugi mizito mitugi mizito

Ai kutalama talama talama mama
Cheza ngoma ya dansi ya Bosco
Dansi ya Makueni
Ai kutalama talama talama mama
Cheza ngoma ya dansi ya Bosco
Dansi ya makueni

Ngoma niya ta ngulata niya tangulata
Syindu niya tangulata niya tangulata
Nisu tii sya mukamba mba
Tututu ngwa ngwa ngwa
Nisyakoma

It Is dancing dancing dancing
Dance to Bosco Mulwa's rhythm
Sounds from makueni
{make some noise for Lilian Muli}
{where are we, let's go, let's go}
{Say Double,double}
{Audience: Double, double}
lii iii My lord is good is oh
Audience: ii iii my lord is good
li iii my lord is good oh
Audience: li iii my lord is good oh
li iii my lord is good oh
Audience: li iii my lord is good oh
blessing double double
Audience: blessing double double
Everything double double
Audience: everything double double

{say no, audience: no}
{Say no audience: No}
No audience: no
No audience: no
No audience: no

{say heavy things }
{Heavy things heavy things}

It Is dancing dancing dancing
Dance to Bosco Mulwa's rhythm
Sounds from makueni
It Is dancing dancing dancing
Dance to Bosco Mulwa's rhythm
Sounds from makueni

I will dance like I will never dance again
I will eat like I will never dance again
Yes this Kamba Dance
Tututu ngwa ngwa ngwa
Those drums have slept
Tututu ngwa ngwa ngwa

Tututu ngwa ngwa ngwa
Nisyakoma
Ila siambaa ngoma
Tututu ngwa ngwa ngwaaa

Erick Omondi Erick Omondi
wapi duru ya Erick Omondi
How are youni
How are youni
How are youni
Erick Omondi Bosco Mulwa nafungulia

Katoto katoto katoto kaseo ti kaa
Katoto katoto katoto kaseo ti kaa
Katoto katoto katoto katimba ti kaa
Katoto katoto katoto kitimba ti kii

{Dialogue}
How are you?
Mukathi ituni
Mukathi ituni(audience)

Inaitwa gari moshi ya ukambani
Gari moshi ya Ukambani(audience)
Inaitwa meli ya nchi kavu
Meli ya nchi kavu(audience)
Inabeba wengi
Ingawaje nzi ana uwezo wa kupaa juu hakuna siku
moja ataitwa ndege

Wapi makofikwa Erick Omondi
Pigeni makofi
Erick Omondi Erick Omondi(audience)
Erick Omondi Erick Omondi(audience)
Erick Omondi Erick Omondi(audience)
[cheers from the crowd]
Haleeluya ameni

Those drums have slept
Those drums which sound
Tututu ngwa ngwa ngwaaa

{Erick Omondi Erick Omondi}
Make some noise for Erick Omondi
How are you
How are you
How are you
How are you
Erick Omondi Bosco I let Thing sound

Here look at a beautiful baby
Here look at a beautiful baby
Here look at some beautiful buttocks
Here look at some beautiful buttocks

{Dialogue }
How are you
You will Go to even
You will Go to even(audience)

This is known as a train from Ukambani
A train form Ukambani(audience)
It is known as a ship on a dry land
Ship on dry land(audience)
It can accommodate a lot of people
Even though a housefly can fly he will never be
called a bird

{clap for Erick Omondi}
{Clap your Hands}
Erick Omondi Erick Omondi(audience)
Erick Omondi Erick Omondi(audience)
Erick Omondi Erick Omondi(audience)
[cheers from the crowd]
Halleluiah Amen

COVER SONGS

OSA UVOO ROSE

Kwoosa uvo0 Rose

Kwoosa uvo0 Rose

Kwoosa uvo0 Rose

Wai wakwa nawandia

Kwoosa uvo0 Rose

Kwoosa uvo0 Rose

Kwoosa uvo0 Rose

Wai wakwa nawandia

Wai wakwa ngwendete ii

Mwendwa Rose

Waiwakwa ngwendete

Waiwakwa na watwawa Kisumu

Nakwendie wi kana

Nakwendie wi kana

Nakwendie wi kana

Kana kaukenge

Nakwendie kivetii

Nakwendie wi kana

Nakwendie wi kana

GREETINGS ROSE

This is for you Rose

This is for you Rose

This is for you Rose

You were mine but you left me

This is for you Rose

This is for you Rose

This is for you Rose

You were mine but you left me

You were mine and I loved you

Dear Rose

You were mine and I loved you

You were mine but you got married in Kisumu

I loved you since you were little

I loved you since you were little

I loved you since you were little child

A very little child

I wanted you as my wife

I loved you since you were little

I loved you since you were little

Nakwendie wi kana

I loved you since you were little child

Kana kaukenge

A very little child

Nakwendie kivetu

I wanted you as my wife

li ii ii Rose my dear

li ii ii Rose dear

li ii ii Rose waiwakwa na watwawa Kisumu

You were mine but you got married in Kisumu

Niiwa woo sana

I am very sad

Niiwa woo sana

I am very sad

Niiwa woo sana

I am very sad

Niki utwawe Kisumu

Why did you get married in Kisumu

Niiwa woo sana

I am very sad

Niiwa woo sana

I am very sad

Niiwa woo sana

I am very sad

Niki utwawe Kisumu

Why did you get married in Kisumu

Niiwa tei sana

I am very sorry

Niiwa tei sana

I am very sorry

Mwendwa Rose

My dear Rose

Waiwakwa na wandia

You were mine but you left me

Ethwa niwandeie Rose

If you do not want me any more Rose

Ethwa niwandeie Rose

If you do not want me any more Rose

Ethwa niwandeie Rose saa yakwa ya kwoko
ndundungie

If you still reject me give me back my wrist watch
please return it

Saa yakwa ya kwoko oo my dear
Saa yakwa ya kwoko,
Nguu yakwa ya alusi ndundungie

Rose aii Rose ndwoose uvoo
Kuma wandia Sammy niw'a woo
Rose aii Rose ndwoose uvoo
Kuma wandia Sammy niw'a woo
Kilunda aii mwanyie niwa woo
Sammy aii Sammy niwa woo
Mulwa aii Sammy niwa'a woo
Sammy aii weewa aii
Kilunda aii Sammy niwa woo

TERESIA

Aa aii iii
Mwa Teresia wa mama ndueke undia
Kyalo kii ni kinene na tuendete kuasa
Kyalo kii ni kinene natuendete kuasa
Waendete Mombasa na maau wee
Waendete Mombasa na maau wee

Twavika vau Kalawa my baby
Twavika vau Kalawa ngamutavya kindu wakwa
Kyalo kii ni kinene na tuendete kuasa

My wrist watch oo my dear
Yes give me back my wrist watch
And my wedding dress

Rose please hear this
Since you left me Sammy I am sad
Rose hear this
Since you left me Sammy I am very sad
Kilunda I am very sad
Sammy Sammy I am very sad
Mulwa , yes Sammy I am very sad
Sammy yes hear me
Sammy Kilunda I am vey sad

TERESIA

aa aii iii
Teresia my dear please do not leave me
This journey is long and we are going very far
This journey is long and we are going very far
You were going to Mombasa by foot
You were going to Mombasa by foot

When we arrived at Kalawa my baby
When we arrived at Kalawa I told you my beloved
This journey is long and we are going so far

Kyalo kii ni kinene na tuendete kuasa

Twavika vau Kibwezi, nduende na mboki

Wavika vau Kibwezi vau Kibwezi nduende na mboki

Na ndukatate kundia ii Teresia

Na ndukatate kundia ii Teresia kindu wakwa

{twende twende}

Twavikie na utuku ii tutalisa kindu wakwa

Twavikie na utuku tutalisa kindu wakwa

Teresia naukulilye kia kii ni kyau

Teresia naukulilye kia kii ni kyau

Wambiie ni kyakwa

Wambiie ni kyakwa na ni nguthi

Teresia ni kyau mwa ni nguseng'a

Twaendanisye Emali Teresia

Twambatanisye Emali

Twaumie vau twathi Ngwata

Wamatavya me Ngwata na Makindu

Na Mutito na Kambu

{wapi duru ya Bosco}

Twavika vau Kibwezi ukandia

Tamika vatu Kibwezi Ukandia

This journey is long and we are going so far

When we reach Kibwezi I told you to train

When you get to Kibwezi can you take the train?

But do not leave me Teresia

Please do not leave me Teresia my dear

{let's us go let's go}

We arrived at night without boarding anything

We arrived at night without boarding anything

Teresia I asked you whose penis is this

Teresia I asked you whose penis is this

you told it is mine

You told me it is mine but I will still go

Teresa what is it, I wonder

We went up to Emali Teresia

We went up to Emali

We then went to Ngwata

You told them at Ngwata and at Makindu

And at Mtito and Kambu

{make some noise}

When we arrived at Kibwezi, You left me

When we arrived at Kibwezi to pick a train

You went with truck drivers

Waendie na ndelewa sya maloli

Waendie na ndelewa sya trela my dear

Walikile Mombasa kyaani

Walikile Mombasa Kyaani

Na wauma Kyaani wathi Tudor

Na wauma Kyaani wathi Tudor

Tyo umalwaya

Ko waendie va Mombasa Teresia

Waamba umbaa Teresia

Wavika vu Mombasa waaie

Na kowoosiwe ni mayini ma Mombasa

Na kowoosiwe ni majini ma Mombasa

Teresia ningukwita syoka my baby

Teresia ningukwita syoka my baby

{Teresia aendie na simu yakwa na ndyeetawa nokia, yeetawa ata? Audience (Kia) aiee ndyeetawa nokia yeetawa ata? Audience (Kia) aiee ndyeetawa Nokia, yeetawa ata? Audience(Kia)}

Kowaendie va Mombasa

Kowaendie va Mombasa Teresia

Na kowoosiwe ni majini ma Mombasa

Na kowoosiwe ni majini ma Mombasa

Teresia ni ngukwita my baby.

You went with truck drivers

you went to Mombasa Kyaani

You went to Mombasa Kyaani

From Kyaani to Tudor

From Kyaani to Tudor

Prostituting

Where are you in Mombasa Teresia

I lost you Teresia

When you got to Mombasa where did you go?

Were you taken by genies in Mombasa?

Were you taken by genies in Mombasa

Teresia I beg you please come back baby

Teresia I beg you please come back baby

{Teresia went with my phone, it was not a nokia phone, and What was it called? Audience (Penis) no it was not a Nokia phone, what was it? Audience(Penis)}

Where are you in Mombasa?

Where are you in Mombasa Teresia?

Or were you taken by genies in Mombasa

Were you taken by genies in Mombasa

Teresia I beg you please come back my baby.

NONGI NENGA MUTI

Nongi nenga Muti nume

Tondu mali yi tayari

Nyama choma na karanga

Tata witu avune viu

Nongi nenga muti nume

Tondu mali yi tayari

Nyama choma na karanga

Tata witu avune viu

Ngwendeaa kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

Ngwendeaa kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

Ngwendea kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

Ngwendea kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

Ngwendea kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

Ngwendea kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

Ndukambalukye nguve ungwete

Ndukambalukye nguve ungwete

Ndukambalukye nguve ungwete

Ndukambalukye nguve ungwete

Twavaluka ou nimeutwona

GIVE ME MY STICK

Please give a stick so that I come down

Because the food is ready

Fried meat and soup

Our Daddy will be full

Please give me a stick so that I come down

Because the food is ready

Fried meat and soup

Our Daddy will be full

I love you for getting an erection so fast

I love you for getting an erection so fast

I love you for getting an erection so fast

I love you for getting an erection so fast

I love you for getting an erection so fast

I love you for getting an erection so fast

Please do not let me fall, hold me and take me

Please do not let me fall, hold me and take me

Please do not let me fall, hold me and take me

Please do not let me fall, hold me and take me

If we fall they will see us

Twavaluka ou nimeutwona

If we fall they will see us

Twavaluka ou nimeutwona

If we fall they will see us

Kavala aki tuungeme

If we fall they will see us

Kavala aki tuungeme

It is better while we are standing

Kavala aki tuungeme

It is better while we are standing

Kavala aki tuungeme

It is better while we are standing

Ngwendea kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

I love you for getting an erection so fast

Ngwendea kukya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

I love you for getting an erection so fast

Ngwendea kumya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

I love you for getting an erection so fast

Ngwendea kumya uyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

I love you for getting an erection so fast

Wauma va Mulela wauma va

Where are you from Mulela?

Wauma va Mulela wauma va

Where are you from Mulela?

Niwandia Mulela mulinditi

You left me in need of you

Niwandia Mulela mulinditi

You left me in need of you

Mweela mwiu utulane na nzamba nguu

A black Hen gets on top an old Cock

Mweela mwiu utulane na nzamba nguu

A black Hen gets on top an old Cock

{hiyi ilikuwa umoja 1 twende umoja 2}

{the above was Umoja 1 we are going to Umoja 2}

{kwambai aa aa aa}

{Say aaaa}

Waendie kumwita tumanthane na mwenzele...

You went to visit Mwenzele

Nayu numite kuasa mulinditi

I come from afar in need of you

Ngamuya mwea ngookila na maseki	I look down and I only see grass
Ngamuya mwea na mavwia	I look down and I see feathers
Ngaamba mwii ngaamba kino ngaamba mee	I say yes I say sex I say testes
Ngaamba mwii ngaamba kino ngaamba mee	I say yes I say sex I say testes
Ngaamba kino ngaamba nguu ngaamba mee	I say yes I say sex I say testes
Waendie kumwita tumanthane na wanzili	You went to visit Wanzili
{vaa ve syana}	{are there any children here}
{Audience aiee}	{audience : Nooo}
Kwitu ni kuasa mwa ndivika	I come from a far place I cannot go back
Kwitu ni kusa kitui ndivika	I come from Kitui and I cannot go back
Mwaitu niwakwie nayu wi nenga thina	My mother is dead and now you trouble me
Mwaitu ni wakwie nayu winenga thina wa unguva my darling ndulike	My mother is dead and now you trouble me with sex, my darling come in
{Chanting}	{chanting}
Ai nimutangasia	I tell you
Wasya wakuikiika mbaitu fm	A with a voice that can be trusted, Mbaitu Fm
Wasya wa Mukamba	The Akamba voice
Ko kalula katunivawa ni kunengeleanilwa Akamba maitu	A calabash becomes smooth by being passed around my dear people
Ikunda yiuva ndukunde na uinengelelya ungi	Please take a sip and pass it to another one
Na ni mutonyeeaa kau	I wanted to whisper that to you.
Nundu wa mindo	Because of that
Aii na mwanaa mwendya	And my kin brother do not get angry with me

Manya unthatia muno ngiti ino

Tondu matuku ma uwau ndyai muvikiu

Ai nyie niweta kyome wa Nthenge ninewiea
uinzuka

Musokolo wa Kawai wi muthuku ngiti ino

Wavithie kyai nthungini kinesa kwoneka na kutoa
mwaki ngiti ino

Ai savali ya andu aingi ninemyona tumaundu
tumaundu tumaundu

Ai novala twaungama tuvuve mwaki

naveala mekwasya tuivuva kino komai

Na kindu wakwa Mukony'o ngwendea kusuvya

Na kindu wakwa Mukony'o ngwendea kunyala

Na nimutonyeaa kau

MATUKU MAINGI NGOMETE NZA

Matuku maingi ngomete nza

Ngilika ni ngunguni na mataangua

Matuku maingi ngomete nza

Ngilika ni ngunguni na mataangua

Akia Ngai mbula ndikambila

Kuendany'a na alisi matungulu

Akia ngai mbula ndikambila

Kuendanya na alisi matungulu

Kamchekechea ni Katii Mueni

You are a dog For the days of sickness

I was not yet mature

I say Kyome wa Nthenge I overheard you talking
about me you are a dog

You are a bad person Musongolo Wa kawai

You hid tea in a basket until people saw it
steaming you are a dog

I have seen that a journey of many people has a
lot of issues lots of issues

Every place we stop to light a fire for the night

But there are those who oppose our idea saying
lets sleep

I like you my dear Mukony'o for breaking wind

I like you may dear Mukony'o for sweating

I wanted to whisper that to you.

I HAVE SPENT MANY NIGHTS OUTSIDE

I spent many night outside

Being beaten by bedbugs and tsetse flies

I spent many night outside

Being beaten by bedbugs and tsetse flies

I swear to you Mbula I will never

Accompany Alice to Matungulu

I swear to you Mbula I will never

Accompany Alice to Matungulu

Katii Mueni is the very beautiful

Koombiwe ni Ngai atekunyinyuka

Kamchekechea ni Katii Mueni

Namutumanieaai yakwa ai nayo

Kyai kyesa kunyw'iwa nzele nziu

Namutumaie ambia eonalo

Kyai kyesa unyw'iwa nzele nziu

Kindu kimuyo ni kino na nyama

Kisamaa ta kyongelelwe sukali

Kindu kimuyo ni kino na nyama

Kisamaa ta kuongelelwe sukali

Kikongelwa kamunyu no kumina andu

Ndumbolele kanini nyinya wa nthambi

Kikongelwa kamunyu no kumina andu

Ndumbolele kanini nyinya wa Nthambi

Ti imwee mwendwa ti eli

Ndukese uthaukanakwa

Ti imwe ona ti keli

Ndukese uthauka nakwa

Ti imwee ee ona ti ya keliii

Beatrice ee ekaa

Eka uthauka nakwa

God created her without moving a bit

Katii Mueni is the very beautiful

God created her without moving a bit

I sent for him to bring my property

And they drank the tea from a black Calabash

I sent for him but he was late and they drank the tea from a black Calabash

The sweetest thing is Meat and sex

It tastes like sugar

The sweetest thing is Meat and sex

It tastes like sugar

If salt is added it might kill us

Please share some mother of Nthambi

If salt is added it might kill us

Please share some mother of Nthambi

It is not one my dear and it is not the second

Do not play joke with me

It is not the first nor the second

Do not joke with me

It is not the first nor the second

Beatrice please stop

Stop joking with me

{Chanting}

Ai langi ndundule

Ai mwa mufaransa

Langi ngwendaa kulungala

Iwavika kyeevoni wambiie shamba

Nzamba Musinga

Ni kana ka tata kanambia wathi Withela ndilikana
na vasi

Ai Langi ndunduleei

Mwa muvalanza Langi nikwendea kulungala

Ai nimwewie ii

Nguma ya mwana wa mundu

Akitwa kakungu na aketwa Musyoka

Ngiti ino

{audience laughs}

Kamwana kailu ke mwii mwau

mwau mwau mwau

Mwa Langi akekala mee ma kikamba

{ethiawa me makunzakunzanu}

Ai na wewa ngiweta ou Mr President

Ndukese umbosa nai

Wambiie umbananganisya kikalo

Mwanakw usu ukwi'wa ayitwa Musyooka

(a form of chanting)

Langi please dance with me

Yes you Frenchman

Langi I like because of your posture

When you arrived at Kyeevoni you told me

Musinga the Gentleman

My dad's son told me about the dance

It is ending when I am entering in with Vasi

Langi please Dance with me

Please Frenchman Langi I like you

Yes have you ever heard?

The praise name of a son of a man

He was named Kakungu and again named
Musyoka you are a dog

{audience Laughs}

A good young man with a good physique

It is you Mwau, Mwau Mwau

Langi looks like the Kamba testicles

(They are wrinkled)

And if you hear me say this Mr. President

Do not misunderstand me

Such you start destroying my reputation

That young man called Musyoka

Musisye niwe uyu niwe uyu

Ona mwoona i nzwii ndune ta ndaa

Na Muikese uthauka na Kamwana kenze nze nze

Aai na mwanaa Mwendya manya unthatia muno
ngiti ino

Tondu matuku ma uwau ndyai muviku

Ai nyie niwetai Kyome wa Nthenge ninewie
uinzuka ngiti ino

Musongolo wa Kawai wi muthuku ngiti ino

Wavithie kyai ikotini kinesa kwioneka na kutoa
mwaki ngiti ino

Aaiii nayo savali ya andu aingi ninemyona
tumaundu tumaundu tumaundu

Ai novala twavika tuivuva mwaki daktali

Na veala mekwasya tuivuva kino komai inyw'e

Ai na kindu wakwa Mukonyo ngwendea kusuvya

{Cheers form the crowd}

Ai kindu wakwa mukonyo ngwendea kunyala

{nundu wa mindo}

Mundu utesi kuthamba

Asuanie kuthamba

Look here he is, here he is

Even if you see his red hair like a bedbug

Do not play with a shaved young man

And my kin brother do not get angry with me You
are a dog

For the days of sickness I was not mature

I say Kyome wa Nthenge I overheard you talking
about me you are a dog

You are a bad person Musongolo Wa kawai

You hid tea in a basket until people saw it
steaming You are a dog

I have seen that a journey of many people has a
lot of issues lots of issues

Every place we stop to light a fire for the night

But there are those who oppose our idea, saying
let's sleep

I like you my dear Mukony'o for breaking wind

{cheers from the crowd}

I like you may dear Mukony'o for sweating

{Because of that}

A person who does not know how to bathe

Should think of bathing

Mundu utesi kuthamba

A person who does not know how to take a bath

Asuanie kuthamba

Should think of bathing

Mundu utesi kuthamba

A person who does not know how to bathe

Ni ndia yi kithingo

He is a dirty fool

Mundu utesi kuthamba

A person who does not know how to bathe

Ni ndia yi kithingo

He is a dirty fool

Kuthamba ni kuseo

Bathing is good

Tusuanie kuthambya

Let us think of bathing

Kuthamba ni kuseo

Bathing is good

Tusuanie kuthambya

Let us think of bathing

Ii kuthambya kuthambya kuthambya

Yes washing bathing bathing bathing

Haleelujaa

Hallelujah

Kuthambyaaa.

Bathing.

KENNEDY WAMBUA'S SONGS

KAVALUKU NA NZOU

Kavaluku keeiwe ni nzou

Uyu nusi muliku

Ndukatate kuinga ta nzou

Ndukatwawe ni kiwu

Kavaluku keeiwe ni nzou

Uyu nusi muliku

Ndukatate kuinga ta nzou

Ndukatwawe ni kiwu

Kavaluku keei nzou

Ndukatate undia

Kitaeka ngulise

Ndikatwawe ni kiwu

(nundu no kasamu kanini)

Kavaluku keei nzou

Ndukatate undia

Kitaeka ngulise muongo

Ndikatwawe ni kiwu

(nundu no kasamu kanini)

Kavaluku keewiwe ni nzou

THE HARE AND THE ELEPHANT

The elephant said to the hare

This is a deep river

Do not try to cross it like an elephant

You will drown

The elephant said to the hare

This is a deep river

Do not try to cross it like an elephant

You will drown

The hare replied

Do not leave me

Let me ride on your back

So that I do not drown

(Because he is a small animal)

The hare replied

Do not leave me

Let me ride on your back

So that I do not drown

(Because he is a small animal)

The elephant said to the hare

Kita ulisa ngingye

Get on my back

Lakini ukenda isa usyoka

But if you ever want to go back

Mbaka wikalilye

You are on your own

Kavaluku keewiwe ni nzou

The elephant said to the hare

Kita ulisa ngingye

Get on my back

Lakini ukenda isa usyoka

But if you ever want to go back

Mbaka wikalilye

You are on your own

Kavaluku kaingwa ni nzou

The elephant helped the hare

Mavikie o nesa

And they crossed safely

Na mavika keeie nzou

But when they reached the other end

Vai undu weka

the hare told the elephant that he has done nothing

Kavaluku kaingwa ni nzou

The elephant helped the hare

Mavikie o nesa

And they crossed safely

Na mavika keeie nzou

But when they reached the other end the hare told

Vai undu weka

the elephant that he has done nothing

Kavaluu kaigwa ni nzou

the elephant helped the hare

Mavikie nesa

and they crossed safely

Kavaluku kaingwa ni nzou

the elephant helped the hare

Mavikie nesa

and they crossed safely

Lakini mavika muingo

but when they reached the other end

Kaneneie nai

the hare spoke mockingly

Lakini mavika muingo

Kaneneie nai

Nawe nzou ndaosa tondu

Niwaendie syake

Nawe nzou ndaosa tondu

Niwaendie syake

Kavaluku ukenda isa usyoka

Muvaka wikalilye

kKvaluku ukenda isa usyoka

Mbaka wikalilye

ISUVIE MUNO

Ta makuyu we wajiji tea makuyu

Noyisuvia ndukese utea yimwe yiumelye

Syima mboo we bora syima mboo

Noyisivia ndukese umwa maa ni mboo

Kunda kithoi Kyallo Mbusya kunda kithoi

Noyisuvia ndukavune wiitue nai

Maembe me muyo we Mutunga totya masamu

Noyisuvia ndukatotyē utotyē siinyu

Wikye maangi we kasee wikye maangi

but when they reached the other end

the hare spoke mockingly

the elephant did not mind

he went away

the elephant did not mind

he went on his way

if you ever want to go back

you have to do it on your own

if you (hare) ever want to go back

You have to do it on your own.

BE CAREFUL

Go fishing Wajiji go fishing but

be careful that you do not catch one that will swallow you

go hunting for buffaloes my friend Bora go hunting but be careful that

the buffalo does not go with your innards

drink the sauce Kyallo Mbusya drink the sauce

but be careful you do not drink too much you diarrhea

the mangoes are sweet Mutunga find the ripe ones

but be careful you do not eat the ones with worms

throw your arrows Kasee throw your arrows

Noyisuvia ndukese kuatha nyamu ikuange

but be careful that you throw and hit an animal
that will kill you

Nikwathukie we ulume nikwathukie

times are bad my friend Ulume times are bad

Ika masavu na uyiisa ngima na utee

Be careful and just eat your ugali from the sides.

MAEMA UMBINA MAIYA

IF THEY DO NOT SING ABOUT ME

Shambiki nzeo

My good fans

Muikamake nikwiw'a

Do not be troubled if you hear

Keni niwiniwe

They are singing about me

Na maema umbina

If they do not sing about me

Maiyaa maiya

They will not eat

Maema umbina

And if they do not sing about me

Makoma ou makoma ou

They will starve they will starve

Tondu no ndia

Because they are fools

Makengetwe matine

They have been lied to

Umbina mavume

To sing about me

Na makaema umbina

And if they do not sing about me

Maiyaa maiya

They will not eat they will not eat

Mwa makaema umbina

If they do not sing about me

Makoma ou makoma ou

They will starve they will starve

Tondu mena nzaa

Because they are hungry

Mevingise makwate ikumi

They try hard to get ten shillings

Mauwe mutu

So that they buy flour

Na makaema umbina

Maiyaa maiya

Mo makaema umbina

Maakoma ou makoma ou

Ikulyo inene

Yo mwimbina mabaka indii

Ndia ii syakwa

Na makaema umbina

Maiyaa maiya

Mwa mukaema umbina

Mukoma ou mukoma ou

Na mukwete umbaka

Ambai mwine

Tondu mwindia

Ekai mwine

Na makaema umbina

Maiyaa maiya

Mwa makaema umbina

Makoma ou makoma ou

And if they do not sing about me

They will not eat they will not eat

If they do not sing about me

They will starve they will starve

The big question is

For how long will you sing about me

My fools

And if they do not sing about me

They will not eat they will not eat

If they do not sing about me

They will starve they will starve

You are building me

Continue singing

Because you are stupid

Just sing

And if they do not sing about me

They will not eat they will not eat

If they do not sing about me

They will starve they will starve

GERMANY BY FOOT

Ngilasya niilye

Ngethia ngyota na mwende

Ngethe yi muingo Germany

Kweli ngewa kuia

Ngilasya niilye

Ngethia ngyota na mwende

Ngethe yi muingo Germany

Kweli ngewa kuia

Wiku muingo ngumisiia muno

li mwende

Ngakwatwa ni mutwe

Wa kuka naku ngwone

Wiku muingo ngumisiia muno

li mwende

Ngakwatwa ni mutwe

Wa kuka naku ngwone

(kuuya munich city)

Niendaa airport mbangite

Nyie ulisa ndeke

Ngewa vai sare

GERMANY BY FOOT

Sometimes I sit alone

And dream about Mwende

My girl who is abroad in Germany

I feel like crying

Sometimes I sit alone

And dream about Mwende

My girl who is abroad in Germany

I feel like crying

While you are away I miss you very much

Yes Mwende

Sometimes I think of

Paying you a visit

While you are away I miss you very much

Yes Mwende

Sometimes I think of

Paying you a visit

(at Munich city)

I go to the airport with an intent

Of boarding a plane

I am told there is no free travel

Nyie ndeke no mbaka ngaiva	I must pay for an air ticket
Niendaa airport mbangite	I go to the airport with an intent
Nyie ulisa ndeke	Of boarding a plane
Ngewa vai sare	I am told there is no free travel
Nyie ndeke no mbaka ngaiva	I must pay for an air ticket
Ngesilya ulisa meli	I think of taking a ship
Mombasa kou	At Mombasa
Onakwo ngewa vai sare	Still I am told there is no free travel
No mbaka nyie ngaiva	I must pay for it
Ngesilya ulisa meli	I think of taking a ship
Mombasa kou	At Mombasa
Onakwo ngewa vai sare	Still I am told there is no free travel
No mbaka nyie ngaiva	I must pay for it
(nakwa ndina mbesa na nowo Kenya yoomie)	(and I do not have money and the times here are so hard)
Niuka na maau	I will come by foot
Germany munich sweetie	Germany Munich my sweet lady
No mbaka ngwone	I must see you
Ngoo yakwa mwa itulie	So that my heart is at rest
Ndisya kuumisya	For now I cannot endure your absence
Mbaka wiuka we baby	I cannot wait until you come
Kita umbeteela	Just wait for me

Niuka na maau

I will come by foot

Ni ngethe yakwa yi Germany

My lady is in Germany

Ni ngethe yakwa yi Germany

My lady is in Germany

Ruth mwende ke Germany

Ruth Mwende is in Germany

Ruth mwende ke Germany

Ruth Mwende is in Germany

Munich city Germany

Munich City, Germany

Munich city Germany

Munich City Germany

Syindu syakwa syi Germany

My property is in Germany

Syindu syakwa syi Germany

My property is in Germany

Nikusya mbaka Germany

I am going to Germany

Nikusya mbaka Germany

I am going to Germany

Niendete by foot nyie

I am going by foot

Niendete by foot nyie

I am going by foot

Wanzanze mbike Germany

Wanzanze I have to go to Germany

Wanzanze mbike Germany

Wanzanze I have to go to Germany

Ni ngethe yakwa yi Germany

My lady is in Germany

Ni ngethe yakwa yi Germany

My lady is in Germany

Ruth mwende ke Germany

Ruth Mwende is in Germany

Ruth mwende ke Germany

Ruth Mwende is in Germany

Munich city Germany

Munich City, Germany

Munich city Germany

Munich City Germany

Syindu syakwa syi Germany

My property is in Germany

Syindu syakwa syi Germany

My property is in Germany

Nikusya mbaka Germany

I am going to Germany

Nikusya mbaka Germany

I am going to Germany

Niendete by foot nyie

I am going by foot

Niendete by foot nyie

I am going by foot

Wanzanze I have to go to Germany

Wanzanze mbike Germany

Wanzanze I have to go to Germany

Wanzanze mbike Germany

NGETHE NGEMI

Twavika kibwezi nienda ukwia nyie inoonie ngethe

When we arrived at Kibwezi I want to tell you I saw a lady and

Nakulya mung'eng'e ambiie yitawa ngemi

when I asked Mung'eng'e he told me her name is Ngemi

Twavika kibwezi nienda ukwia nyie ninoonie ngethe

When we arrived in Kibwezi I want to tell you saw a lady

Nakulya mung'eng'e ambiie yitawa ngemi

and when I asked Mung'eng'e he told me her name is Ngemi

Namisisya metho neewie kweli nyie veo vata

when I looked at her eyes I felt there was a need

Itwike yakwa tukekaa maundu ma vata

Namisisya metho neewie kweli nyie veo vata

Itwike yakwa tukekaa maundu ma vata

Kethwa nyie no mbesa nithoosya ngali syi itatu

Nasali nyie Wanzanze syaleti nundu wa ngemi

Kethwa nyie no mbesa nithoosya ngali syi itatu

Nasali nyie Wanzanze sya leti Nundu wa ngemi

Na mbesa syaema nienda kwa Waemi wa Ngumi

Muvaka none nendana na ngemi

Na mbesa syaema nienda kwa Waemi wa Ngumi

Muvaka none nendana na ngemi

Mukosi na Teke ninyw'e andu ala ngutuma ii

Musembe kasayani muneene mwina ngemi

Mukosi na Teke ninyw'e andu ala ngutuma ii

Musembe kasayani muneene mwina ngemi

Na mwoona vaema musembe mwite Mbitha uu

Mulei Makindu vu kwa ekati we nde wia

Na mwoona vaema musembe mwite Mbitha uu

Mulei Makindu vu kwa ekati we nde wia

she becomes mine so that we can do important things

when I looked at her eyes I felt there was a need

she becomes mine so that we can do important things

if it is money I will sell my three cars

such that I Wanzanze remains with one car because of Ngemi

if it is money I will sell my three cars

such that I Wanzanze remains with one car because of Ngemi

if money is not effective I will go to Waemi wa Ngumi

until I and Ngemi love each other

if money is not effective I will go to Waemi wa Ngumi

until I and Ngemi love each other

Mukosi and Teke I will send both of you

Go to Kasayani and talk to Ngemi

Mukosi and Teke I will send both of you

Go to Kasayani and talk to Ngemi

And if there is no success go and get Mbitha

Mulei at Makindu for he is fearless

And if there is no success go and get Mbitha

Mulei at Makindu for he is fearless

Ngoo ya mundu yoyenda kindu vai tei
Kusema kweli mbaitunye ningwenda ngemi
Ngoo ya mundu yo yenda kindu vai tei
Kusema kweli mbaitu nyie ningwenda Ngemi
Na nundu aka mooombiwe nundu wa aume
Ken nina right yakwasya twendane ngemi
Na nundu aka mooombiwe nundu wa aume
Ken nina right yakwasya twendane Ngemi

SIMON MUNY'WOKI

Nivanga savali nyie ngone anyanyawa
Nivanga savali nyie ngone anyanyawa makwa
Mutemba mwa tuendei masaku kwa D.C
Mutembwa mwa tuendei masaku kwa D.C
ngwone

Nienda nyie kwona anyanyawa makwa
Nienda nyie kwona anyanyawa makwa
Simo wa Munyw'oki na Kyania kang'aatu
Simo wa Munyw'oki na Kyania kang'aatu mweene

Wa Munyw'oki Mutongoi ni ngwenda twonane
Wa Munyw'oki Mutongoi ni ngwenda twonane
Unenge Mawaita undu ngwitya kula

When one's heart loves something it is useless to deny it

And truth be told I want Ngemi

When one's heart loves something it is useless to deny it

And truth be told I want Ngemi

And because women were created for men

I have a right to say Ngemi let us love each other

And because women were created for men

I have a right to say Ngemi let us love each other

SIMON MUNY'WOKI

I will go and visit my friends

I will go and visit my friends

Mutemba let us go to Machakos at the D.C's place

Mutemba let us go to Machakos at the D.C's place

I want to see my dear friends

I want to see my dear friends

Simon Munyw'oki and Kyania Kang'aatu

Simon Munyw'oki and Kyania Kang'aatu

I want to see you Munyw'oki our good leader

I want to see you Munyw'oki our good leader

So that you can advise me on how I will ask for

Unenge Mawaiitha undu ngwitya kula sya Yatta

votes

So that you can advise me on how to ask for votes in Yatta

Umbany'a atongoi umanthie utethyo

Call all the other leaders and ask for support

Umbany'a atongoi umanthie utethyo

Call all the other leaders and ask for support

Ngali sya Kambaini vamwe na mithoko

Support for campaigning and other gifts

Ngali sya Kambaini vamwe na mithoko ooi mbituke

Support for campaigning and other gifts

Simo wa Munywo'ki ngwikwetye mwa sana we

Simon Munyw'oki I heavily rely on you

Simo wa Munywo'ki ngwikwetye mwa sana

Simon Munyw'oki I heavily rely on you

Kaukwati kakwa ni kanini sana

My financial ability is very minimal

Kaukwati kakwa ni kanini sana ndumbukilye

My financial ability is very minimal

Ngewa sya majini ndukewe Munyanyawa

Do not listen to stories about genies my friend

Ngewa sya majinindukewe Munyanyawa

Do not listen to stories about genies my friend

Bidii niyo mali meneena na manoe

Hard work is wealth they will talk and get tired

Bidii niyo mali meneena na manoe tyoouu

Hard work is wealth they will talk and get tired

SYINDU SYA MUTONGOI

THE LEADER'S PROPERTY

Ndanu lika ngalini oino ya mutongoi

Ndanu get into the Honorable's car

Ndanu lika ngalini oino ya mutongoi

Ndanu get into the Honorable's car

Wiamba upondethwa raha iwe ni mutongoi

He will show you a new lifestyle

Wiamba upondethwa raha iwe ni mutongoi

He will show you a new life style

Mbesa itingwa shida iwe kwa mutongoi

Money is not a problem for the Honorable one

Mbesa itingwa shida iwe kwa mutongoi tuu

See money is not a problem for the Honorable one

Karibu kwa mutongoi

Welcome at the leader's club

Karibu kwa mutongoi tuu

Welcome at the leader's club

Ndanu kwanza wi sawa quality ya mutongoi

Ndanu you are good for the leader's taste

Ndanu kwanza wi sawa quality ya mutongoi

Ndanu you are alright for the leader's taste

Wiamba kwony'wa maisha iwe kwanza ni mutongoi

The leader will show you a good lifestyle

The leader will show you good lifestyle

Wiamba kwony'wa maisha iwe kwanza ni mutongoi

Naku usuvia quality syindu sya mutongoi

As for you take care of the leader's property

Naku usuvia quality syindu ya mutongoi tii

See take care of the leader's property

Syindu sya mutongoi tii

See here is the Boss's property

Syindu sya mutongoi tii

See here is the Boss's property

Wamba uthi mulolongo iwe na mutongoi

We are going to Mlolongo

Wiamba uthi mulolongo iwe na mutongoi

We are going to Mlolongo

CapHill vu makuti kwa atongoi

CapHill Makuti the Bosses place

CapHill vu makuti kwa atongoi

CapHill Makuti the Bosses place

Nzovi na nguku ya uchoma mbilu ya mutongoi

Beer and fried chicken is on the Boss

Nzovi na nguku ya uchoma mbilu ya mutongoi nduke

Beer and fried chicken is on the Boss

Mbosi sya mutongoi

The leader's friends

Mbosi sya mutongoi nduke

Just come join the leader' friends

Ndanu nduu ti nduuka iwa mutongoi
Ndanu nduu ti nduuka Wiwa mutongoi
Wailye kwithwa na heshima Juu ya mutongoi

Wailye kwithwa na heshima Juu ya mutongoi
Tena kana usuvie Syindu sya mutongoi
Tena kana usuvie Syindu sya mutongoi tii

Ndanu ka mutongoi
Syindu sya mutongoi tii...

YATTA TUVUMITE VIU

Ninoonie ndalili sya maundu
Mbendi ya yatta ikaete mautanu
Ninoonie ndalili sya maundu
Mbendi ya yatta ikaete mautanu

Bendi ya yattayikwete Kundu kwingi
yiete mauseo
Bendi ya yatta ikwete
Kundu kwingi yiete mauseo

Miziki ya benga yio kyati
Lakini vayingwa thina yu
Miziki ya benga yio kyati

Relationship is not madness you are the Boss's property

Relationship is not insanity you are the Boss's property

You must have respect because of the Boss

You must have respect because of the Boss

Again please take care of the Boss' Property

Please take care of the Boss's property

Ndanu you belong to the Boss

See here is the Boss's property

YATTA WE ARE FAMOUS

I saw signs of things to come

Yatta Band will bring good things

I saw signs of things to come

Yatta band will bring good things

the Yatta band is bringing good things

in different places

The Yatta band is bringing good things

In different places

Benga Music is very challenging

But there is no problem

Benga music is very challenging

Lakini vayingwa thina yu	But there is no problem
Na mbendi imwe yesa ufaulu	Many families benefit
Itethasya family mbingi	When one Band succeeds
Na mbendi imwe yesa ufaulu	Many Families benefit
Itethasya family mbingi	When one band succeeds
Ukambani yu kila vandu	The whole of Ukambani
Meina mayasya ya wanda	Is singing with us
Ukambani yu kila vandu	The whole of Ukambani
Meina mayasya ya wanda	is singing with us
Ona meru embu na mbeere	Even Meru Embu and Mbeere
Mesunga mayasya ya wanda	Still sing with us
Ona meru embu na mbeere	Even Meru Embu and Mbeere
Mesunga mayasya ya wanda	Still sing with us
Atumia syanana iveti	Men people children and women
Meina mayasya ya wanda	Still sing with us
Atumia syanana iveti	Men children and women
Meina mayasya ya wanda	Still sing with us
Syo nguu na imwana sya muika	The young people and tortoise
Syichembeka syaitye ya wanda	Dance and sing with us
Syo nguu (tortoise)na imwana sya muika	The young people and Tortoise

Syichembeka syaitye ya wanda

Dance and sing with us

Kinze kitu kweli ki nditi

Our dances are so good

Ndwiyyete ndukewe ta uvungu

Come and see for yourself

Kinze kitu kweli ki nditi

Our Dances are so good

Ndwiyyete ndukewe ta uvungu

Just come and see for yourself

Noyuka ujaribu uvuny'e

Eat well before you attend

Vesungwa mwa muvaka rushu

For we will dance until tomorrow

Noyuka ujaribu uvune

Eat well before you attend

Vesungwa muvaka rushu

For we will dance until morning

Ona vai nondu Ona vai thina

There is nothing there is no problem

Ona vai nondu Ona vai thina

There is nothing there is no problem

Ona vai nondu Ona vai thina

There is nothing there is no problem

ukilyai moko Ukilyai moko

Raise your hands raise your hands

Ikilyai moko Ukilyai moko

This side that side

Ngaliko ii ngaliko iya

This side that side

Ngalika ii ngaliko iya

This side that side

Ngaliko ii ngaliko iya

This side that side

Vau kati tyo Ken

In between yes it is still Ken.

NGATUNGIWE MALI MASII

I WILL GO FOR MY BRIDE PRICE

Umila muia ngali nikuthi kwooka

Come out Muia the vehicle will leave

Umila muia ngali nikuthi kwooka

Come out Muia the vehicle will leave

Kyalo kii kina woo na methoi

Kyalo kii kina woo na methoi

We Simo ita Vomu na Carlos

We Simo ita Vomu na Carlos

Tuende Masii nundu wa mwelu

Tuende Masii nundu wa mwelu

Ve uvoo wi matu wina woo vvu

Ve uvoo wi matu wina woo vvu

Muia manya nyie nina woo ki

Muia manya nyie nina woo ki

Ve undu na muno iwa Carlos

Ve undu na muno iwa Carlos

Aii Mwelu nunatwaiwenyie ndesi

Aii Mwelu nunatwaiwenyie ndesi

Ni mwalimu wa Masii sekondali

Ni mwalimu wa Masii sekondali

Ni nzamba ime ikwitwa Ndolo Muuti

Ni nzamba ime ikwitwa Ndolo Muuti

Kethwa nunatwaiwe Mwelu mali ni ngwosa

Kethwa nunatwaiwe Mwelu mali ni ngwosa

Ngili yiana na ngathooa ploti

Ngili yiana na ngathooa ploti

Ngasomethya syana ainau maku ii

This journey is full of sadness and tears

This journey is full of sadness and tears

Simon please call Vomu and Carlos

Simon please call Vomu and Carlos

Let us go to Masii Because of Mwelu

Let us go to Masii because of Mwelu

There is a report that is very distressing

There is a report that is distressing

Just know that I am Sad my friend Muia

Just know that I am very sad my friend Muia

This is too much Carlos

This is too much Carlos

Mwelu got married without my knowledge

Mwelu got married without my knowledge

To a high school teacher t Masii Secondary school

To a high school teacher at Masii Secondary school

He is called Ndolo Muuti

He is called Ndolo Muuti

If you are married I want my bride price

If you are married I want my bride price

A hundred thousand shillings an the plot I bought

A hundred shillings and the plot I bought

I even paid school fees for your younger siblings

Ngasomethya syana ainau maku ii
Mwende mutuku kyalo mwikya na Syow'ia
Mwende mutuku kyalo mwikya na Syow'ia
Ndwina nthoni utwaitwe nyie ndesi

Ndwina nthoni utwaitwe nyie ndesi
Kau ungumwony'a muyaamba kuwoona

Kau ungumwony'a muyaamba kuwoona

Masaivuki ninamo ma kutosha aa

Masaivuki ninamo ma kutosha aa

Mbendi ya yatta na squad ya Huruma

Mbendi ya yatta na squad ya Huruma

Katuumo osa ngali noyuka

Katuumo osa ngali noyuka

Kiliviti osa mwaki no oyuka

Kiliviti osa mwaki no oyuka

Mali yakwa no mbaka nyie ngatungiwa

Mali yakwa no mbaka nyie ngatungiwa

I even paid school fees for your younger siblings

Mwende, Mutuku, Kyalo and Syow'ia

Mwende, Mutuku, Kyalo and Syow'ia

Don't you have shame getting married without my knowledge?

Don't you have any shame getting married without my knowledge?

I am going to put a huge fight that you have never seen

I am going to put a huge fight that you have never seen

I have enough thugs for the job

I have enough thugs for the job

The Yatta Band and a Squad from Huruma

The Yatta Band and a Squad from Huruma

Katuumo get the car and be on the way

Katuumo get the car and be on the way

Kiliviti please take fire and come let us go

Kiliviti please take fire and come let us go

I have to get my bride price

I have to get my bride price

DOCTOR MUENI

Ngwendea kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

Ngwendea kuuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

Ngwendea kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

DOCTOR MUENI

I love you for coming so fast

I love you for coming so fast

I love you for coming so fast

Ngwendea kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki
Ngwendea kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki
Ngwendea kuka oyu k wa mituki mituki mituki

I love you for coming so fast
I love you for coming so fast
I love you for coming so fast

Neewa nai ndumanaa daktari umwe
Neewa nai ndumanaa daktari umwe

When I am sick I sent for one doctor
When I am sick I sent for one doctor

Doctor Mueni Daktari wakwa museo
Doctor Mueni Daktari wakwa museo

Doctor Mueni My good Doctor
Doctor Mueni My good Doctor

Doctor mueni mbee nyie ni vata naku
Doctor mueni We nyie ni vata naku
Nakya keli Ngwendeaa kuka mituki
Nakya keli Ngwendeaa kuka mituki

Doctor Mueni I am very fond of you
Doctor Mueni I am very fond of you
And secondly I like you for coming so fast
And secondly I like you for responding so fast

Doctor Mueni avika kwaka ngavao
Doctor Mueni avika kwaka ngavao
Mauwau makwa aumila mo kakavao
Mauwau makwa aumila mo kakavao

Doctor Mueni when you come to me I get well
Doctor Mueni when you come to me I get well
All my sickness heals when you come to me
All my sickness heals when you come to me

Doctor mueni Asante mwa nundu wa mituki
Doctor Mueni asante mwa nundu wa mituki
Oila nakwita Usembaa ukoka mituki
Oila nakwita Usembaa ukoka mituki

Doctor Mueni thank you for coming so fast
Doctor Mueni thank you for coming so fast
Whenever I call you rush to me
Whenever I call you rush to me

Ngwendaaa kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki miuki
Ngwendaaa kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki miuki
Ngwendaaa kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki miuki
Ngwendaaa kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki
Ngwendaaa kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki
Ngwendaaa kuka oyu kwa mituki mituki mituki

NENZIWE NUU?

Yu kwina andu amwe meusambasa uvumi ni
mwenze
Yu kwina andu amwe meusambasa uvumi ni
mwenze
Nienda mumanye kukengana mbaitu ni uthuku
Nienda mumanye kukengana ni uthuku Akamba

Nenziwe nuu mwikengana nenziwe nuu
Nenziwe nuu? mwikengana nenziwe nuu

Nakwa nyie niona
Syo rasta syakwa syi sawa
Nakwa nyie niona
Syo rasta syakwa syi sawa muinzungie

Lipoti mbingi nikwatie nivau Mombasa
Lipoti mbingi nikwatie nivau Mombasa
Kwitwika nyie Ken nikumbiwe nauma mutitu na

I love you for coming so fast
I love you for coming so fast
I love you for coming so fast
I love you for coming so fast
I love you for coming so fast
I love you for coming so fast

WHO SHAVED ME

There are people who are saying that I cut my hair
There are people who are spreading rumors that I
cut my hair
I want you to know that lying is not good
I want you to know that lying is not good my
people

Who shaved me? Why are you lying who cut my
hair

Who shaved me? Why are you lying who cut my
hair

And yet I see that

My dreadlocks are fine

And yet I see that

My dreadlocks are fine

I got the report at Mombasa

I received the news while still in Mombasa

It has been said that I was arrested at Mutito and I

neenzwa

Kwitwika nyie Ken nikumbiwe nauma mutitu na
neenzwa

Mwiasya volisi syangwatie nina mbendela

Mwiasya volisi syangwatie nina mbendela

Ati ngatwa ngavingiwa ken na ngenzwa

Ati ngatwawa ngavingiwa ken na ngenzwa uvungu

Isyitwa yakwa mwinthukisya niki wanzanze

Isyitwa yakwa mwinthukisya niki wanzanze

Hivi majunzi munaisye nimbatitwe kwina

Hivi majuzi munaisye nimbatitwe kwina

Tena ni kyau akengani

Tena ni kyau akengani

Tena nangenza ndithwa neenzwa akili

Tena nangenza ndithwa neenzwa akili
mwisonoke

KISANGULA ONYO

Nindavawa niwuendaa kwoo

Nangatavwa nukunaa simu

Nangaseng'a niki na tikaku

Kisangulaa

cut my dreadlocks

It has been said that I was arrested at Mutito and I
cut my dreadlocks

You say that police officers arrested me for flying
a flag in my car

You say that police officers arrested me for flying
a flag in my car

I was placed behind bars and I shaved my
dreadlocks

I was placed behind bars and I shaved my
dreadlocks

Why are you destroying my name

Why are you destroying my name

Very recently you said I was prohibited from
singing

Very recently you said I was prohibited from
singing

What is it you liars

What is it you liars

Even if I shave I have not shaved my brains

Even if I shave, I have not shaved my brains.

A WARNING TO YOU KISANGULA

I have been informed that you visit her

I have been informed that you call

And I wonder why and she is not yours

Kisangulaa

Nindavawa niwuendaa kwoo

Nangatavwa nukunaa simu

Nagaseng'a niki na ti kaku

Kisangulaa

I have been informed that you visit her

I have been informed that you call

And I wonder why and she is not yours

Kisangulaa

Niukulya muno umanthe mwa kaku

Nundu wakwithwa niwisi ni kakwa

Niukulya muno mwa manthe kaku

Kisangulaa

I beseech you to look for your own

Because you know she is mine

I ask you to find yours

Kisangulaa

Nindavaw'a niuendaa kwoo

Ukuite tuchips na nguku

Nangaseng'a niki na ti kaku

Kisangulaa

I have been informed that you visit her

Carrying French fries and fried chicken

And I wonder why and she is not yours

Kisangulaa

Nindavaw'a niuendaa kwoo

Ukuite tuchips na nguku

Nangaseng'a niki na ti kaku

Kisangulaa

I have been informed that you visit her

Carrying French fries and fried chicken

And I wonder why and she is not yours

Kisangulaa

Onyo kali ninaumie mwa kwaku

Umangy'a mbwaa kaswitini a kakwa

Lika mitaa umanthe mwa kaku

Kisangulaa

A stern warning I left your territory

Please leave her alone she is mine

Look for your own

Kisangulaa

Onyo kali ninaumie mwa kwaku
Umangy'a mbwaa kaswitini a kakwa
Lika mitaa umanthe mwa kaku
Kisangulaa

A stern warning left your territory
Please leave her alone she is mine
Look for your own
Kisangulaa

Wikulya kyau kaswitini mwa kakwa
Naiwiwaa kaitwika ni kakwa
Lika mitaa umanthe mwa kaku
Kisangulaa

What are you looking for she is mine
And you know she is mine
Look for your own
Kisangulaa

Wikulya kyau kaswitini mwa kakwa
Naiwiwaa kaitwika ni kakwa
Lika mitaa umanthe mwa kaku
Kisangulaa

What are you looking for she is mine
And you know she is mine
Look for your own
Kisangulaa