

Figurative Language in Muigai Wa Njoroge “Mūri Mūrūrū” (Bitter Root) Song

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INTRODUCTION:

The study begins by positing one critical aspect of language as observed by Finegan et al, (1992) who cites that, one of the functions of language is to express thought; in other words, language is used to communicate wills or feelings with others. While quoting Jacobson (1960); Kamaliah (2013) opined that language serves an expressive or emotive function and that such expressive function can be found, for instance, in song lyrics. Kamaliah (ibid) goes on to say that in the song lyrics, the composers can freely express their feelings with their hearers. It is worth to note that, it is against this backdrop that this paper envisages to analyze figurative language employed by Muigai Wa Njoroge song “Mūri Mūrūrū” (bitter root) that was composed in the wake of the Building Bridges Initiative (hereafter BBI) that found its way in Kenya political arena in the culmination of the handshake fiasco within Kenya political echelon. The role of language is undeniably very critical in all sphere of human life since it is a system of conventional spoken or written symbol that is employed by people for communicating with one another. The nature of language found in songs is meant to communicate to the audience by conveying his voice so that people can decode his feelings and that of the other members of the public. Songs tagging varying themes ranging from love, social, political and others expressing our feelings; in essence, as an aspect of literature; songs play fundamental role that is hinged on the nature of language that plays out. According to Meyer (1997), who is quoted by Arifah (2016); observes that, literature happens to be a term used to describe written texts marked by careful use of language, which includes features such as creative metaphors, well-turned phrases, elegant syntax, rhyme, alliteration, which are aesthetically read or intended by the author to be aesthetically read and are deliberately somewhat open in interpretation. As an act of singing; song as piece of music with words that are sung has a function to express the thoughts and feelings in which two crucial elements such as lyrics and music play out.

With the advent of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) in Kenya a number of artists in Kenya such a Muigai Wa Njoroge have opted to compose varying songs which may be seen as vehicles of conveying connotative information regarding the much hyped (BBI) initiative with varying agenda of either demeaning the process or ameliorating the proponents’ move. In view of the aforesaid; the study intends to analyze figurative language that the aforementioned Kikuyu musician maestro employed in his hit song “Mūri Mūrūrū” (Bitter Root) of 2020. Muigai wa Njoroge is among the most successful and popular Kenyan musicians. He was Born in Lari Division, Kiambu District in present day Kiambu County. He is a Gospel musician from Kenya with a sizable number of Songs Featuring on Afrika Lyrics. The song that put him on the lime light was ‘Kigutha’ (denoting catapult) which had an anti-AIDs message. His latest hit is “Mūri Mūrūrū” (Bitter Root) which he composed in the wake of the BBI popularization rallies across Kenya targeting the Kikuyu community as a whole with the sole message on the importance of reclaiming their unity which is in the verge of disintegration.

Keywords: Figurative Language, “Mūri Mūrūrū” (Bitter Root), Song Lyrics,

1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the study is to analyze figurative language in Muigai wa Njoroge's song "Mūri Mūrūrū" which was composed in the wake of handshake and the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) popularization rallies across Kenya. The song is sung in Kikuyu language and targets Mount Kenya region communities Gikuyu, Embu and Meru (GEMA).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Popular art like music is an effective medium for expressing individual and collective representations and aspirations not only to the composer but to the society at large. Music artists compose songs to act as conduit to help them share their experiences and capture the contradictions and dynamics prevalent in society at various occasions of their lives. It is worth to note that, music as a performing art and cultural production is a fundamental feature of life in Africa. Biko (1979) affirms that "music in African culture features in all emotional states" and remains an essential companion to the people as they "share the burden and pleasures of work." In relation to his observation, it is undeniable to opine that music will always be fundamental in most activities of everyday life. It is against this backdrop that the richness and diversity of any particular type of music can be assessed. According to Wafula (2001), the significance of a particular music or song as a form of speech utterance arises not only from stylistic considerations but also from what it communicates. In other words, music is not only about structural forms and rhythmic styles, but also about what it tells us about society and about ourselves: music is a mode of self-writing capable of revealing the complex layers of our being and of society (Nyairo and Ogude 2003). In essence therefore; the said layers in question may only be peeled off if the figurative language employed by these artists is ventilated. In view of the above, this paper looks at figurative language that plays out in "Mūri Mūrūrū" (Bitter Roots) by Muigai Wa Njoroge and how it has been used to construct sub-national identity conciseness among the Kikuyu in regard to the unheralded decry over BBI which was ushered in Kenya political arena after the infamous "political handshake".

While investigating figurative language in five John Legends' song, Arifah (2016) observed that songs usually consist of figurative language since figurative language is used in lyrics that happen to be well written. This researcher goes on to say that descriptive words of figurative language has a meaning in sense other than literal; according to her even words convey precise meaning. Any songwriter or composer usually beautify the language they use by any figurative language which acts as the bait – thus attracting their target audience; Arifah (2016) cites Putu Ayu (2012) who affirmed that, "music without words is poetry, only not in the general sense". The above researcher (Putu Ayu) investigated figurative language in Adele's song lyric in which types of figurative language were found and later their contextual meaning was described. Also quoted by Arifah (2016); Sharndama and Suleiman (2013) studied about an analysis of figurative language in two selected traditional funeral songs of the Kilba people of Adamawa state in which findings identified common figurative language used in the performance of the Kilba funeral songs on the audience to draw conclusion as to how figurative language varies from the ordinary or everyday language.

While investigating Popular Music and the Negotiation of Contemporary Kenyan Identity: the Example of Nairobi City Ensemble Nyairo and Ogude (2003) focused on the lyrics in their study and embraced Agawu's (2001) argument who opined that, to understand music as a text is to decode it as 'words that enable song, the poet's emergent music that is eventually colonized by the composer's music'. According to Hanks (1989) a text, 'can be taken (heuristically) to designate any configuration of signs that is coherently interpretable by some community of users'. In this sense, music when theorized as a text readily becomes a site upon which meaning is negotiated or, as Agawu (2001) says of African music; this is undoubtedly depicted by Muigai Wa Njoroge's "Mūri Mūrūrū" (Bitter Root) meant to convey unprecedented occurrence infiltrating the Kikuyu unity that has been enjoyed for a long time.

In an effort to tease out application of figurative language in "Mūri Mūrūrū" (Bitter Root) the study relied on John Lyons philosophical question on "what is meaning" and in accordance to Arifah (2016) observation while citing Lyon (1995) is that; the question can be answered by using the following meaning theories: 1. The referential of denotation theory describes that the meaning of utterances is what it shows to, such as "Herry" means "Herry", "birds" mean either the general class of birds or the essential property that they all share; 2. The ideational, or mentality theory describes that the meaning of an

expression is the idea or concept related with the mind of anyone who knows and understands the expression; 3. The behaviorist theory describes that the meaning of an expressions either the stimulus that causes it or the response it cause, or combination of both, in particular occasion or utterances; 4. The meaning, use theory describes that the meaning of expression is determined by, if not identical with, its use in the language; 5. The verification theory describes that the meaning of a statement is determined by the variability of the sentences which contain it; 6. The truth conditional theory describes that the meaning of an expression is its contributions of the sentences which have it.

Risdianto (2016) in his work entitled Discourse Analysis of a Song Lyric Entitled "We Will Not Go Down" quoted Hornby (1992) who defines that language is a system of sounds and words used by humans to express their thoughts and feelings. Ramelan (1992) observes language as an arbitrary system of sounds or sequences of speech sounds which is used or can be used to interpersonal communication. In other words, it can be said that language is a system of sounds used as a means to communicate human's feelings and thoughts with others. Ramelan (1992) underpins that the use of language enables the members of a social group to cooperate with one another for their own benefits. It is a simple fact to say that the role of language is very important in human life as a means to communicate ideas, feelings and desires among individuals as part of social community. By the use of language, we can communicate and express our ideas, our feeling and also share information with other people. One way to communicate with language is by the use of music. In a nutshell, the song "Mūri Mūrūrū" (Bitter Root) by Muigai Wa Njoroge is classical example denoting how feelings of composer is channeled to the intended audience.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed qualitative approach where by the data was analyzed qualitatively. Quality refers to the what, how, when, and where of a thing-its essence and ambience Qualitative research thus refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and description of things (Berg 1989)." The data to the study was analysed descriptively. The data in this study is in the form of transcript on song lyrics of "Mūri Mūrūrū" (Bitter Roots). The main data of the study is the song entitled "Mūri Mūrūrū" (Bitter Root) which was targeting mainly Kikuyu community. The study also relied on secondary data which was collected from relevant sources such as the internet which could support the analysis of the research.

Collecting of data in this study was divided into a number of steps: (1) Listening – the researcher listened and re-listened the song in order for him to pick various elements of figurative language and decode the underlying meaning and the feeling. (2) Transcription of the song and translating it. (3) Analyzing – Here, analyzing of the nature of language employed with an aim to decoding the meaning in relation to the intension of the composer. (3) Reporting - The data which was analyzed was drawn in form of conclusion by underpinning the nature of figurative language and presupposed meaning.

The theme of the song is about the political struggle more so in the Mount Kenya Region under the precipice of "The Handshake" culminating to the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) rallies in Kenya with the main proponents of the initiative being Uhuru Kenyatta (president of the republic of Kenya) and Raila Odinga (who until then was opposition leader flagged by National Super Alliance - NASA). "Mūri Mūrūrū" (Bitter Root) disguises the intended meaning in reference to Raila's re-entry into the Jubilee Government. Raila's infiltration in the region is viewed as a bitter root that has sprouted at the nerve center of the Kikuyu community culminating to yielding of unwarranted political ripples among the sons and daughters of "Mumbi"-Kikuyu community.

The study is qualitative in nature and will confine itself to both figures of speech and content analysis since data collected involves textual sources and visual data from the song under study. In essence; the study is a descriptive in nature.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The song "Mūri Mūrūrū" (Bitter Root) was composed by Muigai Wa Njoroge a Kenyan who hails from Kiambu County in the former Central Province found within Mount Kenya Region which is predominantly inhabited by Kikuyu community speakers the most populous community in Kenya. The song was composed towards the end of the month of February 2020 after the ugly and infamous BBI rally in Kitui County within former Eastern Province among a section of Kikuyu community. The song

impacts the native radio stations in the region (Mount Kenya Region) and beyond since demographically; Kikuyu native speakers are found beyond her borders. The song is an astounding example of a gospel political song intertwined in two conspicuous and deliberate layers with the junk of its content inclining to the political axis. Despite his onslaught contents against divisive politics within the Region (Mount Kenya) and the entire country at large; this artist commands huge followers due to his satirical lyrics to people from all ages in the Mount Kenya Region. It is worth to note that, his latest songs may be categorized among the known stinging satire on the Kenya political arena. To the deep native speakers of Kikuyu language; the song is highly coded and as such remains a preserve of those abreast with political showdown in the region. In order to commence critiquing the song; “Mūri Mūrūrū” (Bitter Root), the song hereby written and translated:

Mūri Mūrūrū

1. Hindi imwe **ūthamakinī wa Daudi nī kwamerire mūri mūrūrū**
Absalomu murū wa Daudi **akīgayania nyūmba ya Jakuβu,**
Reke hīndi iyo ciana cioyanire mathanwa reke andū a **nyūmba**
imwe mateng’eranie tūndū wa wiyedi wa mūndū ūmwe Ithiraīri mageītana thakame.
Mūri ūcio mūrūrū nī **ūmunywo narua ūraharagania nyūmba ya**
Mūmbi, atongoria, athuri a kiama kia ma na atongoria a kanitha nī inyuīī mwīkuū
2. Hari **karūgano ka ng’ūmbe ithatū cietūretie werūine**
iriaga hamwe īdī tūmaheni twa warūβūkū twatūmire **cioragwo imwe kwa imwe.**
Ndaraca ino mūrēta BB...dūī ? nī mūrakionire **maciāro mayo,**
Njoro **ngaβana wa ithaa rīmwe** akiīgata **mūrū wa nyina** Ikamba.
3. **Ūromwe nī Ūrehaga ūtoria** na guo **ūigi witū** nīguo **ngo ītu** riria
cira wa mbūrūri ūgocirwo **ithaβu ritū ritwaragīrie.**
Nayo thū yamenya ūguo **igītua ngondu ikiīgirira rūa rwa thayo,**
Mwarega gūcoka **thutha wa hema** ciana nī **ikamūmena na imūrume.**
4. Marigithathi na **ituge cia nyūmba,** aigī materwo na **nominaconi**
Kiambu tūgītīgīrwo **gīthina;** Kírīnyaga **tata wa kamerūkia,**
Nake ūria ūngī nī **arateīrwo na gīge** nī kuonagwo na **“my friend”:**
rīria **nyama īgakinya** ya kūgayanio **rūriri mūkaragīrīrio nūū?**
5. Rīū nyūmba no mūhaka īnyitane, **itoga īria ītigarete** irute **indo**
cīra wa rūriri ūiguō methainī thīna ūyo nī **witū ti wa nyūmba īria,**
Mwaka ūyo nī **“wa kusema ukweli”** atī nī **ithanwa riatemaga miti** na no
mīti yacagūrīte ithanwa atī tūndū **rīhangīritwo mūtī.**
6. Gwataniro yanyu ya **nyūmba ya Gema** niyo yaigatire mūthūngū
Kenya **ūrūmwe ūcio ūrī kuo ūrī kūninwo** nī ateti oo makienda o **gūtūria indo ciao.**
Kamarū aigire **rīria mūgūtuonga mūtīgage gūtūonga mwikinyire;**

thĩ ino nĩĩrĩ mwene no mũgathama mũkerorerwo ta kiĩba kia Moi.

7. Nyũmba ya Mũmbi no nginya **tweβange tũndũ** wa **gũtũβaga**
niaβangirwo na **twamũre mũndũ ũngĩ gũtaneha.**

Data 1.

Hindi imwe **ũthamakinĩ wa Daudi nĩ kwamerire mũri mũrũrũ**
Absalomu murũ wa Daudi **akĩgayania nyũmba ya Jakuβu,**
Reke hĩndi iyo ciana cioyanire mathanwa reke andũ a **nyũmba**
imwe mateng'eranie tũndũ wa wiyedi wa mũndũ ũmwe Ithiraĩri
mageĩtana thakame.

One time during the reign of King David a bitter root sprouted,
Absalom son of David caused separation in the house of Jacob,
Chaos erupted among the children, members of the same family
confronted each other just because of personal interest Israelites
killed each other.

The artist commences his song by foregrounding on a historical biblical perspective that succinctly resonates well with how political terrain was bedeviling Jubilee Government under the leadership of Uhuru Kenyatta and more importantly Mount Kenya Region in the wake of Building Bridges Initiative BBI rallies in Kenya (since this is an audio-visual song; photo of Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto donned in Jubilee Party dress code pops up alongside *Kieleweke* (meaning it will be understood) and *Tangatanga* (loitering) factions tags. *Kieleweke* tag representing Uhuru Kenyatta political die-hards in parliament and *Tangatanga* faction representing William Ruto political die-hards in parliament; the bitter root is clearly noted to have sprouted in Jubilee Party).

In relation to the first stanza, Absalom's revenge for the rape of his sister Tamar by murdering his half-brother Ammon an occurrence that took place after two years of Ammon's initial sin. Two things in this narrative stand out. First, it is remarkable that David was oblivious to his children intended actions. Perhaps David was suspicious of Absalom's invitation to attend a sheep-shearing celebration, for he declined to participate. However, David allowed all his sons (including Ammon) and some servants to attend. Second, there was likely an intended parallel in this text between David's use of his servants to murder Uriah and Absalom's use of his servants to murder Ammon. After his murder of Ammon, Absalom fled to Geshur, which was governed by his grandfather (2 Samwel 13: 23-39).

In relation to the aforesaid lyric, there is an astute use of parallelism since like repetition, there is a biblical historical recurrence expression pitying King David and his son Absalom. Parallelism in regard to Mount Kenya region depicted a picture that had two factions from the same community having risen up against each other under the watch of the father. In this respect president Uhuru Kenyatta (Kenyan president) is viewed to be King David who propagated for the sprouting of the bitter root (handshake) that subsequently paved way for sowing seeds of discord among sons of Mumbi (in reference to Mount Kenya community - Gikuyu, Embu and Meru). *Nyũmba imwe mateng'eranie* (one family going for each other) has been used metaphorically painting a similar picture to what was happening to King David's reign. Arifah (2016) quoted Kennedy (1983) who observed that; parallelism is a principle advocating that ideas of equal importance or significance should be treated at equal length within a poem. He continues to say that parallelism requires treatment for equally importance aspects of the matter under consideration.

Presupposed bitter root that sprouted in the region is a metaphor which happens to be the title of the song (*Mūri mūrūrū*). Bitter root in this context; is in reference to Raila Odinga who was infiltrating (making inroad in) Mount Kenya a move that was being perceived to be dividing leaders in the said region. Bitter root is never edible and for ease of decoding; according to the artist of the song (*Mūri mūrūrū* – Muigai Wa Njoroge), Raila's maneuver having been okayed by President Uhuru Kenyatta was being viewed as a futile fishing expedition that was destined to collapse. *Mageitana thakame*, (denoting slaying each other) is a metaphor that underpins a strong message which if translated literally means (pouring each other's blood). In regard to the community apprehension, the scenario that may be decoded in such a context is ugly for it fits well in what may be postulated as bloodbath upheaval against brothers.

Data 2:

Chorus :-

Mūri ūcio mūrūrū nĩ ūmunywo narua ūraharagania
nyũmba ya Mũmbi, atongoria, athuri a kiama kia maa
na atongoria a kanitha nĩ inyuĩ mwĩkuũ

Reaske (1996) from where Arifah (2016) has borrowed heavily opined that; repetition is a figure of speech which uses recurrence to show the forceful pretension which is used to make sure the readers or listeners are abreast or precisely pick what the author's statement intended to affirm. The statement continues to say that repetition is an effective literary device that suggests or adds special meaning to a piece of literature or poetry. Repetition in such a context may be of words, phrases, lines or stanzas an occurrence that is conspicuous in (*Mūri mūrūrū* – Muigai Wa Njoroge song). It is worth to note that, there are 6 stanzas in the song in which after every stanza the chorus which happens to be our data number 2 is repeated; in essence this can aptly be picked to be the gist of the heart in the song. *Mūrūrū nĩ ūmunywo narua ūraharagania nyũmba ya Mũmbi* (root should be uprooted urgently that is causing division among Kikuyu Community) has been employed metaphorically alluding one distinct fact; that procrastination in stopping that unprecedented sprouting of the bitter root was not of paramount importance to the Kikuyu Community because it was disintegrating their unchallenged historical unity. *Athuri a kiama kia maa* (sincere council of elders in the community) is a metaphor that falls within the chorus which aims at reiterating one critical aspect that has bedeviled the Kikuyu council of elders with some elders usurping the mandate of the bona fide council of elders mandate which is acceptable in line with the traditions of the community. The artist intension in the metaphor is to clearly show that all is not well in the echelon of the realm of council of elders in the Mount Kenya Region with different factions purporting to be in charge. In essence, the message that artist is pointing at is that; the confusion in the region can be nipped in the bud by genuine and sincere political leaders, clerics and council of elders taking up the matter.

Data 3.

Hari karũgano ka ng'ũmbe ithatũ cietũretie werũine iriaga
hamwe ĩdĩ tũmaheni twa warũbũkũ twatũmire cioragwo imwe
kwa imwe.

Ndaraca ino mũreta BB...dũĩ ? nĩ mūrakionire maciaro mayo,

Njoro ngaβana wa ithaa rĩmwe akiĩgata mūrũ wa nyina Ikamba.

A story is told of three cows that for a long time who lived and grazed together in the field,

But they ended up being killed one after the other because of their

foolishness of falling to the gullible tricks of the hare,

There is this bridge you are referring to as BB... What? You all saw its repercussions,

Nyoro a one hour old governor chasing his own brother in Kitui.

The artist employs a Kikuyu classical oral literature story pitying three cows which had coexisted for a long time without unwarranted friction being exhibited amongst them. Indeed their friendship was none of the other since they complimented one another during rain and shine but their unity diminished unceremoniously when they allowed the tricks of the hare play in their unity. The end result was that they subsequently lost their lives. When this stanza is playing three names tagging Gikuyu, Embu and Meru (GEMA) pops out which undeniably draws a picture of how these three predominately communities inhabiting the region were raising up against each other for falling to the gullible tricks of the hare. **Karũgano ka ng'ũmbe ithatũ cietũretie werũine iriaga hamwe** (story of three cows that had coexisted for a long time) is a metaphor denoting the three Mount Kenya Communities (Gikuyu, Embu and Meru, GEMA). Historically, their unity has played out since pre colonial period in Kenya. **Tũmaheni twa warũbũkũ** (gullible tricks of the hare) is a metaphor in reference to the **Mũri mũrũrũ** (bitter root) that sprouted in the Mount Kenya Region and drove its divisive wedge at the behest of the BBI campaign rallies. Bitter root in this context is none other than Raila Odinga. **Cioragwo imwe kwa imwe** (they were killed one after the other) the phrase in question has been used metaphorically in reference to the three predominately communities that occupy the vast Mount Kenya Region (GEMA). Political machination in line with BBI appears to have ushered in divide and rule strategy employed by **Mũri mũrũrũ** (bitter root) whose agenda is to serve undetected political poison chalice to each of the Mount Kenya Region communities; with this kind of undertaking the unity that has been enjoyed since time in memorial will stand to be dissipated and eventually annihilated to oblivion. These song lyrics are artist's strategies to sound a warning shot against the communities in question in an effort to remind them the importance of harnessing their long founded unity and not to fall victims of the bitter root (**Mũri mũrũrũ**) tricks. **Ndaraca ino mũreta BB...dũĩ** (bridge you are referring to as BB... What?) is a metaphor depicting a symbol of linking or connecting two varied ends in reference to the acrimony that has thrived in the Kenya political divide; whose mandate was to bridge the differences that have existed within the political arena. The metaphor is an example of a political innuendo that aims at rubbishing the proponents of such an undertaking; hence sarcastically questioning it's essence with distinct question – **dũĩ ?** (what?). **Ngaβana wa ithaa řimwe** (one hour old governor) is an irony which happens to be kind of style in which the statement means contrary to the words (Parington 2007 as quoted by Arifah 2016). That is a deliberate attack towards Nyoro (name of the governor) who assumed the position of governor for Kiambu County in Mount Kenya Region after being sworn in the day preceding the rally in Kitui County which came barely after approximately 16 hours. To this end, the phrase above is an example of a figurative language involving a relationship between the reality and the term used to describe it. The artist intended to apply mockery strategy to show the impatience that had come with the sprouting of the bitter root (**Mũri mũrũrũ**). What can be deduced from the statement is a clever joke emanating from the incident in which the artist wanted the listeners to partake in that private joke. **Mũrũ wa nyina** (his own brother) is a metaphor that is intended to paint a picture of what the relationship was like before BBI and her proponents found their way in the region. In reality, an own brother refers to one's siblings but in this context it was in reference to political brotherhood. When this lyric is playing out, a photo of the governor (Nyoro) fomenting the uncouth behavior of the host governor (Kitui County Governor in the former Eastern Province) pops out reinforcing the speed at which the bitter root (**Mũri mũrũrũ**) was disintegrating the unity that had been enjoyed by these brothers.

Data 4.

Ūromwe nĩ Ūrehaga ūtoria na guo **ũigi witũ** nĩguo **ngo řtu** riria

cira wa mbũrũri ūgocirwo **ithaβu ritũ ritwaragĩrie**.

Nayo thũ yamenya ūguo **igĩtua ngondu ikiĩgirira rũa rwa thayo**,

Mwarega gũcoka **thutha wa hema** ciana nĩ ikamũmena na imũrume.

Unity brings victory; our majority factor is our shield when

country's budget is being allocated our population to talk on our behalf,

When the enemy realized this, he came donned in a sheep skin, if

do not organize ourselves and retreat in the backstage our children

will hate and curse us.

Üromwe nĩ Ürehaga ütoria (Unity brings victory) is a deliberate metaphor that the artist employs to castigate failure by Mount Kenya region communities for their myopic and obstinate behavior to discern that un-wrestled historical fact. **Üigi witũ nĩguo ngo itu** (our majority factor is our shield) is a metaphor that aims at underscoring the role played by numbers in matters politics and distribution of country's wealth. In essence, what this metaphor depicts is topoi of numbers in regard to argumentation strategy under Discourse – Historical Approach Theory. Historically; the role of the shield during the pre colonial period engagement during war was to guard the life of one given warrior in the battlefield. This artist intends to reiterate to the community the importance of standing united and not to allow the bitter root divide them. **Ithaβu ritũ ritwaragĩririe** (our population to talk on our behalf) is a good example of personification; and as stated by Lakoff & Johnson (1980), personification is another form of ontological metaphor. This form of metaphor turns a concept of a physical object into a person. For example; **Ithaβu ritũ ritwaragĩririe** (our population to talk on our behalf). **Ithaβu** (population) here is being personified; being portrayed to resemble a human being by doing something that generally only a human being would do, which is 'talking'. **Nayo thũ** (the enemy) is a metaphor pointing at the **Mũri Mũrũrũ** (bitter root) who according to the artist he should be perceived to be an enemy spreading his bitter tentacles within the communities. **Igĩtua ngondu ikiĩgirira rĩa rwa thayo** (he came donned in a sheep skin) is a metaphor which is symbolic in nature pointing out on how the enemy tried to disguise his real nature pretending that he was coming for peace and with this kind of pretence the bitter root tentacles were destined to disintegrate Mount Kenya mega unity that has acted as the source of their success. **Thutha wa hema** (retreat in the backstage) is a metaphor whose agenda is to appeal to the Mount Kenya region leadership and the three members of the communities (Gikuyu, Embu and Meru) to regroup from the vicinity of none locals (perceived enemy) and retrace when and where the rain started beating them lest they faced their children's wrath in case the enemy realized his objective. It is worth to cite that, when the stanza and the lyrics of the song are sung, photo of Raila Odinga pops out with Gikuyu sheep headgear strictly worn by elders within the community who satisfy and observe very crucial prerequisite measures that not many Gikuyu elders live to attain such accolades. To this end, the artist's intention is to sarcastically interrogate how the enemy (**Mũri Mũrũrũ**) became a stardom within this communities whose traditional rituals on such intricate matters and none achievable even to the most adherents members of the communities managed it.

Data 5.

Marigithathi na **ituge cia nyũmba**, aigĩ materwo na **nominaconi**

Kiambu tũgĩtigĩrwo **gĩthina**; Kĩrĩnyaga **tata wa kamerũkia**,

Nake ũria ũngĩ nĩ **arateĩrwo na gĩge** nĩ kuonagwo na **"my friend"**:

rĩria **nyama igakinya** ya kũgayanio **rũriri mũkaragĩririo nũũ?**

First borns and community pillars were rigged out during

nominations, while Kiambu was taken by a shameless thief;

Kirinyaga was left in the hands of a criminal,
 The other one was dumped during the locust era just for going
 around with “my friend” when the sharing of the country’s “cake”
 will be done... who will be articulating your interest?

Marigithathi na ituge cia nyumba (First born and community pillars) this is a metaphorical musical lyric that the artist invokes to draw attention to all and sundry in Mount Kenya region noting that the communities had her sons and daughter who were politically suitable to steer the communities on all matters pertaining to their welfare; hence referring to them as pillars. When this lyric is played photos of those pillars pop up ostensibly indicating the loss the community underwent during 2017 electoral nominations. The photos are meant to back up artist’s worry that should also jog the memories of the communities in question. **Nominaconi** (nominations) is code – switched in reference to the occurrence during 2017 general election where these pillars of the communities in matters politics were rigged out making it easy for the sprouting of the bitter root within the echelon of politics in the region. Code – switching is deliberate and crafty way of reinforcing his desire for unity in the region. **Githina** means a gigantic problem denoting “shameless thief” the lyric in question alongside **tata wa kamerukia** (implying auntie whose work is to swallow public resources) postulates that, the two counties (Kiambu and Kirinyaga) were brought into disrepute for falling in the hands of criminals. This in no doubt allows a metaphor to exist in the lyric. **Arateirwo na gige** (was discarded during the invasion of locust in Kenya) is a metaphorical lyric pointing out that even with the unanticipated invasion of locust a heartless act that was no considerate fired one of their sons from a position that would have allowed him to speak for the communities in the region for one obvious reason; accompanying **my friend** (my friend in reference to William Ruto - Deputy President). My friend is a metaphor implying the one excommunicated in all the realms of power in Kenya. The lyric in the song has one simple message to the communities in Mount Kenya region; that the bitter root in the region was devastatingly dismembering their known mega unity to the core. **Ruriri mukaragirio nuu?** (who will be articulating your interest?) Is an example of a rhetorical question that is not asked in order to receive an answer from the audience; in this case listeners but it is posed to make a point. Sometimes a rhetorical question will just be left open, but other times the speaker will immediately go on to answer it. In either case, no answer from the audience is expected. Using a rhetorical question here and there can make artist’s work sound more natural. In addition, a question gives the feel of a dialogue like in the song **Muri Mururu** because the listener feels as though he or she is being addressed *directly* by the singer. In this context; there is at least one clear purpose for this kind of rhetorical questions, to persuade and to move his argument and to involve the communities in his effort to forestall the unity that was fast fading because of the bitter root (**Muri Mururu**) sprouting in their midst.

Data 6.

Rũ **nyumba no mũhaka ñyitane, itoga ñria ñtigarete irute indo**
cĩa wa ruriri ũiguo methainĩ thĩna ũyo nĩ witũ ti wa nyumba ñria,
 Mwaka ũyo nĩ “**wa kusema ukweli**” atĩ nĩ **ithanwa riatemaga**
miti na no mitĩ yacagũrite ithanwa atĩ tũndũ rĩhangĩritwo mũtĩ.
 Now the house must unite; the rich amongst us to facilitate an
 urgent meeting and table our aspirations because it does not in
 any belong to that house,
 We must state facts as they are in 2020 since the axe was felling

trees and these trees had elected the axe because it had been from
handle of the tree.

Nyũmba no mũhaka ñyitane, itoga ĩria ĩtigarete indo cĩra wa rūĩrĩ ũĩguo methainĩ (house must unite; the rich amongst us to facilitate an urgent meeting and table our aspirations) is a metaphorical lyric referring to the three major communities in Mount Kenya region; precisely, Kikuyu, Embu and Meru who were being urged to unite. In a rejoinder to that earnest appeal, the artist metaphorically calls for the rich who may have the community's interest at heart to avail their financial support to jumpstart debate in an effort to redeem their dissipated unity. **Witũ ti wa nyũmba ĩria**, (does not in any way belong to that house) is an interesting lyric that is backed up by the photo of the statue of the founding father; the Late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta that pops up ostensibly to underscore that the community's dreams, desires and aspirations should not be left to that house; disguising his metaphor to the statue but his underlying target being President Uhuru Kenyatta. The artist observes that 2020 is the year **wa kusema ukweli** (to state facts as they are) insinuating that facts were not being rallied as they were. He uses code – switched lyric to underpin that, hypocrisy was one of the challenges bedeviling the unity at the Mount Kenya region. In order to show how salient this matter was, the artist uses **ithanwa riatemala miti na no mũĩĩ yacagũĩte ithanwa atĩ tũndũ rĩhangĩritwo mũĩĩ** (the axe was felling trees and these trees had elected the axe because it had been fitted from the handle of the tree) as a personification metaphor; Kennedy (1983) quoted by Arifah (2016) stated that personification is the attribution of a personal nature or character to inanimate objects or abstract notions especially as a rhetorical figure; to this end, the artist uses the axe to disguise the leader who was supported to man by members of these three communities and metaphorically referring to the three communities as trees; ironically, the axe was busy cutting down trees. In essence, Kikuyu community refers to the voter's card as **mũĩĩ** (tree in reference to one vote). **Mĩĩĩ** (refers many trees) and if contextualized refers to votes. The artist employed it sarcastically to show the community who could decode the lyric how the leader they elected was busy allowing seeds of discord to germinate under his watch by allowing **Mũĩĩ** **Mũrũrũ** (bitter root) camouflaged in handshake regalia to the detriment of the region.

Data 7.

Gwataniro yanyu ya **nyũmba ya Gema** niyo yaigatire mũthũngũ
Kenya **ũrũmwe ũcio ũrĩ kuo ũrĩ kũninwo** nĩ ateti oo makienda o
gũtũria indo ciao.

Kamarũ aĩgire **rĩria mũgũtuonga mũtigage gũtũonga**
mwĩkinyire; thĩĩ ino nĩĩrĩ mwene no mũgathama mũkerorerwo
ta kĩĩba kia Moi.

It is the unity of GEMA community that chased away colonizers in
Kenya but that unity has now been killed politicians... Just to
safeguard their personal wealth,
Kamaru pleaded with you when you are "suckling" us do it in a
gentle manner for this world is not our home, You will also die one
day and your body will be viewed just like they did to the late
president Moi.

As postulated earlier, **Nyumba ya Gema** (house of GEMA) is metaphorical figure of speech implying the larger Kikuyu community composing the Gikuyu, Embu and Meru. An aspect of house refers to a single unit that was traditionally occupied by members of a single family; to this end, the artist painted a picture of how GEMA unity had remained intact save for the orchestrated efforts by politicians to cripple that unity. The artist goes a step further to highlight how that unity is being suffocated by the said politicians in the following lyric **ūrūmwe ūcio ūrī kuo ūrī kūninwo** (unity has now been killed). For completeness of summary in regard to the unity that has been exhibited in the region, the artist portrays a distinct image of politicians in an effort to protect their wealth. Here the artist employs this lyric **gūtūria indo ciao** (safeguard their personal wealth) which if dissected keenly teases out one glaring fact; community's interest has always been relegated from the said politician's tray of concern. In an effort to bring music historical lyrics in regard to the observations he was articulating; the artist uses late Kamarus lyrics (late Kikuyu musician maestro) **rīria mūgūtuonga mūtigage gūtūonga mwikinyire; thīi ino nīirī mwene no mūgathama** (when you are "suckling" us do it in a gentle manner for this world is not our home) indeed the lyric can unequivocally be traced back to the world's renown music guru Jim Reeves (This world is not my home). The lyric aforementioned stands out as a metaphor that has been employed to remind them what had been opined by a musician who in regard to the entire community were privy to. The musician was simply telling these leaders that, as the under looked members of the Mount Kenya community; they were on the know that they were being "suckled" but all they were craving for was for these leaders to employ decency while actualizing their unchallenged acts. As the artist concludes in his second last stanza he uses a simile in the lyric **mūkerorerwo ta kīiba kia Moi** (your body will be viewed just like they did to the late president Moi). Macmillan (1984) says simile is direct comparison between things, which are not particularly similar in their essence. Similes may either be explicit or implicit depending on the way they are phrased. The artist of the song **Mūri Mūrūrū** (bitter root) has invoked an explicit simile in which the characteristic in question is being compared between the two "objects" being stated. The popping out of President Uhuru Kenyatta viewing the body of the late President of Kenya Daniel Toroitich Moi undoubtedly leaves no doubt as to the kind of leaders the artist was inferring to. The artist's intention was simple; he was targeting to make his description more vivid or memorable in order to establish a conspicuous characteristic of what he was describing – in this context, the dignitary viewing the body and the one being viewed.

Data 8.

Nyumba ya Mūmbi no nginya tweβange tondū wa gūtūβanga

nīaiβangirwo na twamure mūdū ūgī gūtaneha.

House of Mumbi we must organize ourselves before we go in

disarray because he who was to organize us has already been

hoodwinked.

The last stanza teases out a phenomena that is clearly in the domain of Mount Kenya region community in relation to the handshake fiasco; in essence, the artist is making an earnest appeal to GEMA community to ponder over the already unfolded occurrence in which he insinuates that, the leader they had ostensibly elected to lead them had slipped away from them. **No nginya tweβange tondū wa gūtūβanga nīaiβangirwo na twamure mūdū ūgī gūtaneha** (we must organize ourselves before we go in disarray because he who was to organize us has already been hoodwinked) is a metaphor that depicts sarcasm to the purported leader who is viewed by the artist to have been hoodwinked to a point of abdicating his core mandate of propagating cohesion to the GEMA community in Mount Kenya region. He posits that they needed to nominate another leader because going by what can be contextualized from the lyrics in the song, there is no doubt that the bitter root (**Mūri Mūrūrū**) had devastatingly spelt death knell to the unity of GEMA COMMUNITY within the Mount Kenya region making them rise up against each other.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings discussed previously, it can be drawn that figurative language used in the *Mūri Mūrūrū* (bitter root) is dominantly about leadership and pitying the Mount Kenya region community. Metaphors, personification, similes, irony, parallelism are the main figures of speech that were employed by the artist. Furthermore, it can be concluded from the initial discussion in regard to the lyrics in the song that; despite the artist being a gospel artist he tailored his lyrics to mesh well with political aspect of life targeting the GEMA COMMUNITY within Mount Kenya region.

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