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The Postcolonial Economic Ideology and the Construction of Gĩkũyũ Romance: An Analysis of Selected Gĩkũyũ Popular Songs

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Abstract:

This article is an analysis of the role played by the postcolonial economic ideology in the construction of modern Gĩkũyũ romance. The data for analysis is obtained from selected popular Gĩkũyũ songs. The songs have been selected using purposive sampling. The study has used qualitative research design and it is guided by postcolonial theory. Reflexive reading approach has also been employed as a technique of data analysis. The study has revealed that some of the economic factors that affect, influence and complicate the construction of Gĩkũyũ romance include; the growth of capitalistic money economy, education and unemployment, social class differences, the diaspora experience, urbanization, the culture of prostitution and the growth of technology. The growth of technology comprises of advanced communication agents such as the electronic media in the television, the mobile phone, the computer and the internet. These factors affect, influence and complicate the construction of modern Gĩkũyũ romance by either enhancing relationship stability or causing dysfunction and tragi-romance.

Keywords: Gĩkũyũ, postcoloniality, romance, tragi-romance.

1. Introduction

African art is to a large extent no longer a response to the traditional attempts at redefinition of the African experience that Ashcroft et.al (1989) refers to as, 'The Empire writes back to the Metropolis.' Mwangi (2009) introduces the concept of, 'The Empire writes back to Self,' contending that African artists are no longer in a struggle to redefine, the African cultural identity and salvage the African image from colonial and postcolonial stereotype labels of inferiority. Literary composition in Africa today is addressing contemporary African issues affecting the African people within the African situation and as they relate with the outside world. Mwangi (2009) proposes a reflexive reading of African texts. Reflexive reading involves analyzing African art forms as home-grown entities that are writing back to themselves, to the African realities and to one another. In this case, the content of the songs is an authentic reflection of the African contemporary situation and realities. For example, the subject matter of the contemporary Gĩkũyũ popular song addresses emergent postcolonial themes such as urbanization, shifting gender ideologies, cultural transition, change and economic trends as they relate to the construction of modern Gĩkũyũ romance. This factor merits a reflexive reading approach within the precept of the 'Writing Back to Self' theory because African art is now a model of self-articulation for Africans. The songs are African in structure and content and although they are a product of inter-borrowing and inter-textuality, they contextually operate within the African situation. Inter-textuality is the compositional integration of structural components of song production resultant from cultural inter-borrowing between African artists and western forms. Indeed, the consumers of the songs revealed during live show interaction that the art relates to Gĩkũyũ realities and experience and that is why the songs were read as reflexive.

Romance is a fanciful, expressive and pleasant feeling in an individual, caused by an emotional attraction to another person of the opposite sex. All human beings experience romance and this gives it a universal characteristic. Hatfield & Rapson (2007) take romance to be closely related to sexual attraction although there is more emphasis on emotions than physical pleasure. Ellis (1960), says that romantic love is a mixture of emotional and sexual desire; emotional highs, exhalation, passion and elation. It also includes friendship, tenderness and affection characterized by passionate words, kind tone of voice, smiley facial expression to a romantic lover and good actions to a partner. The premise of romance may not be described exclusive of the concept of passionate love. For this study, the terms passionate love and romantic love have been used interchangeably with romance. Passionate love is a universal human emotion experienced by many people in all the cultures of the world.

Fischer & Carnochan (1990) state that romantic love is expressed in subjectivity to a variety of cultural contexts inclusive of traditional, modern, urban and rural contexts, as well as affluence or poverty status. In agreement with this idea, these factors may be considered to influence the nature and character of romance frameworks inherent in different cultures such as Gĩkũyũ. Cultural values affect and influence the mode of expressing passionate love in different cultures.

As a result varied cultural rituals of love, patterns and structures are formed amongst different social groups and communities. In some communities, such factors as chastity, hard work and wealth status for female and male partners respectively, are important considerations whereas these traits are less emphasized in others. That is why Wallen (1989) concludes that the cultural perspective is more powerful than evolutionary heritage in understanding the process of mate selection. This provides a basis for the study to analyze how postcolonial factors affect the character and structure of modern *Ākūyū* romance.

2. The Postcolonial Economy and the Construction of Ākūyū Romance

Ākūyū is a class society consisting of two clusters of social categories comprising of the rich and the poor. Postcolonial economic ideology in *Ākūyū* has capitalistic origins due to the colonial experience under the British. According to Hall (2001), there are lingering economic disparities caused by capitalistic imperialism inherent in the former colonies which are responsible for postcolonial social strata. Imperialistic capitalism is inherited in *Ākūyū* from the colonial experience. Ngũgĩ (1986) explains that the achievement of political independence does not translate into economic liberation for the whole citizenry in Kenya but it only does for a small segment of the elite that grabs governance and forth controls the national economic policy. From *Ngũgĩ*'s perspective, neo-colonialism and the emergence of corruption in the public sector and government are responsible for the growth of economic inequality and poverty in postcolonial *Ākūyū* that affects, influences and complicates modern *Ākūyū* romance. For example, the rich are able to contract romance with ease across the social-economic divide because of their economic advantage. This reality is highlighted in the songs; *Njeri Gaitū*, *Tūirio Twega*, *Nyūmba Ūtarīhaga*, *Nī Ngīkūrīhīra*, *Irene Wa Tata*, *Momo*, *Mama Kīwinya* among others. Those with less economic advantage experience romantic strain and complications due to the economic realities of postcolonial time that face the poor.

Formal education is introduced by the colonialist in *Ākūyū* as an agent of civilizing the primitive people. It is one of the most valued components of European culture in *Ākūyū*. It is embraced as a mark of modernity and civilization but more importantly as an agent of economic empowerment, liberation from ignorance and a gateway to formal employment in independent Kenya. However, there are many challenges in the acquisition of education leading to disparities and inequality. Those who get minimal education or lack any, fail to access formal employment. In the recent past, achievement of education has taken an ironical twist by bringing disillusionment to the educated individual. Educational certificates fail to guarantee direct entry into the job market and acquisition of the cherished white collar jobs. Resultant is unemployment, poverty and disillusionment. Economic inequality has diverse effects on social interaction including romance. The concept of unemployment and its relationship with urbanization is alluded to in *Momo* and *Mama Kīwinya*. The youthful job seekers migrate to the city in search of jobs because there are job opportunities created by industrial growth, business and administrative institutions. Due to financial and material vulnerability they fall into the hands of romance predators and gradually experience tragi-romance.

In *Gathoni* by Joseph Kamarū, the spirit and character of *Harambee* culture as it influences the construction of romance, is highlighted. The period after independence in Kenya is characterized by a national struggle to promote economic development and nation building. The government develops the '*Harambee*' ideology in pursuit of the implementation of the visionary economic slogan of the founding fathers of the nation, patroned by President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta in the ideology of '*Uhuru na kazi*'. *Uhuru na Kazi* means that independence calls for corporate commitment to hard work for nation building and community development. Ngethe (1979) gives the meaning of *Harambee* as a Kiswahili word that means, 'Let us all pull together.'. The two ideologies are a mobilization tool to get the populace into corporate economic contribution at every level for the construction of a stable economy. The political class and the business community takes lead in the communal endeavour to consolidate capital for this process. One of the elements of capital is human labour and capital labour. The peasantry is motivated to produce the former and the working class, the political class and the business community to give the latter. The physical meeting point for all the groups, is the *harambee* funds drive occasion where any form of contribution is cherished. Musicians also give their contribution by providing entertainment to the gathering. The persona is a guitarist during the occasion providing entertainment to the crowds but more importantly motivating the guests and the guests of honour to contribute large amounts of money.

*Tuonanire na Gathoni...Harambee-inī yarī Nyīrī,
Atongoretie choir ya cukuru īrīa athomagīra,
Na ithuī twahūrāga guitar, tūkūngūre mūgeni.
Gathoni...ī... nī ngwenda ... atuīke wakwa wa mbūri.*

We met with *Gathoni* during a *harambee* ceremony in Nyeri,
She was leading the choir of the school she was going to,
And we were playing the guitar to entertain the chief guest,
Gathoni...ī...ī, I want her to become my woman of the goats.

This occasion becomes a spring board for a love affair between a guitarist and a girl soloist. The affair is baked through small salutation exchanges between the guitarist and the soloist. It blossoms into a sweeping romance in which love is exchanged by word and gesticulation to the point of a dating process coordination in epistolary form through love letters.

*Watua kwandīka marūa, nītagwo Suzzy Gathoni,
Na ithandūkū nī four two double zero four (42004)
Kamarū na ndūkarege, nīguo ngwathīrīre Mucī,
Kamarū...ī...ī nīngwenda, ūgoka iburū ikumi.*

When you write the letter, my name is *Sussy Gathoni*,
 And my postal address is four two double zero four (42004),
 And *Kamarū* don't decline so that I direct you to our home,
Kamarū oh *Kamarū* I want you to come on April 10th.

Apart from describing a positive romance, the song *Gathoni*, also records the historical emergence of the ideological practice of the *Harambee* phenomenon in Kenya. *Harambee* ideology is a home-grown economic strand of the postcolonial Kenyan culture popular for its inclusivity and communal characteristics. These characteristics often provide space for potential lovers to meet and build romantic relationships as it happens in *Gathoni*.

Money economy in modern *Ākūyū* experience also contributes to the construction of *Ākūyū* romance because the capital ability of a man or lack of it either facilitates romantic stability or threatens it. In *Wendo Ūgūrūki* the union crumbles because the man goes abroad to Saudi Arabia to look for greener pastures. On arrival he finds himself in a union with a beautiful Arabian woman. It is this union that throws his legitimate Kenyan lover into a stupor of confusion when she finds out that her man has a new romance status. As an immigrant in search of greener pastures, the man becomes vulnerable to extra marital affairs abroad because of loneliness and the distance away from his wife.

Mūthenya ūrīa sweetie wakwa wanyitire iruaa,
Nīwetwo wīra wa ūtereba Saudi Arabia,
Nīndaiguire ngoro yakwa yaihūra gīkeno,
Sweetie..ĩĩ nĩ tondũ nĩ wona wīra,
 The day my sweetie you received a letter,
 Saying that you had got a chauffeur job in Saudi Arabia,
 I felt happiness filling my heart,
 My sweetie.. that you had got a job.

The experience of loneliness in the diaspora drives the individual to indulge in new romance as a temporary solution to emotional strain emanating from lack of intimate companionship. Unfortunately, this often results in relationship complications such as severed relationships with the legitimate partner as occurs in *Wendo Ūgūrūki*. Money economy is an important factor that influences and even complicates romance structure because some income generating procedures require temporary absence from home for indefinite periods, a factor that opens the romance space to possibilities of extra-marital affairs. When a partner indulges in extra romance the possibility of severing the old one is big and as a result the first romance disintegrates leaving the victim in traumatic peril as the woman in the song repeats in the chorus;

Nīmenyete wendo ūcio waku nĩ ūgūrūki,
Nīmenyete wendo ūcio waku nĩ maithorii,
Watumire nĩ na maa ndũke wa kanyugĩ sweetie..ĩĩ
Ūhenetie atĩ nĩ wendo.

I have realized your love is madness,
 I have realized that your love is tears,
 It made me become a caricature sweetie ...ii
 After cheating me that it was love.

Young people who have no money fall into the trouble of scavenger older persons of the opposite gender who give them money and material privilege in return for romantic goodies. *Njeri Gaitū* describes the adventures of *Njeri* in the hands of a 'Sugar Daddy.' She is a school girl when she meets the old man who entices her with niceties and high class romance, exposing her to the high life of the city; disco experience at the carnivore with expensive wine and luxury rides in modern classy vehicles. *Njeri* recounts;

Ūūūi ndakuagwo na prado, na prado,
Nĩ ngatwaro maica maigūrū,
Ūūūi ndakīrawo.. ūūi kunda kanini,
Kunda kanini atĩ Amarura ti njohi.

Oh oh.. I used to be carried in a *prado*, in a *prado*,
 And am taken to a high life experience in the city,
 Oh oh.. and I was being told,
 Oh oh... I used to be told, come sip a little,
 Sip a little.. *Amarula* is not alcohol.

A *prado* is luxurious motor vehicle acquired only by the rich classes and *Amarula* is a luxury wine sold in high class entertainment parlour because it is expensive and far out of reach for the common man. *Njeri* demeans school and its relevance to her is compromised in this context of luxury. Consequently, she drops out of school and spends all her time in a romance of vanity. The consequence is her destruction. *Njeri* is abandoned with three children and now lives in poverty. The romance is short-lived and now she has to traverse loneliness, poverty and disillusionment. She says;

Ūūūi nĩ nderire na rwa njora, Na rwa njora

Mūrō nĩ wīrīagīra.

Oh oh I ate myself with a sheath sword, a sheath sword,
 Sweetness bites for itself.

Mbeca ciarĩ nyingĩ ta mahuti, Ta mahuti,

Ta mahuti nginya ngiuga gĩthomo ti thuarĩ.

Oh oh...money was plenty, like leaves,

Like leaves until I said education is not an undergarment.

Although traditional *Ākũyũ* romance culture allows men to romance much younger women, the culture expects the practice to be undertaken with responsibility. The man is to give the girl not only romance but marital identity in marriage and marital well-being of she and the children. On the contrary the modern elder *Ākũyũ* man is permissive and crafty. Modern culture gives him the label of 'Sugar Daddy' because quite often he is the age of the lover girl's father. His characteristics are appalling because apart from deceiving the young inexperienced girl with romance goodies, (hence the label Sugar Daddy) he takes no responsibility of her future well-being or stability or that of the children he sires with her. This is perversion. In most cases the girl drops from school and becomes an abandoned teenage mother. The modern Sugar Daddy romance results in the young girl's trauma and emotional destruction as seen in *Njeri Gaitũ*. Reflexive interpretation of *Njeri Gaitũ* shows that the song is an attack on the cultural erosion inherent in modern *Ākũyũ* and the ideological vision of the author is that the *Ākũyũ* must go back to the cultural drawing board and evaluate the modern cultural imports that facilitated the erosion in order to see what should be revived for the purpose of protecting society from romantic crisis.

One of the post-independence characteristics of Kenya is the growth of urbanization. A number of the selected songs focus on the role played by urbanization in the construction of romance structures. Urbanization is directly related to rural-urban migration. Romance patterns are affected forth by this reality. It is this migration that contributes the construction of urban romance realities. Sometimes lovers meet and form conventional unions that result in happy marriage. Other times the unions are unorthodox and they end up in tragic disillusionment and pain. For example *Tũrio Twega* is a story of romance adulterated by rural-urban migration in which the abandoned man ends up a devastated figure of disillusionment. He laments repeatedly in the chorus;

Njokeria mbete ĩyo ndakũgũĩre,

Tondũ mbica.. nĩ wagĩkirie kĩoro,

Warĩkia kuona mũthuuri Nairobi,

Na ngamenya agwĩtaga tũrio twega.

Return to me that ring I had bought you,

For the photos you threw into the latrine,

When you got a husband in Nairobi,

And I hear, he calls you a delicacy of good food.

The song speaks to *Ākũyũ* audience concerning the relationship between money and true love, as a sensitive reality that requires critical evaluation. Men of less economic status become losers because naturally women prefer those men with enough resources to guarantee their upkeep and as the dejected male lover in the song contends, it is wiser for a rural man to procure romance from women of the village who belong to his social class.

One contentious feature of urbanization is housing. As a modern challenge to rural arrivants in the cities, housing controls lifestyle because of its cost and availability. All housing attracts payment of rent. Those without money contend with residence in appalling circumstances of the slum sector. It is then very easy for poorer individuals like the young men in *Momo* and *Mama Kĩwinya* to fall into the hands of predator elder persons of the opposite sex. The man in *Mama Kĩwinya* complains;

Wathũkirie mũtwe na kũheaga mbeca,

Ndakwĩra ngone aciari we ndũngĩtĩkĩra,

Kaaĩ wahikirie na ndũtware rũraacio..maami,

Ātĩri mũirĩtu ũngĩnjĩtĩkĩra..maami,

Tondũ nĩ mooĩ mũtugo yaku wee x2...

You corrupted my head by giving me money,

When I tell you I want to go and see my parents you refuse,

Did you marry me and you didn't take the dowry.. *maami*,

There is no girl who can accept me.. *maami*,

Because they know your habits.

Mama Kĩwinya is a song that reveals that the challenges of urbanization are diverse; from housing to upkeep and this often affects romantic relationships where the financially challenged become vulnerable and suffer romantic exploitation. Modern *Ākũyũ* should therefore develop economic strategies of promoting regional equality that targets upgrading of rural space in terms of infrastructure and individual growth to avoid rural urban migration. Modern education policies should evolve into developing transition programmes to link school leavers with training and the job

market so that disillusionment caused by unemployment upon completion of courses, does not drive them to the cities where they fall victims to romance predators.

The women are lucky beneficiaries. They fall into the hands of richer men who provide them with romance, pay housing cost and even quite often find their way into marriage. This happens in *Tūirio Twega* where a woman gets married to a rich city man who loves her unconditionally. She affirms repeatedly in the song, “*ū na ngakena akīnjīta tūirio twega...*” meaning, “Yes... and I enjoy when he calls me a delicacy of sweet food...” Another occurrence is in *Nyūmba Ūtarīhaga*, where in the world of the song, the woman is a beneficiary whose house rent in a good section of the city is paid for by a lover. Since money economy in the urban space is so critical to survival, urban women sometimes become very materialistic and courts a multiplication of lovers to whom she allocates segments of her budget and bills. As a result, such women live in perpetual fear of discovery by each man and the tensions explode into volatile experiences when eventually the men make discovery of each other. It is in light of this reality that *Nyūmba Ūtarīhaga* highlights the consequence of romantic plurality emanating from upkeep complications of urban life. In highlighting this experience the song is proposing expansion of empowerment channels for women to drive them into financial independence and self-reliance to avoid complications of physical attack on each other by men over one woman.

In other developments, marital discontent occurs and women victims take leave of the marital home. They get alternative quarters in the cities and big towns for residence away from abusive husbands as seen in the song; *Waarī Mūhoroki*. Cities and towns also provide conducive environments for romantic indulgence. There are many dating zones in the city where couples find space for private catching up outings. One is mentioned in *Date Ya Mūico* as *Thīka*. However the catching up does not take place because of the romantic demeanour of the woman involved. She comes for the date in the company of others. The next date and presumably a contentious one is supposed to be in *Meru*, another big town with a suitable romance environment for good private talk as seen in the following words;

*Date ya Mūico tūgacemania Mūrū,
Woka mūrī erī, Ngagūtigania Mūrū,
Njoke ngwīthambe ta ndoro ya gūthinga,
Na ndiganīrūo kana nī ndī ndakuona.*

The last date we shall meet in *Meru*,
If you come in the company of another I will abandon you in *Meru*,
Then I will wash you off my hands like construction clay,
And I forget that I have ever seen you.

Cities and towns are also a contentious factor in the construction of romance because they are the meeting points for many lovers, the dating zones, the residential and also the separation areas for those who fall out with each other, the latter evident in *Waarī Mūhoroki* and *Date Ya Mūico*. This is evident during live show occasions where urban dwellers from all walks of life converge for the happy experience of cherished music, favourite artists, lyrics and educative themes as revealed in the interviews. Those who participated in the interviews said they attended live show occasions for entertainment and educative content of the songs.

Urbanization also provides contested space for subversive romantic indulgences. The cities are a haven of illicit sexual indulgence especially because of the challenges of a world experiencing the culture of money economy. Women turn to promiscuous methods of acquiring money. In the world of *Ākūyūromance*, this commercial aspect of promiscuity is called prostitution. In *Nī Gūite* part 1 and part 2 the phenomenon of *Koinange* street is brought out. *Koinange* is a metaphor for the prostitution zones of the cities. In *Koinange street*, sex is exchanged with money. City men access sex for pay as long as they have money. In *Nī Gūite*, sex is metaphorically referred to as a parcel of land on sale without a title deed;

Man: *Tūthiaga Koinange tūtārī na ūmenyo.....
Tūkagūra mīgūnda itārī na Title...*

We normally visit *Koinange* without worry....
And we buy parcels of land without Title Deeds..
Woman: *Anake mūthiaga Koinange kūgīra kū?*
Mwamenyeire kūū mīgūnda īyo ndīrī Title...?

Men...what do you go to *Koinange* to do?
How did you discover those parcels of land have no Title Deeds?

Prostitution in modern *Ākūyū* is a product of the pressure of the money economy. Women engage in the trade as an occupation for commercial reasons to the extent of likening the transactions to the lucrative sale of parcels of land. The song speaks to policy making bodies to implement economic designs that empower women and give them opportunities for entrepreneurship by for instance providing accessible and serviceable funding schemes to women. In *Irene Wa Tata* prostitution also blossoms within urban space. Irene has opened a market for cheap romance at *Maaī Mahiū* which is an urban centre and a replica of *Koinange* street in *Nī Gūite part 1 and part 2*;

*Nāīraiguire atī we wonagwo Maaī Maahiū,
Kūū nīkūo wee ūīgīte thoko ya wendo wa raithi,
Ndereva cia lorry hamwe na makanga,
Leo ni leo mbei nī ya hwai-inī.*

I have heard that they see you in *MaaīMahiū*,
That is where you have opened an open market for cheap love,
All the lorry drivers and their conductors,
Today is today, it is close down sale.

Irene's merchandize are thighs and her clients are men from all walks of life. At *Maaī Mahiūs* she targets long distance truck drivers and their conductors. Prostitution is so demeaning that for Irene there are no provisions for any man of big pay or small pay because money is so important that dignity is of lesser value. As a product of an imbalanced economy, Irene is an ideological satire of modern economies that fail to provide women with occupational capacity for survival but leave them vulnerable to economic choices that render them ignoble, while exposing them to medical threat of deadly diseases like HIV/ AIDS.

The tragic consequence of prostitution is the dreaded HIV/ AIDS. In *Nī Gūtee* part 1, the man says that upon a clinical procedure, a regular *Koinange* client is pronounced HIV positive which is a devastating outcome. In *Irene Wa Tata*, the persona is most of all worried of the possibility of Irene contracting HIV because her sexual behaviour has driven her into vulnerability. On the contrary Irene demonstrates cynicism on the possibility of infection showing how corruptible the practice of prostitution makes an individual in her retaliatory remarks thus;

Ndaigire woigire atī mūkingo nī fashion,
Ūrīa itari naguo nīmūhītūke nī ihinda. x2
I heard that you said HIV/ AIDS is a fashion,
That the one without it is outdated.

Wee ūrī sex hawker Irene wa Tata,
Ndūcagūraga wa igana kana wa twendi,
Ona e mūhunyūku o na kana nī kīonje,
Mwana wa Tata bata nī akiume ciringi,
Thī ūkūmaga na ūmenye mūkingo nī ūgwati. X2

You you are a sex hawker Irene of my aunt,
You don't choose a man with a hundred shillings,
Or one with twenty shillings,
Even if he is emaciated or crippled,
Child of my aunt, the essence is his coin,
Walk on as you dry but be informed,
That HIV/ AIDS has no cure.

Prostitution is a product of urbanization in *Ākūyū*, advanced by the challenges associated with the emergence of the money economy, economic decline, inequality, rural urban migration, unemployment and poverty. Most often it leaves those in the practice ravaged by HIV/ AIDS causing tragi-romance. The HIV/ AIDS scourge is a postcolonial medical challenge that enters *Ākūyū* space in the early 1980s. In the formative years of its discovery medical and social management was difficult and victims succumbed a few years after infection. Although over the years management has improved with evolution of medicinal invention such as the discovery of retroviral drugs and growth of general awareness on its management, the disease is terminal and thus tragic. HIV/ AIDS is contracted mainly through unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected partner. Multiplicity of sexual partners complicates the situation because it allows possible contraction, re-contraction and resistance to medication. Victims have to travail stigma and ill health because of compromised immunity. The convenient surety of escape from HIV/ AIDS is sexual abstinence, maintenance of one sexual partner or failure to indulge in unprotected sex. As a postcolonial reality in *Ākūyū*, HIV/ AIDS affects romantic relationships because it is a source of trauma and possible death. In another song; *Nī Gūtee* Part 1, the man says that the romantic transactions in *Koinange* not only bring financial consequences of loss but also eventually cause infection with HIV/ AIDS as seen below;

Tūthiaga Koinange tūtarī na ūmenyo,
Tūkagūra mīgūnda itarī na title,
Ūcokaga kūmenya thutha-inī wī mwenje,
Na watūria uhoru ūcio wega ūkona nī gūtee. x2

We go to *Koinange* without knowledge,
And buy those parcels of land without a title deed,
Soon you realize that you have been shaved,
And upon scrutiny of the matters you realize,
That this is an empty story of loss.

Lamenting on behalf of those men who visit *Koinange* for romantic fun, he says, "*Dagītarīagakwīra atī wīnako*," meaning that after losing your money, you visit a doctor and the doctor says that you have the "thing." The thing is the HIV virus.

Kuona nī tūhū na wahutia ūrute mbece,
Tondū Koinange nonginya ūheo risiti,
Wathī kwī ndagītarī agakwīra wī nako,
Weciria ūhoru wa Koinange ūkona nī gūtee. x2

Viewing is free but when you touch you pay,
 Because at *Koinange* you must be issued with a receipt,
 When you visit the doctor, he says you have contracted it,
 And when you think about *Koinange*,
 You realize it is an empty story of loss.

The concept of HIV/ AIDS is addressed in the songs as a critical component of post coloniality owing to its toll on human life through death. The song promotes advancement in government policy on the struggle to fight the spread of HIV/ AIDS in Kenya. By demarcating the prostitution regions of the cities such as *Koinange* street in *Nĩ Gũute* and *Maaĩ Mahiũ* of *Irene wa Tata*, the artists aim at challenging the government to target those areas with programmes such as publicity, creation of HIV/ AIDS awareness and supply of free quality protection equipment for the clientele of the commercial sex industry.

The dream of fortune abroad has also been captured in the *Ākũyũ* popular song as an influential factor in the construction of *Ākũyũ* romance. The question of the diaspora experience is depicted in a number of the selected songs as a characteristic of post-colonial experience. Many Kenyans dream of going abroad in search of greener pastures because it is presumed that there are more promising economic channels for financial growth outside the country. This is a result of the colonial experience in which Africans are socialized into believing that the west has everything superior. There are examples in the songs; *Wendo Ūgũrũki* and *Amsterdam*. The man immigrant in *Wendo Ūgũrũki* goes to work in Saudi Arabia as a driver and the lady of estrangement in *Amsterdam* leaves for Europe presumably because the financial pastures are greener there. In *Amsterdam*, the man expresses his longing for a re-union with his estranged wife saying;

*Nĩ ngũhaica ndege ũũĩ ngacuuke Amsterdam,
 Njũrie wĩra mũgiithi-inĩ ndũre ngũtaimĩte...
 Kana rĩmwe ũũĩ tĩyia, ciana nĩkangora,
 Ngĩrĩhia mũgiithi ndĩmatware cukuru.*

I will take an aeroplane oh.. and come to that Amsterdam,
 And ask for a job as a train attendant so that patiently time you,
 Or probably one time the children,
 Will find me charging fare in the train,
 And then I take them to school.

The desperation expressed by the man in the song *Amsterdam*, reveals the disillusionment and trauma of victims of marital disintegration. The song speaks to the society to develop methods of solving marital conflict through corporate strategies, the extended family, the religious sector as well as the civil society. Other songs that depict the dream of fortune abroad and the concept of greener pastures are *Abidjan*, *Mũtino wa Ndege* and *Mama Kĩwinya*. In *Abidjan* and *Mũtino wa Ndege*, the man is leaving on official duty. As he addresses his partner in the following lines;

*Mwendwa wakwa kaaĩ ũkũrĩra nĩkĩ,
 Rĩrĩra nyoneirwo wĩra?
 Wamenya mwendwa ũrĩra twanarĩa thĩĩna,
 Hamwe na ciana ciitũ.*

My dear why are you crying,
 When I have been given a job?
 And you know how we endured hardships,
 Together with our children?

The migration abroad in this song is caused by unemployment and poverty in Kenya. The essence of art is to point at social flaws that threaten stability so that a song like *Abidjan* satirizes a modern economy, so imbalanced that the disadvantaged must take abode abroad in search of opportunities, at the expense of their marital stability. In this case, it is the responsibility of government to provide enterprise channels of economic growth for the citizens and create employment opportunities for the people within the country. For *Mama Kĩwinya*, her children have all been sent there with a dream of prosperity.

Social class stratification is alluded to in the songs as one of the factors that influence mate selection. According to Buss (1994) a lot of importance is attached to resource capacity in the construction of a romance because women feel safer in the hands of men who can manage the upkeep of a family. From a patriarchal perspective, a man is expected to have the capital capacity to maintain upkeep of his wife and children. Men with measurable capacity for this requirement access romantic favour more easily as earlier shown in the analysis of *Tũirio Twega*. The poor mount a spirited struggle to attain financial ability in order to impress their women so that they keep the status of super males. A good example is in *Nĩ Ngaatho*, where a poor man works out dedicatedly to upgrade his financial capacity and social status marked by the construction of a modern house and accumulation of unspecified property. This is affirmed by the woman;

*Nĩ ndirikanaga wahikĩirie kĩaga kĩa ngũkũ,
 Narĩo riiko twashĩaga na your mother,
 Ūgĩtungumania ũtuku ona mũthenya,
 Ūgĩaka nyũmba njega,
 Na ũkĩnjĩra nĩ yakwa.*

I remember you married me in a chicken shed,
 And the kitchen we shared with your mother,
 Then you struggled day and night,
 And constructed a good house,
 And you told me it is mine.

This shows that when men provide maintenance for their women, there is tranquillity and happy union. The women seem to openly express pleasure at such capacity in their men showing that financial and resource capacity are masculine attributes of importance in the construction of romantic stability. The artist in *Paloma* insinuates that he could put up with his overseas lover in *Rūai*. *Rūai* is a low class habitation zone for the financially disadvantaged dwellers of Nairobi. In making this proposal to *Paloma*; a woman of more affluent orientation, the persona contends that true love traverses class limitations and thrives successfully as long as there is goodwill for love. Sometimes social class differences cause complicated outcomes with one of the lovers exploiting the partner's status of financial vulnerability as can be seen in a number of songs. One of the songs is *Njeri Gaitū*, in which a girl from a lesser class is hooked into a romance by a rich man with a huge financial might from the category of the rich *Ākūyū*. He owns money and capital resources such as expensive motor vehicles and his socialization space is the affluent establishments of the city of Nairobi such as the Carnivore where the rich of the city take refreshments and high class Disco entertainment from local and international artists. The persona describes him in a stanza;

*Weee wanangiire wa mūthūni,
 Waku agatūka, rūgarūgia ya makanga,
 Kīrīa ūhandaga ūūūi nīkīo ūkagethaa,
 Mwītemengeri ndūkanakūrie ikīyohaa. X2*

You.. you destroyed the child of the poor,
 Your own child will become the play-toy of touts,
 What you plant is what you will harvest,
 You made your selection, don't complain during the dressing.

Njeri Gaitū takes a naturalistic approach to attack the exploitation of the poor by the rich using the biblical precept of getting an equal measure of payment for the way you treat others. The capital baron in the story uses his economic might to deceive a child of the poor and in the world of the song, his punishment will come swiftly in the destruction of his own daughter who will ironically be ravaged romantically by touts. The song is making a statement that impunity begets natural justice and the rich must therefore exercise cultural sensitivity and remain within the dictates of common *Ākūyū* romance practice where a man takes responsibility of his romance mistakes by either marrying the girl or paying the cultural fines.

Ākūyū is a class society comprising of the rich and the poor and the character of modern *Ākūyū* romance is influenced by this factor in its construction. Eagleton (1996) describes social stratification as an element of the colonial experience resultant from capitalistic imperialism that led to the growth of economic imbalance, as well as social and material inequality. In *Ākūyū* it affects the construction of romantic relationships because of the material components of romance related to economic status during the process of mate selection. Urbanization, formal education, rural-urban-migration, poverty and unemployment are important components of economic inequality that influence romance. The emergence of money economy brings in various challenges that put pressure on the individual due to upkeep issues and survival procedures. This factor is responsible for romantic estrangement outcomes, the rise of prostitution, HIV/ AIDS, cultural erosion, reversal of gender roles, love-triangle complications and the possibility of migration abroad in search of greener pastures.

3. Technological Evolution and *Ākūyū* Romance

Technological advancement influences the structure of *Ākūyū* romance in various ways. Sometimes the effect is positive and other times it is negative. In some cases, technology promotes the relationship while at times it aids its destruction. For instance, in songs like, *Mūtino Wa Ndege*, *Wendo Ūgūrūki*, *Njeri Gaitū*, *Number ya Chiirū*, *Mobile* and *Amsterdam*, technology causes tragi-romance. In others like *Gathoni*, *Nī Ngaatho*, *Paloma*, *My dear Kwaheri* and *Abidjan*, the romance is enriched.

The aeroplane is a modern mode of transport; the product of European technological invention also transported to Kenya by colonialistic design. The *Ākūyū* use the aeroplane to go abroad for business transactions or to look for greener pastures. Both ventures have an objective of making money for financial stability. In *My dear Kwaheri*, the persona tells his woman that she will rejoice at his return from overseas because she will be the first beneficiary of his promotion.

*Maithori maacio moothe ūrarīra macoke kīongo,
 Mūrata nīgūkorwo nī ūgakena nī,
 Ndaheo madaraka My dear kwaheri.*

Return all those tears you are crying to your head,
 For my dear you will rejoice when I get a promotion,
 My dear kwaheri.

Promotion of the man in this case translates to financial stability in the relationship meaning that technology is one of the imported aspects that benefit the *Ākūyū* and therefore a vital component of post coloniality. It is also important to note that the speaker in the song is a man of expertise, who is going abroad for more skills that may benefit the country in terms of economic growth. The production of such a song is writing back to the modern *Ākūyū* cautioning against negative immigration abroad by some Africans of weak patriotic affiliation who go abroad and totally get christened members of the new world, becoming citizens and using their energy and skills to build foreign countries as their mother country suffers deprivation of expertise. *My dear Kwaheri* condemns this practice of desertion as a kind of alienation and calls on the *Ākūyū* with international prospects to travel abroad, carry the relevant skills and commodities and return home like the persona in this song. Another man in *Abidjan* is also using the aeroplane to go abroad on business matters for financial reasons. In both cases the aeroplane is an agent of financial advantage for it enhances global links for the *Ākūyū* that promote economic growth at the family level.

Another instrument of advantage is the motor vehicle. The motor vehicle, like the aeroplane, is a product of European technology, too brought to *Ākūyū* by the colonial masters. It has also become an important component of *Ākūyū* transport within the country either as a private machine or as a public service vehicle (PSV). In *Ni Ngaatho*, the motor vehicle is a source of romantic satisfaction. The woman persona sings the husband for his acts of love such as hiring a luxurious motor vehicle (*Mbiūki*) to transport her to maternity, as local neighbours walk or use public transport (*Matatū*). This gesture gives a lot of satisfaction to the woman who in return appreciates openly in song. In *Gathoni*, the romance is nurtured using letter writing. The love letters are delivered by post office (another facility also introduced by the colonialist) using the motor vehicle for delivery to the designate post office. The letter in this song coordinates the dating process for the two lovers with mentions of place and time in the phrase; '*Kamarū...ĩ...Ni ngwenda... ũgoka April ikumi*,' meaning, '*Kamarū...I would like you to come on April 10th*. She goes further to serve him with her contact address thus;

*Watus kwandīka marūa njitagwo Sussy Gathoni,
Na ithandūkū ni 42004...,
Kamarū na ndūkarege nīguo ngwathĩrĩe mūcī,
Kamarū...ĩ Ni ngwenda... Ūgoka April ikūmi.*

When you write the reply, my name is *Sussy Gathoni*,
And the post office box is 42004,
And *Kamarū* don't decline so that I direct you to our home,
Kamarū oh *Kamarū*, I would like you to come on April 10th.

In this stanza, the girl love bird gives her details for the envelop address with accuracy to ensure that the great letter does not error in destination. The love date is on April 10th when in a private talk she promises to give him directions to her parents' homestead. It is an important letter that will translate into *Kamarū*'s landmark visit to *Gathoni*'s home to meet her parents. This meeting is integral for it will mark legitimacy and introduce a crucial status in the romance that will culminate into solemnization of the relationship into a marital union. The letter and the post office facility are important components in the romantic journey of the lovers because they are agents of communication. Although more inventions like the mobile phone and the internet have enhanced the communication sector of modern *Ākūyū*, *Gathoni* remains a relevant historical record of the components of romantic structure. Elbow (1946) acknowledges that one of the reasons for creative writing is the recording of historical experiences for the sake of preservation and archiving or the 'historical impulse.' In this light, the song; *Gathoni*, preserves the rich history of the postcolonial era such as the essence of the post office and the love letter in the coordination of courtship through letter writing and dating procedures.

Many times, potential lovers meet in commuter and travel space where they engage in common conversation and get acquainted to each other to the extent of getting close either immediately or in the long run, the ultimate of which is romance endearment. Introductions, telephone numbers and other contact commodities are exchanged and later they become tools of access to each other by the parties. A number of flaws in the public service motor vehicles have for a long time enhanced the possibility of close body contact for potential lovers due to overloading and overcrowding; a situation that contributes to romantic inclinations as happens in *Number ya Chiirū*. The transport sector in Kenya has struggled with the control of public transport service providers especially the *Matatū* and recently the *Boda* taxi. The *Boda Boda* taxi is a mode of transport involving commercial hire of a bicycle or a motorcycle for travel service. The two modes of transport have for a long time curved a metanarrative of road carnage and travel discomfort for clients with impunity commonly referred to as *Matatū* madness. *Matatū* madness is characterized by overcrowding, un-roadworthy vehicles, speeding and irresponsible overtaking, negligence of traffic rules, immoral crew and incompetent drivers. It is the minister for Transport; the late Hon John *Mīchuki* who battles impunity on Kenyan roads by implementing the Government policy on the control of public transport in the year 2003. The *Matatū* code of conduct brings order on Kenyan roads and the entire industry undergoes a cultural evolution. As a result the implemented rules come to be called the famous *Mīchuki* rules. It is these rules that the persona refers to in *Number ya Chiirū*. Breaking them is the genesis of the short-lived romance that he remembers with nostalgia. He says that it was raining heavily and they break the famous *Mīchuki* rules by accommodating an extra passenger into the already filled up to capacity *Matatū*.

*Kwarī juma tūgithī Londiani...ĩ,
Mbura ĩkiura, Ta ĩrĩa ya Nuhu...ĩ.
Tūkivunja watho wa Mīchuki...ĩ
Mūirĩtu umwe akĩrwo anjīkarĩre...ĩ*

It was a Saturday, as we travelled to *Londiani*,
 It started raining heavily like that rain of Noah's time,
 We broke the great *Mĩchuki* rules,
 One young lady was told to sit on me..

The concept of the extra passenger is a commercial element characteristic of the Kenyan transport structure. Before the *Michuki* rules *Ākũyũ* *Matatũ* crew develops enterprise slogans to legitimize overloading such as "*Kuoya Kuoya* is my Policy" that means. "Pick it, pick it, is my policy." The pronoun, 'it' refers to cash money, the proceeds collected from overloading. There are others employed as strategies to facilitate the overloading such as, "*Nne Nne kama Orbit*" a borrowed Kiswahili phrase that means, "Four four like Orbit tums," that forces four people into a space of three passengers. Orbit tums are pieces of chewing gum whose packaging is made into rows of four. The gum is popular with *Matatũ* staff who use it together with groundnuts as an accompaniment for chewing "*Miraa*." *Miraa* is a contentious crop whose leaves are chewed for relaxation by *Matatũ* staff but socially outlawed as an addictive drug. The song hails the introduction and implementation of critical transport regulation rules by the government, under the patronage of the popular Minister for Transport; Hon. *Mĩchuki*, in the 2002 Narc government in the backdrop of a chaotic transport industry infamous for gross contravention of the law with impunity in the former government of President Moi. Breaking the now very famous *Michuki* rules of control is conveniently used by the artist to highlight the reality of love grown in a *Matatu* ride situation that sometimes grow into a full romance or sometimes is a short-lived affair of infatuation as occurs in *Number ya Chiirũ*. Either way the possibility of romance constructed within the *Matatũ* space is brought out as a characteristic of modern *Ākũyũ* romance, but the song brings out the problems associated with this kind of romance such as its temporary nature and the difficulties affecting its growth. For instance, the telephone contacts are exchanged and lost because of the infrastructural challenges of rural Kenya. Due to a weak road network, rural roads are inaccessible during the rainy season and travel is aided by the *Boda Boda* taxi either in form of a bicycle or a motorcycle as seen in the refrain;

Nũũ ũũũ number ya Chiirũ ...ĩ?
Na ĩrĩa aheire ma nĩyorire...ĩ
Na yorire twagwa na nduthi...ĩ x2
Nũũ ũũũ number ya Chiirũ ...ĩ?X2

Who knows the number of *Chiirũ*...

And the one she gave me got lost,
 And it got lost when we overturned with the motorcycle,

Who knows the number of *Chiirũ*? x2

The loss of *Chiirũ*'s number is the motorcycle accident that occurs in the rain because of the bad roads. The song therefore cautions the ministry of public works to balance the distribution of infrastructural funding and engage foresight bodies or authorities of credibility to ensure rural road network is established for not only romantic prosperity but also the growth of rural economies. In this case, the song is speaking back to the governance structure of modern Kenya on the essence of rural transport and matters of accessibility as a prerequisite to development and stability. The motorcycle accident also alludes to issues of road safety emanating from not only the motor vehicle but also the introduction of the motorcycle in the Kenyan transport arena. Motorcycle transport is marred with irregularities and illegalities inclusive of absent control systems on cyclist qualifications, insurance facilities, maintenance of the motor, speeding and overloading leading to a multiplication of problems such as maimings and death. Complications of this nature are expensive in light of financial strains on the individual, the family and the state. Reading *Number ya Chiiru* carefully highlights the underlying calling to the authorities to regulate and monitor the *Boda Boda* sector so that it can be an agent of replenishing the transport sector without causing threat to social welfare.

The motor vehicle is further mentioned in a number of other songs like *Njeri Gaitũ*, *Momo* and *Wainaina*. In *Njeri Gaitũ*, the luxurious Prado; an expensive machine of affluence, contributes to *Gathoni*'s deception. She laments; "*Wũũ ndakuagwo na Prado.. Na Prado, ngatwarwo maicaa ma igũrũ..*" that means, "Oh...I used to be carried in a Prado, in a Prado and taken to high life." It is this high life experience that is *Njeri*'s trouble with Sugar Daddy. Soon he withdraws and deserts her after her life is destroyed. *Njeri* is abandoned with three children. She says that her current status is *Āchokio*; a derogatory label for a woman who fails in marriage and returns to her father's homestead with her offspring. *Āchokio* is derived from the *Ākũyũ* word "*Ācoka*" that means "to return." So *Ācookio* is a derogatory label for a returnee woman who arrives in her father's homestead carrying the baggage of children from another home. The song cautions young girls to be cautious of modern rich elder men who may only be interested in romantic favours without any moral responsibility of the outcomes. The role of the electronic media in the construction of modern *Ākũyũ* romance has also been brought out in the songs. The woman *Wairurĩ* in the song; *Wairurĩ*, receives the news that her man is wedding Lucy *Karĩmi* through electronic media. The wedding advertisement is made on radio and television as is the advertisement culture of modern *Ākũyũ*.

Tũkĩharĩria ũhiki, na tũgĩtangathithia radio-inĩ,
Ngathĩti-inĩ nginya televĩceni.

We arranged a wedding and advertised over the radio,
 Newspapers including the television.

Uhiki wakwa wari wa mweri wa mugwanja,
Nake Wairurĩ ahetwo rũũtha mweri wa gatano,

*Arĩ kwao Karatina akĩigua na Kameme,
Kĩnuthia nĩ areka ũhiki na Lucy Karimi.*

My wedding was in the month of July,
And my *Wairurĩ* had been discharged in the month of May,
At her home in *Karatina*, she heard over the radio,

Kĩnuthia is doing a wedding with Lucy *Karĩmi*.

This publicity of the wedding creates a complication because *Wairurĩ* travels to the venue with precision and confronts the clergyman. Out of this confrontation, a dual wedding occurs and the society is taught a salutary lesson that polygamy cannot be wished away or dismissed with the simplicity with which Christianity prescribes. It is therefore up to the *Ākũyũ* to devise methods of incorporation of polygamy into modern *Ākũyũ* Christianity. It is this news that gets *Wairurĩ* to the wedding venue right on time to find the vows almost underway. Her arrival is crucial because she averts the impending exclusion and she too gets married. *Kĩnuthia* weds both women and becomes a modern polygamous Christian. This occurrence has been facilitated by the electronic channels of communication used in contemporary Kenya. The song therefore promotes the need to embrace technological growth in modern *Ākũyũ*.

Advancement in technology promotes the process of globalization in the contemporary *Ākũyũ*. *Kĩmani wa Turacco* in *Paloma*; depicts fictitious romance possibility in which lovers may fall in love with media models. The setting is in Kenya and far away Mexico. The subject of infatuation is a media model starring in a Mexican soap opera.

*Wendo ũmaga kũraihi hĩndĩ ũhana ta kĩroto,
Ūngĩkũingĩra ngoro-inĩ ũhanaga ta wahũgũya,
Ūkanjia kũ admire, mũndũ wĩ thĩ cia kũraihi,
Ūkaimagine e waku. Na ũmuonaga TV-inĩ.*

Love comes from far, and also it is like a dream,
When it fills your heart you become like a zombie,
Then you start admiring people in land far away,
And you fantasize that she is yours, yet you see her on Tv.

The growth of television technology has linked the world into one small interaction unit in the process of globalization. The fictional romance described in *Paloma* is a fantasy developed from admiration of media models far away from reach. This fantasy is a literary possibility in the creative process. Literary artists have always constructed romance fantasy stories with a moral lesson in local oral tradition. *Kĩmani* may have borrowed the concept of fantasy from the European oral tradition in the story of Cinderella and the African oral narrative of romantic fantasy. In Cinderella, an unfortunate girl of poverty travails a life of humiliation from her rich peers but destiny takes her to fortune and she marries the prince, becoming rich instantly. He may also have borrowed it from the African oral tradition in which the African woman beauty gets rescued by a young handsome man who often outsmarts the ogre and marries the girl. Their romance is often described as a living 'happily ever after' experience in the marriage institution. The persona in *Paloma* dreams of possibility of a similar romance outcome with a model so far away abroad within the provisions of dream and fantasy. *Paloma* therefore reveals the achievements of technological evolution and the process of globalization. Other agents of technological growth mentioned in the song include the airplane and the mobile phone. The two are instruments of modern communication systems that facilitate the linking of regions across the oceans of the world. In *Paloma*, *Kĩmani* says he will look for air ticket to travel to Mexico to see *Paloma* and confront his romantic opponents. He also mentions the mobile telephone; a gadget that enables Emilia to remain close to *Paloma*.

*Na ũmenye nĩ ta ũgũrũki, nyonaga ũkũhũra thĩimũ,
Ngeciria ũrahũra yakwa, nganjia gwetha netiworki,
Orĩmwe ngaririkana, atĩ ndũrĩ number yakwa,
Emiliano ũũĩ akamwĩoya, ngakunja ngũndi tũrũe.*

And I tell you it is like insanity, I see you telephoning someone,
Then I think you are calling my phone, and I start looking for network,
Suddenly I realize that you do not have my number,
Then Emiliano picks the call, and I fasten my fists,
In readiness to fight him.

Further he states that it is on television that he admires *Paloma* for her beauty. The song is therefore a narrative of the relationship between technology and romantic attachment. Technology is an agent of building romantic relationships. It provides various facilities of communication in which emotions are expressed in print or spoken forms. For example from *Gathoni* to *Paloma*, letter writing has evolved to the short text message phenomenon using the mobile phone and the email text in the internet. In the world of *Gathoni* (1970s to the early 2000) spoken exchange is by the post office call box using the landline telephone channel before the introduction of the mobile phone in *Ākũyũ*. The latter-day category of lovers are beneficiaries of the mobile phone. The song *Paloma* therefore depicts the role of technology in the development of romance starting from locating a lover to communicating with her as well as coordinating the dating programme. Technology is presented in *Paloma* as a progressive aspect of postcolonial *Ākũyũ* that enhances the process of globalization.

On the other hand, technology contributes to the occurrence of tragi-romance. *Mobile* by John De Mathew highlights how the mobile phone contributes to the occurrence of domestic conflict. The married couple in the song is in conflict over the use of the man's mobile phone. The woman's suspicion keeps a spirited struggle to scroll through her husband's phone everyday scrutinizing how many calls he has made or received from women. The man says that they quarrel everyday due to her enquiries on, 'who is this who had called you? What were you saying to one another?' This is shown in the refrain;

Nĩ kũ ũcaragia phoni book-inĩ ya thĩmũ yakwa?

Tondũ oro mũthenya nonginya tũnegeanie..

Mũcĩ watũkire tarĩ igoti-inĩ nĩ macĩira,

Ūkĩnjũria ũyũ ũkũhũrĩte thĩmũ mwĩranaga atĩa?

What do you look for in the phone book of my phone?

Because every day we must quarrel

The home has become like a courthouse because of cases

As you demand that I explain

What this caller and that one discusses with me.

In this case the mobile phone is the cause of the constant quarrels. There are devastating consequences of the tracking system in which a woman keeps trailing the calling patterns of her husband. At one point the man explains to her that one of the women in the call log is a *Nyeri* lawyer, his official legal officer who represents him in the business dispute suit over the *Nyeri* house. The mobile phone in this story is negatively affecting the man's business network because of the tensions it is causing him at the family level.

The growth of technology has brought about new inventions such as the motor vehicle that replenishes romantic relationships as well as complicate them in different ways such as contributing to domestic strife and tragi-romance. Other inventions that cause romantic strife include the aeroplane that causes peril through plane crash death or by facilitating estrangement of couples, the mobile phone and the media (print and electronic).

4. Conclusion

The study has established that the postcolonial economic ideology contributes to a large extent to the construction of *Ākũyũ* romance. There are various economic factors that influence, affect and complicate *Ākũyũ* romance. They include the growth of capitalistic money economy, education and unemployment, social class differences, the diaspora experience, urbanization and the culture of prostitution. The songs analysed to get this data are; *Gathoni, Momo, Mama Kĩwinya, Wendo Ūgũrũki, Tuirio Twega, Njeri Gaitũ, Waarĩ Mũhonoki, Nĩ Gũũte, Date ya Mũico, Irene wa Tata, Mũtino wa Ndege, Nyũmba Ūtarĩhaga* and *Amsterdam*.

The growth of technology has also been found to contribute to the construction of the romance. Technological evolution includes advancement in communication modes such as the electronic media in the television, the mobile phone, the computer and the internet. This gadgetry has reduced the world into a global village where communication is enhanced with a network of sophisticated airwaves for message delivery. This enhancement of communication is an agent of coordination of romantic activities such as dating and expression of romantic messages. The songs that have been analysed to provide data on this factor are; *Paloma, Number ya Chiirũ, Mobile, Gathoni, Amsterdam, Mũtino wa Ndege, Abidjan, Nĩ Ngaatho, Wairurĩ, Wendo Ūgũrũki, Njeri Gaitũ, My Dear Kwaheri* and *Wainaina*. This analysis reveals that there are a myriad of postcolonial economic factors underlying the construction of postcolonial *Ākũyũ* romance.

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