Gender in Church Music: Dynamics of Gendered Space in *Muziki wa Injili* in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

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This article deals with the dynamics of gendered space in *Muziki wa Injili* (lit. Gospel Music) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *Muziki wa Injili* is characterized by employing body movements, by incorporating improvisation, and by featuring the use of electric guitars and keyboards all of which are uncommon in the mainstream church music traditions, particularly in the art church choir music and church hymns. In addition, unlike art choir music, *Muziki wa Injili* borrows musical elements from other popular music genres such as rumba, soukous, zouk, reggae, rap, taarab, and salsa (charanga), to be brief. The elements borrowed include dancing styles, rhythmic, and/or melodic configurations, playing techniques, ornamentation, and singing styles, among others. Sometimes it is performed by church choirs. At other times it is performed by individual musicians who record and sell their cassettes privately. Thus the use of the concept *Muziki wa Injili* is broader than that of *Muziki wa Kwaya* (lit. Choir Music) in that it includes not only the music performed by church choirs, as is the case with *Muziki wa Kwaya*, but also church music performed by individual musicians. Apart from being performed in churches during services, *Muziki wa Injili* is also performed during concerts of *Muziki wa Injili* (which take place almost every weekend in different concert halls in Dar es Salaam) and during indoor and outdoor evangelical meetings (Barz 1997, 2003). Because of the recent developments in recording, the advent of cheap cassette reproduction technology, and the growing broadcasting opportunities in television and radio stations, some of which are owned by church organizations, *Muziki wa Injili* has grown rapidly in popularity and use in the last two decades (Barz 1997, 2003; Sanga 2001, 2006). As I illustrate in an ethnographic account below, the prominence of women in this music has also increased significantly during this time.

This Is Not "The Way Things Were"

It takes more than good musicians to make a good concert of *Muziki wa Injili*. What is also needed is a good MC (Master of Ceremonies, or Mistress of Ceremonies I would add). One of the concerts that I attended

as an observer and recorder was organized by the Calvary Assemblies of God Church in Dar es Salaam. The concert took place on November 21, 2004 at Msimbazi Centre Hall (one of the halls owned by the Roman Catholic Church and used for many functions including send-offs, wedding ceremonies, and church music concerts on hire). The concert had two MCs: Mr. Harris Kapiga, presenter at Praise Power Radio (a new Christian radio station in Dar es Salaam) and Pastor Catherine Abihudi, one of the pastors of Calvary Assemblies of God (the church that organized this concert). In the following paragraph, I allow my fieldnotes and memory to flash back and transform that past into the present so as to present the MCs at work here and now.

After the first round of performances the MCs also perform to prepare musicians and audience for the next round. Theirs is not a song. It is a conversation. Holding their microphones, they look at the audience and then at each other. They both smile. Harris Kapiga starts with a remark, "*Wanawake wamekuja juu kweli katika Muziki wa Injili siku hizi*" (Women have really come up in Gospel Music nowadays). He starts to mention the names of the female musicians who have just performed: Mercy Nyagwaswa, Miriam Lukindo, Debora Shaaban. He stops and looks at Pastor Catherine Abihudi. Abihudi says that there are also men. She mentions the two men who have just performed: David Robert and Mr. Billionaire. Kapiga interrupts and adds a list of other famous female musicians who are not here today: Rose Muhando, Bahati Bukuku, Jennifer Mgendi, Neema Mushi, Flora Mbasha, Ency Mwalukasa. "OK *tuendelee*" (OK, let's continue), Pastor Catherine Abihudi brings the dialogue to an end and the concert continues (an account from my fieldnotes, November 21, 2004).

Traditionally, many societies have been organized so that men and women occupy different spheres. While men occupy a public sphere women occupy a private sphere (Bayton 1998; Koskoff 1987; Rieger 1985; Rosaldo 1974; Spivak 1996; Worth 2001). In addition, men have been associated with culture and creativity while women have been associated with nature and a lack of creativity (Koskoff 1987; Makore 2004; McClary 1991; Nzegwu 1998). With these views one would not be surprised to read an account that Nicholas Cook writes about the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra:

> In the face of mounting public protest, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra *confirmed* its policy of excluding all women—except harpists (the male harpist is virtually an endangered species).

> It thereby remained true to the dictum of its most famous conductor, Herbert von Karajan, that '*a woman's place is in the kitchen, not in the symphony orchestra*' (1998: 110, my emphasis).

The scene in Dar es Salaam has not been very different from the above. For example, it was observed in my earlier study that most roles (particularly the most prestigious ones such as choir teacher, choir conductor, or an instrumentalist) were played by men (Sanga 2001). To borrow a phrase from Cook, this is "the way things were" (1998: 105). Cook uses the phrase to show that what is taken to be "the way things are" is a system of beliefs that keeps ideologies of domination unchallenged.

The present scene in *Muziki wa Injili* in Dar es Salaam (as Kapiga observed) indicates that something seems to be not "the way things were." Referring to my ethnographic account above, for example, there were a number of male musicians of *Muziki wa Injili* in Dar es Salaam that Pastor Catherine Abihudi could mention had she decided to extend the MCs' show. But that was to be expected. Conversely, the prominence of female musicians in this music genre was a recent phenomenon. Given the public nature of this music genre, the situation seemed to challenge and threaten gender stereotypes that were taken to be unquestionable truth.

It should be noted here that a number of studies show that there has been an increased involvement of women musicians even in other music genres in Tanzania such as taarab and rap and that this increase has influenced the increased focus on women's issues in the lyrics of the music (see Askew 2000, 2002; Fargion 1999, 2000; Perullo 2005). However, in this article my focus is on *Muziki wa Injili*. I examine factors that have led to these changes and I analyze the construction of gender in selected songs by female musicians.

In what follows, I begin by outlining the theory of spatial trialectics, which I use to analyze the dynamics of gender in relation to *Muziki wa Injili*. Then I examine the factors that have led to the increased prominence of women musicians in this music genre. I do this by focusing on the life history of a famous female musician in Dar es Salaam, Jeniffer Mgendi. I also analyze the lyrics of selected songs of *Muziki wa Injili* and show how the songs deal with gender relations as well as the way in which masculinity and femininity are constructed, negotiated, or contested.

Theorizing Gendered Space

There has been an increased use of spatial dimensions in the recent theorization of gender issues (Ardener 1993; Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003; Massey 1994; Moore 1986; Pellow 2003; Rosaldo 1974). Generally speaking, in these studies gendered spaces have been taken to include particular locations or physical spaces in which or through which gender is constructed, expressed, practiced, and/or experienced. As Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga put it,

> We define gendered spaces to include particular locales that cultures invest with gendered meanings, sites in which sex-differentiated practices occur, or settings that are used strategically to inform identity and produce and reproduce asymmetrical gender relations of power and authority (2003: 7).

My treatment of gendered space in this article goes beyond the physical spaces ("locales," "sites," or "settings") in which or through which gender is constructed, expressed, practiced, contested, and experienced. I use a spatial trialectics model or a model of three-dimentional construction of space (following Nzegwu 1999) in which a social space is perceived to have three layers: physical, mental, and lived space (Deal 2002, 2003; Lefebvre 1991; Soja 1985, 1996). The physical gendered space includes "locales," "sites," and "settings" such as houses, churches, or school buildings in which or through which gender is constructed, contested, and experienced. The mental gendered space includes words, myths, songs, paintings, literary works, and other forms of communication and representation through which ideas about gender are constructed, expressed, or communicated. Various physical gendered spaces normally acquire gendered meanings through this mental gendered space. The lived gendered space includes real experiences of individuals who encounter various gendered physical practices and gendered mental representations. The experiences therefore may be physical (e.g., injury), economic hardships, asymmetrical power relations, denial of property ownership, or psychological marginalization and alienation, among other experiences. I would like to emphasize here the centrality of mental gendered space in shaping people's lived experiences of gender. It is through mental space that various gendered stereotypes are constructed, disseminated, and sustained. As I illustrate in various analyses throughout this article, negotiation and contestation of various gendered experiences also involve resisting, dismantling, and transforming (or at least questioning) mental gendered space.

In the next section, I focus on the musical life hi/story of Jennifer Mgendi, one of the famous female musicians of *Muziki wa Injili* in Dar es Salaam, and examine the conditions or circumstances that made it possible for her to become a successful independent musician for at least one decade. In other words, I want to investigate the conditions that led to the success of her "transgressive character," to borrow a phrase from Nkiru Nzegwu (1998). Nzegwu uses this phrase to refer to efforts made by an individual to act "against prevailing gender stereotypes" or to cross gender categories and adopt a "self-empowering language that recasts history and tradition" (1998: 105–106).

Jennifer Mgendi and the Transgression of Gendered Space

I begin by quoting Jennifer Mgendi's history as she told it during my interview with her. After presenting her narrative, I make some comments to show how her narrative is linked to what I call "transgression of gendered space."

> My history of *Muziki wa Injili* began officially in the year 1995. However, I can say, even before that I was involved in music activities though it was not *Muziki wa Injili*. I remember since my childhood I was a person who liked to listen and dance to music. When I heard music, sometimes I could even cry because I longed that I could be one of the singers in that music.

From 1979 to 1985 at Mgulani Primary School in Dar es Salaam:

> When I was in primary school I was dancing *ngoma* (traditional dances) in a school dance group. I also sang in a school choir with the same group at Mgulani Primary School. At the same time I was singing in a church choir [later she clarified that it was a children's choir]. So I continued thus until the time when I decided to be saved and also I had completed my primary education. So I abandoned those *shughuli za utamaduni* (lit. cultural activities, but also used to refer to traditional dances).

From 1986 to 1989 at Kisutu Girls Secondary School in Dar es Salaam:

> To be frank, when I went to secondary school I could not manage to repress my great enthusiasm in music. So I found myself still in love with music. I joined a fellowship group at our school. We

> had a student fellowship of saved students and we had a choir. I continued to sing in that choir. I also joined a school [secular] choir and we were performing in various school functions like form-four graduations.

From 1990 to 1993 at Korogwe Teachers College in Tanga:

> Then I went to Korogwe teachers college where I continued to sing in a school choir as well as in a student fellowship choir at the college.

1994 at Handeni Secondary School in Tanga:

> After that I was posted to teach at Handeni Secondary School. When I arrived there I continued with my music business. I joined a church choir. But more importantly, I met an American *dada* (lit. sister, also a respectful way of calling a girl or a woman). She was a volunteer worker from a certain organization called Peace Corps. That *dada* whose name was Rachel Nagel knew to play a guitar. So when I saw her playing a guitar I was so attracted. I asked her to teach me. So she taught me to play some chords like A, D, E and G. I played those chords until I was able to play them *vizuri* (lit. nicely). I began to compose my own *mizunguko* (lit. rounds, used to refer to chord progressions) like A D E. I tried to play those *mizunguko* in a certain way and I began to sing at the same time. I mean I was composing various songs in relation to those *mizunguko.* I found myself having composed many songs during that period.

From 1994 to 1998 and 2000 to 2002 at the University of Dar es Salaam:

> In the same year, I left and went to join the University of Dar es Salaam. When I arrived there the zeal for music increased and now I desired to record my songs. I wanted to see how they would be when they are recorded, well accompanied with instruments and played by good instrumentalists. That is when I informed my fellows who knew well about studio recording. These were Lugendo Msegu and Cleopa John who were also students at the University of Dar es Salaam. Therefore I saw them. They practiced the songs themselves as instrumentalists and then we practiced the songs together. We went to the studio to record the songs. That was 1995 and that is when I can

> say that my musical history officially began. (Jennifer Mgendi during an interview with the author on September 18, 2004, my translation)

By the year 2004 Jennifer Mgendi had recorded and released a total of four albums in audio form including *Nini*? (1995), *Ukarimu Wake* (2000), *Nikiona Fahari* (2001), and *Yesu Nakupenda* (2003). She had also released two video cassettes that included selected songs from the first three audio albums. These video cassettes include *Best of Jennifer Mgendi* (2001) and *Chombo cha Sifa* (2004).

In what follows she explains about the financing of all these projects.

> My first album, I recorded it myself and I went to make more copies to *Wahindi* (referring to Indian business persons involved in the music business), Mamu Stores. I was selling them myself when I was invited to sing somewhere such as in church services or concerts. But I became surprised to find the album was spreading fast without my getting any profit. The *Wahindi* and other people were reproducing them without corresponding with me. As for my second, third and fourth, I have entered into a contract. When I was in the studio, recording my second album, the Mamu Stores personnel came and found me there. Because they had already heard my first album and they had found that it was marketable, they asked to be distributors of my albums. I agreed. So they pay studio expenses, they sell the cassettes and they give me my royalty. (Jennifer Mgendi during an interview with the author on September 14, 2004, my translation)

Let me begin by commenting on the role of the various physical places that Jennifer Mgendi's narrative of becoming an independent musician of *Muziki wa Injili* takes us to. To the extent that this narrative is a historical one, time plays a significant role. However, we can also observe the primacy of physical spaces in it. Hence, the narrative integrates both temporal and spatial aspects. I consider these physical spaces to be "stamps" or "milestones" in her history of becoming a musician of *Muziki wa Injili*. Important events in her life history are situated within physical spaces. The conditions within those physical spaces influenced her involvement in music.

Second, in spite of her great enthusiasm to become a popular music singer, an enthusiasm she had felt since her childhood, Jennifer Mgendi never became one until later in her life. It was when she met Rachel Nagel that she began to follow her "transgressive" path. She was inspired by seeing Nagel playing a guitar. Most choirs that perform *Muziki wa Injili* in Dar

es Salaam used guitars. Similarly, the popular music groups she saw in videos used guitars. But she was never inspired to become a guitarist then. We cannot avoid speculating that, since in most of these choirs and music groups the guitarists were men, guitar playing was synonymous with men's business. Finding out that a guitar was played by a woman or a *dada,* as she calls her, this discovery "unlearnt" or erased her former notions about guitar playing. The mental "wall" between what was considered men's roles and women's roles in popular music was dismantled (or at least questioned) and this dismantling of a mental wall made the lived experience of learning and playing a guitar possible. Equally important, Nagel agreed to teach her and she taught her to play some chords.

It should be pointed out though that the changes in terms of an increased number of female instrumentalists have been taking place even in church choirs (although with a slow pace). There are more women instrumentalists in choirs that perform *Muziki wa Injili* today than was the case a few years ago. However, the male dominance in the area of instrument playing in most choirs seems to make the learning environment for women difficult. Jennifer Mgendi's "transgression" was made easier because she found someone, a *dada* outside the male-dominated context, who was willing to teach her.

Third, the learning of guitar did not only inspire Jennifer Mgendi to become a guitar player but more importantly, it led to her becoming a composer. When she had mastered playing it, she composed her own *mizunguko* (the term she used during the interview with the author, which literally maybe translated as "rounds," meaning repeated chord progressions) and later composed songs based on those progressions. Some of the songs she composed through this method were later recorded in her albums. In other words, her learning of the guitar led to a "second transgression" of gendered spatiality, composition. It was observed in my earlier study that most teachers of popular church choirs in Dar es Salaam were men and it was the teachers who composed songs for these choirs (Sanga 2001). The situation was not very different in 2004 in most church choirs that I studied. Most of the choir teachers were men. However, in a few cases women did become choir teachers, as was the case with Rose Muhando. Muhando reported that she had been a choir teacher in Dodoma and the choir (Chimuli) had recorded an album *Kitimutimu* that includes her songs, some of which she sang as a lead singer (*Nyakati* of February 6–12, 2005). Jennifer Mgendi worked outside this male-dominated context; that is, she composed all the songs, which she recorded, singing all the parts herself.

Fourth, let me comment on the role of the financial status in Jennifer Mgendi's success. After completing her studies in a teacher's college, Mgendi worked for about a year as a secondary school teacher. Then she joined the University of Dar es Salaam in 1994 as a student. In 1995 she recorded her first album *Nini*? Mgendi was able to pay all the studio expenses herself for recording this album. In addition, she paid the expenses of reproducing the cassettes. This made it possible for her to start selling the album. The *Wahindi* proposed to be suppliers of her albums after they had found that her first album "was marketable," as she puts it. This serves to underscore the fact that if she had not been able to finance the recording of her first album, the *Wahindi* would not have recognized her even if she had gone and asked them to finance her recordings. I was informed that normally these music agents wanted an artist to show them an album that they had listened to before they decided whether they would distribute the album and refund the recording expenses or not. In some cases they told the artists to distribute the albums first to various radio stations and if they found that the albums became popular they would agree to refund the recording expenses and distribute the albums (personal communication Chediel Nyirenda on January 1, 2005 and Nestory Ihano on December 21, 2004). Mgendi's "transgressive" practice was made possible by her being able to finance her first album, which became a springboard for her future projects.

Finally, Jennifer Mgendi's success depended partly on the role of recording technology and the expanding mass media, particularly church-owned radio stations. The technology and mass media made it possible for many people, not only in Dar es Salaam but even in other parts of Tanzania, to hear Mgendi's songs. For this reason, her compositions were able to "go public." This was also the case with other female musicians: the public and institutions acknowledged these artists not only as singers but also as composers. For instance, during the Tanzania Gospel Music Award Concert (2004) on January 31, 2005, Rose Muhando was awarded the "best composer of the year" award among other awards. As pointed out earlier, the involvement of mass media and recording technology in publicizing not only the songs of female musicians but also their composition skills played a role in "dismantling" the mental walls around composition as a male-gendered space.

Reading Gender in the Lyrics of Selected Songs

It has been observed that one possible explanation as to why some artworks by women differ from those by men (though the differences need

not be essentialized) is that women and men are exposed to different life experiences and that these experiences have an influence on their artworks (Ballantine 2002; Nzegwu 1998; Worth 2001). For example, during an interview with a reporter of a Christian newspaper (*Nyakati)*, Rose Muhando (who had just won three awards during the Tanzania Gospel Music Award 2004, that is, as best composer, as best singer, and for the best album of the year) was quoted saying:

> In that second song [in her album] "Bwana Nipe Uvumilivu" ("Lord Give Me Endurance") I really sang my own life; how I and my children suffered after the fathers of my children ran away from me. Surely, I sang it with deep feelings because it was really my own suffering (*Nyakati* of February 13–19, 2005, my translation).

Listening to *Muziki wa Injili* one encounters a number of songs that deal in varied ways with gender relations. For this reason, in this section I focus on the lyrics of three selected songs and in most cases with the video presentation of the songs, and I analyze how these songs deal with gender relations as well as the way in which masculinity and femininity are constructed, negotiated, or contested. The selected songs include "Mama" ("Mother I Thank You")[1] by Mercy Nyagwaswa (from her album *Mbingu Zahubiri*), "Mapito" ("Paths") by Bahati Bukuku (from her album *Yashinde Mapito*), and "Nipe Uvumilivu" ("Give Me Endurance") by Rose Muhando (from her album *Uwe Macho*).

Mercy Nyagwaswa: Mama (Mother I Thank You)

The first song to be analyzed is "Mama" ("Mother I Thank You") by Mercy Nyagwaswa. Mercy Nyagwaswa is one of the female popular church musicians in Dar es Salaam who perform regularly in popular church music concerts in Dar es Salaam. She rose to fame in 1999 when she sang as a lead singer with the AIC (African Inland Church) Dar es Salaam Choir during the mourning of *Mwalimu* Julius K. Nyerere's death (the first president of Tanzania). The choir's song about the death of *Mwalimu* Nyerere (*Aturukuye*) was broadcast on various radio and television stations. In the year 2004 she recorded and released her first album, *Mbingu Zahubiri*. The song "Mama" is one of the songs in this album. I begin by presenting the lyrics of the song and my English translation. Then I proceed to provide an analysis of the lyrics.

Original Version in Kiswahili	English Translation
Chorus (sung twice):	**Chorus (sung twice):**
Wewe ni jasiri. Mama nakusifu.	You are a brave person. Mother I praise you.
Wewe ni malkia. Mama ninakuimbia.	You are a queen. Mother I sing for you.
Stanza 1:	**Stanza 1:**
Mama yangu ninakushukuru.	My mother, I thank you.
Ulinileta hapa duniani.	You brought me here on earth.
Ulihangaika nikiwa tumboni	You suffered when I was in your womb
miezi tisa uliyonibeba.	during those nine months that you carried me.
Ulisumbuka, ulitaabika.	You were troubled and distressed.
Uliugua, ulihangaika.	You became sick, you were disturbed.
Lakini mwisho ukanizaa.	At last you delivered me.
Kwa uchungu ulivumilia.	You endured pains.
Chorus (sung twice):	**Chorus (sung twice):**
Wewe ni jasiri. Mama nakusifu.	You are a brave person. Mother I praise you.
Wewe ni malkia. Mama ninakuimbia.	You are a queen. Mother I sing for you.
Stanza 2:	**Stanza 2:**
Mama yangu ninakushukuru.	My mother, I thank you.
Ulinitunza niwe na afya njema.	You took care of me so that I became healthy.
Ulisumbuka nikiwa mgonjwa,	You were troubled when I was sick,
hata pia nikiwa mzima.	even when I was in good health.
Ulinilea niwe mtu mwema.	You raised me so that I became a good person
na mambo mengi ulinifundisha.	and you taught me many things.
Siwezi mama kukulipa.	I cannot pay you mother.
Mwenyezi Mungu akubariki.	May God almighty bless you.
Chorus (sung four times):	**Chorus (sung four times):**
C: Wewe ni jasiri.	C: You are a brave person.
L: Mama,	L: Mother,
C: Mama nakusifu.	C: Mother I praise you.
L: Mama,	L: Mother,
C: Wewe ni malkia.	C: You are a queen.
L: Mama,	L: Mother,
C: Mama ninakuimbia.	C: Mother I sing for you.
Coda (sung twice):	**Coda (sung twice):**
Wewe ni jasiri. Mama nakusifu.	You are a brave person. Mother I praise you.
Wewe ni malkia. Mama ninakuimbia.	You are a queen. Mother I sing for you.

A song by Mercy Nyagwaswa available in her album *Mbingu Zahubiri*. The cover of this CD includes the lyrics of all the songs. Therefore, the Kiswahili version of the lyrics is adopted from this CD (my translation).

In this song the singer thanks her *mama* (mother) for a number of reasons. She thanks her mother for bringing her into the world. In particular she acknowledges the pains that her mother experienced during pregnancy and later at delivery. The singer also thanks her mother for taking care of her. The care expressed in this song is twofold: physical care (making sure that she is healthy) and mental care (teaching her many things

including how to be good or kind). The mental care here may be taken to mean socialization, that is, imparting cultural, religious, or moral values that enable a person to live in a society. She highly values these acts, so she says she cannot pay back. So she praises her mother and she asks God to bless her.

The song does not only mention these experiences of a woman, but more importantly, it respects and shows their value. The chorus (which she sings twice before and after the first stanza and twice after the second stanza) and the coda portray these experiences (pregnancy, childbearing, and teaching or socializing her) as heroic acts. The mother is praised for being *jasiri* (a brave person) and *shujaa* (a hero). It is important to note the fact that the Kiswahili words used here, *jasiri* and *shujaa,* do not differentiate between masculine and feminine heroism. The heroism of being pregnant or of bearing a child has the same name, value or status as the heroism of a warrior who fights to defend his or her nation against enemies. In fact, Mercy Nyagwaswa uses the same words, *jasiri* and *shujaa,* in another song (*Cheza*) in which she uses them to describe and praise the heroism of King David who fought against the enemies of the nation of Israelites. I posit that the song dismantles the old myth that "painted" pregnancy or childbearing experiences as sources of women's weakness and consequently a reason for their subordination. Here we may cite a Kikuyu myth that Ngugi wa Thiong'o recounts in his book *The River Between* in which women's pregnancy is portrayed as an expression of their weakness and as a justification for being overthrown, ruled, and denied rights of property (particularly land) ownership (wa Thiong'o 1965: 15).

The scene is in the hills along the Honia River. Waiyaki, a young man, accompanies his father Chege for a walk in which Chege wants to introduce to his son a number of Kikuyu traditions and show him Kikuyu land (now taken by the colonists). He also uses this opportunity to teach him to fight for the land. On their way they see an antelope leaping away from them. Waiyaki is puzzled and remarks: "They see men and run away. Why? Don't they run away from women?" Chege replies by narrating a myth:

> You don't know this! Long ago women used to rule this land and its men. They were harsh and men began to resent their hard hand. So when all the women were pregnant, men came together and overthrew them. Before this, women owned everything. The animal you saw was their goat. But because the women could not manage them, the goats

ran away. They knew women to be weak. So why should they fear them?

And the narrator comments: "It was then Waiyaki understood why his mother owned nothing" (wa Thiong'o 1965: 15).

The myth explains and justifies why men had to overthrow women (because they were harsh). It also explains why this process of overthrowing women was successful (because of pregnancy and weakness). Then it justifies the denial of property ownership to women. Through myths such as this (which is a mental gendered space), a real experience of asymmetrical property ownership in many societies (which is a lived space) is not only justified but also sustained in that the myth is passed from one generation to another. Chege shows Waiyaki not only the land (physical space) that Waiyaki should fight to seize back from the colonists but also the myth (mental space) to ensure that the land remains in the hands of men.

In addition, the woman in Mercy Nyagwaswa's song performs a number of roles including not only childbearing but also teaching or socializing her child. In this case, the song dismantles the wall between the nature/culture and private/public gendered spaces that justifies women's marginalization from taking part in most public affairs such as musical performances as exemplified by our reading of Cook 1998 concerning women being denied the opportunity to play in an orchestra (Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra), because the kitchen is considered to be their place, as conductor von Karajan stated. Since women's lived experiences (marginalization or denial of property ownership) have been shaped by these constructs, the song plays a role in reshaping these experiences.

Bahati Bukuku: Mapito (Paths)

There are songs that address women's difficult experiences: the experiences that are caused by their interaction with a gendered space. In what follows, I analyze a song by Bahati Bukuku, "Mapito" ("Paths"), and show how it deals with women's experiences in a gendered space. Bahati Bukuku, one of the female musicians of *Muziki wa Injili* in Dar es Salaam, rose to fame in 2003 with her album *Yashinde Mapito*, which takes its name from the song "Mapito." The lyrics of the song and my English translation are presented below.

Original Version in Kiswahili	English Translation
Mapito	*Mapito* (Paths)
Mapito ee	*Mapito*
Mapito	*Mapito*
Mapito kweli Mapito	*Mapito* really *Mapito*
Mapito kwa mjane anaponyang'anywa mali ee.	*Mapito* of a widow when wealth is grabbed from her.
Mapito kwa wanandoa wanapofarakana.	*Mapito* of a married couple when they are in conflict.
Mapito kwa wasomi wanapofukuzwa kazi ee.	*Mapito* of educated people when they are retrenched or expelled from work.
Mapito kwa wachumba wanapodanganyana.	*Mapito* of an engaged couple when they cheat each other.
Duniani kuna mapito ambayo mwanadamu anapitia.	The world is full of *mapito* in which a human being passes through.
Kweli mapito yanakatisha tamaa.	Surely *mapito* are demoralizing.
Kweli mapito yanavunja moyo.	Surely *mapito* are heartbreaking.
Haijalishi wewe mapito yako.	It does not matter what kind of *mapito* you are going through.
Wewe ni mjane mama, wamekunyang'anya mali,	If you are a widow, mother, they have grabbed your wealth,
jibu sio kulaumu. Mwamini Yesu.	blaming is not an answer. Believe in Jesus.
Yeye aliyekupa mali airekebishe.	He who gave you wealth will amend (the situation).
Haijalishi mama mapito yako.	It does not matter what kind of *mapito* you are going through mother.
Wewe ni mjane, wamekunyang'anya mali,	If you are a widow and they have grabbed your wealth,
jibu sio kulaumu. Mwamini Yesu.	blaming is not an answer. Believe in Jesus.
Yeye ndiye jibu lako akusaidie	He is your answer to help you.
Vumilia vumilia mama.	Endure, endure mother.
Vumilia vumilia tena umwombe Mungu.	Endure, endure and pray to God.
Vumilia vumilia mama.	Endure, endure mother.
Vumilia vumilia huku ukimwombea Mungu.	Endure, endure and pray to God.
Inakupasa uvumilie mama.	You ought to endure mother.
Inakupasa uvumilie mjane.	You ought to endure widow.
Yawezekana Baba mapito yako ni hiyo ndoa yako inakusumbua.	Father, maybe your *mapito* is your marriage that troubles you.
Yawezekana mama mapito yako ni hiyo ndoa yako inakusumbua.	Mother, maybe your *mapito* is your marriage that troubles you.
Jibu siyo taraka mama.	Divorce is not an answer, mother.
Mwamini Yesu oo.	Believe in Jesus.
Yeye aliyekupa ndoa airekebishe.	He who gave you marriage will amend it.
Yawezekana Baba mapito yako ni hiyo ndoa yako inakusumbua.	Father, maybe your *mapito* is your marriage that troubles you.
Yawezekana mama mapito yako. Ni hiyo ndoa yako inakusumbua.	Mother, maybe your *mapito* is your marriage that troubles you.
Jibu siyo haki sawa.	"Equal rights" is not an answer.
Mwamini Yesu.	Believe in Jesus.
Yeye aliyekupa ndoa airekebishe.	He who gave you marriage will amend it.

Original Version in Kiswahili	**English Translation**
Vumulia vumilia baba.	Endure, endure father.
Vumulia vumilia mama.	Endure, endure mother.
Vumulia vumilia baba.	Endure, endure father.
Vumulia vumilia mama.	Endure, endure mother.
Inakupasa uvumilie mama.	You ought to endure mother.
Inakupasa uvumilie ee aa.	You ought to endure.
Yawezekana baba mapito yako ni maisha magumu yanakusumbua.	It may be your *mapito* father, is that difficult life which troubles you.
Jibu siyo kujiua. Mwamini Yesu.	Suicide is not an answer. Believe in Jesus.
Yeye mtuliza bahari ayarekebishe.	He who calmed the sea will amend it.
Yawezekana mama mapito yako ni maisha magumu yanakusumbua.	It may be your *mapito* mother, is that difficult life which troubles you.
Usikate tama. Mwamini Yesu ee.	Do not lose hope. Believe in Jesus.
Yeye ndiye jibu lako. Atarekebisha.	He is your answer. He will amend it.
Inakupasa umwombe Mungu.	You have to pray to God.
Inakupasa umwombe Mungu.	You have to pray to God.
Mwombe Mungu.	Pray to God.
Mwombe Mungu.	Pray to God.
Haijalishi kaka mapito yako	It doesn't matter whether your *mapito* brother
ni huyo mchumba amekudanganya.	is that your fiancée has deceived you.
Yawezekana dada mapito yako	It doesn't matter whether your *mapito* sister
ni huyo mchumba amekurubuni.	is that your fiancé has deceived you.
Usikate tamaa. Mwamini Yesu ee.	Do not lose hope. Believe in Jesus.
Kumbuka, mume mwema hutoka kwa Mungu.	Remember, a good/kind husband comes from God.
Kumbuka mke mwema hutoka kwa Mungu.	Remember, a good/kind wife comes from God.
Acha tama. Wewe mwombe Mungu (sic).	Don't lose hope. Pray to God.
Vumilia huku ukimwomba Mungu.	Endure while you pray to God.
Inakupasa uvumilie kaka.	You ought to endure brother.
Inakupasa uvumilie dada.	You ought to endure sister.
Vumilia vumilia tena umwombe Mungu.	Endure and pray to God.
Vumilia vumilia tena umwombe Mungu.	Endure and pray to God.
Inakupasa uvumilie kaka.	You ought to endure brother.
Inakupasa uvumilie dada.	You ought to endure sister.
Vumilia vumilia baba.	Endure, endure father.
Vumilia vumilia mama.	Endure, endure mother
Inakupasa uvumilie ee.	You ought to endure.
Inakupasa uvumilie ee.	You ought to endure.
Vumilia vumilia kaka.	You ought to endure brother.
Vumilia vumilia dada.	You ought to endure sister.
Inakupasa uvumilie ee.	You ought to endure.
Inakupasa uvumilie ee aa.	You ought to endure.

A song by Bahati Bukuku available in her album *Yashinde Mapito* (my translation)

My first attempt to translate the title of this song, "Mapito," led me to a phrase: difficult experiences. "Is this not an interpretation of the metaphor in the title?" I asked myself. The word *mapito* is not a formal one and it does not have an entry in a dictionary (TUKI 2001). Literally, the term means paths or

ways, especially those used by people who walk on foot. It is derived from the Kiswahili verb *pita*, which means pass. It is synonymous with the Kiswahili word *njia*, which is used formally. However, in most cases the term *mapito* is used in its metaphorical context. Recalling my first attempt to translate the title, I am reminded of an observation that Friedrich Nietzsche makes in his article, "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense," that after a long usage a metaphor is conceptualized as a concept and what we take to be a concept, he writes, "is nevertheless merely the *residue of a metaphor*, and that the illusion which is involved in artistic transference of a nerve stimulus into images is, if not the mother, then the grandmother of every concept" (2000: 57, emphasis original). Bahati Bukuku begins the song "Mapito" by defining the term in its metaphorical context. After singing the word five times, she puts it in four contexts. She says: *Mjane* (a widow) is in *mapito* when properties are grabbed from her; a married couple is in *mapito* when they are in conflict against each other; educated people are in *mapito* when they are retrenched or expelled from work; and an engaged couple are in *mapito* when they cheat one another. Then she comments: "The world is full of *mapito* in which a human being passes through" and that these *mapito* are demoralizing and heartbreaking.

This process of defining *mapito* in a video of this song is undertaken by using two types of actions. First, there are those *matendo* (actions) performed by the singers, which are part of the performance of the song. Bahati Bukuku, the lead singer and other singers (backing vocalists) dance while they put their hands on their chests and make their faces look gloomy. I interpret this as a sign of sorrow and sympathy for the people who suffer from the various experiences they mention in the song. In addition, Bukuku shows and touches the ring on her ring finger when she sings about the *mapito* of the engaged couple who cheat one another. Second, there are those actions that are enacted in the style of a play or a movie. When Bukuku sings about the *mapito* of educated people being retrenched or expelled from work, we see a man in the office working on a computer. Then another man comes in, he gives a letter to the first man and he leaves. The first man opens the letter, he reads it silently and then he angrily throws it down and confusedly stands up. Since we hear the lyrics of the song, we believe that the letter is a notification of his retrenchment or dismissal from work. Similarly, when Bukuku sings about the *mapito* of a married couple who are in conflict with each other, we see a man carrying a stick and chasing a woman who struggles to run away from him. Again, by listening to the words of the song at this section we perceive that it is a husband who is abusing his wife.

Let me pause here for a while and examine the power asymmetry in this family conflict. When we listen to the words of this song without a video presentation we may not be able to perceive the gender asymmetry between a husband and a wife. I posit that it is a normal thing for people to have conflicting or opposing ideas on some matters. As a Kiswahili saying goes: *Vikombe viwili vikiwa pamoja havikosi kugongana* (literally, when two cups are placed at the same place no wonder they will clash). The saying is normally used to imply the possibility of conflict or disagreement among people who happen to live together for some time. One uses it when leaving the persons he or she has stayed with for a given period of time, as a way of asking for forgiveness in case there was any collision even when one does not remember any incident of disagreement with them. Married persons are not exceptional in this regard. Focusing on family conflict in this song, two questions arise: Must a conflict or disagreement be solved or negotiated in a manner in which power is asymmetrical? Must it be solved with the use of force (stick)? The video presents this *mapito* as an asymmetrically gendered one. It is a husband who chases his wife using a stick. To re-contextualize Foucault's terminology, the stick and the force used by a man in this conflict seem to me to be a "technology" of gender subjugation, suppression, and domination through which a husband seizes power in a family (Foucault 1994, 1997). It is a "technology" similar to that used by an armed robber or a hijacker, to whom one is forced to surrender anything in order to save one's life. It is important to note the role of mental gendered space here. Insofar as the users of this "technology" are informed by a gendered mental space (beliefs in men's supremacy over women), this "technology" is used by men to seize power over women. Therefore, the *mapito* in this family conflict should be understood to be bad experiences or sufferings on the part of a wife.

After this exposition, the song deals with a few *mapito* in some detail, including the *mapito* of an engaged couple who cheat one another, the *mapito* of a married couple who are in conflict, and the *mapito* of a widow (*mjane*) whose belongings have been grabbed. Let me comment on the last type of *mapito* here.

The Kiswahili word *mjane* for a widow first needs a comment. A dictionary describes *mjane* as: 1. widow, widower. 2. unmarried person, bachelor, spinster (TUKI 2001). Normally, people use this word with the first definition in mind, but in both definitions the term applies to either males or females. However, in practice the term is commonly used to refer to a woman whose husband has died. Normally, people suffer the loss of their

relatives (a brother, a sister, a wife or a child). But being a widow (*mjane*) is a double suffering. It means not only losing a spouse but also suffering gender oppression. It is the latter problem that becomes a social and a gender problem, particularly when losing a husband means losing the ownership of property. The life after the loss of a husband becomes a miserable one no matter how much wealth the couple has accumulated.

The song does not end with revealing these *mapito*. It suggests some solutions to the problems highlighted. The solutions are rooted within a Christian faith in God. The song says that a person who is in *mapito* should not only endure but also should believe in Jesus and pray to God, since God is the provider of anything that one loses such as wealth (for a person like our *mjane*) and marriage (for a woman who has been chased away from her husband and home). It says that God is able to amend the situations in which people find themselves. In the video, we see Bukuku at the seashore and she points to the sea when she sings that God is a solution for all *mapito* since He is the same God who calmed the storms in the sea. We can re-contextualize here the message of Steve Biko who, when writing about Black Consciousness and Black Theology, points out that within Christianity God is considered to be a God who fights for the oppressed and who never lets a lie go unchallenged (Biko 2002: 83). In short, He is a God that responds to the needs and problems of His people. With this belief the song discourages two commonly used ways of solving family matters. It discourages demands for equal rights and divorce as solutions for family conflicts. Only God, the song says, is a solution for these problems.

It is not the case that the situation seems to be desirable. It is also not the case that the song advises people to accept and continue to live with the problem. Conversely, the situation is portrayed as a problem that needs to be solved. However, the solution offered here is deeply rooted within a Christian faith in which a fight against the problem has to be a spiritual one. That is to say, it has to be fought through prayer, faith, and endurance and that God the fighter will fight for the oppressed and solve the problems.

I would like to note the gendered nature of this solution to the problem of *wajane* (widows) highlighted earlier. It is normally said that God is a husband of *wajane* (widows) and a father of orphans. The song by Rose Muhando (discussed in the next subsections) also explicitly declares this message. God a husband of widows! In order not to perceive this message as another way of dismantling the wall between binary opposition of God and human beings, we need to grasp its metaphorical nature. The metaphor aims to portray God as a provider of needs to the needy. However, this

interpretation raises two questions related to the politics of gendered space. First, if calling God a husband of widows is just a metaphor (which we believe it is, insofar as the wall between God and human beings in Christianity is still in place), why is God not portrayed as a wife of the husbands who lose their wives? Second, if calling God a father of orphans is just a metaphor, why is God not portrayed as a mother of orphans (or at least of those who lose their mothers)?

There are two possible explanations for the above questions. First, according to a Christian tradition, God is a male God and therefore it sounds like an insult calling Him a wife or a mother, just as is the case when one calls a woman a "man" or a man a "woman." Second, and it is this that I want to insist upon in relation to this song, when men lose their wives, they do not experience problems like those experienced by wives who lose their husbands. The relatives of a wife do not grab properties from a husband who loses his wife. Hence, it is the wives who lose their husbands who need God as a husband, since "husband" in this context means someone with properties and a provider of family needs. Children who lose their parents need God who is a father, since "father" means someone with properties and a provider of family needs. In this context, they do not need God as a mother, since "mother" means someone who does not own properties or who is dispossessed of her belongings.

This discussion reveals that beneath the surface layer of these metaphors (God, a husband of widows and God, a father of orphans) there is a gendered social context from which the metaphors take their reference. A metaphor is a gendered mental space that, on the one hand, expresses a gendered lived space or experience, and on the other hand, it informs or challenges the gendered lived space.

Rose Muhando: Nipe Uvumilivu (Give Me Endurance)

Another song that deals with women's experiences in a gendered space is "Nipe Uvumilivu" ("Give Me Endurance") by Rose Muhando. Recalling her statement during an interview with a newspaper reporter, "in that second song, "Bwana Nipe Uvumilivu" ("Lord Give Me Endurance"), I really sang my own life," I find that it is important to read this song along with the story about her life that she narrated during the previously mentioned interview. The first part of this interview was published in *Nyakati* of February 6–12, 2005 and the second part was published in the same newspaper a week later (February 13–19, 2005). The song is now in her album

Uwe Macho. The album was first released as an audio cassette and CD. Later, the video cassette of this album was also released. For this reason, the discussion of this song integrates three narratives of Muhando's life history; that is, the story told through the lyrics of the song, the story told through a video presentation of this song, and the story told through a newspaper interview. It should be noted here that in all these three cases, the story is mediated by the techniques, aesthetics, and conventions of the medium in which it is told. However, it is also interesting to note how Muhando interacts with these media (with their powers, techniques, aesthetics, and conventions) to tell her story. In addition, this reading is also another layer of the mediation that is fashioned by academic conventions and my own manner of analysis and writing. Therefore, the reader should take into consideration all these factors.

The lyrics of the song and my English translation are as follows:

Original Version in Kiswahili	**English Translation**
Stanza 1:	**Stanza 1:**
Nimekukimbilia wewe Bwana	I have taken refuge in (run to) you Lord
mwamba wangu na ngome yangu.	my rock and my fortress.
Nakuinulia macho yangu.	I lift up my eyes to you.
Baba Mungu naja kwako.	God, Father I come to you
Nainua mikono yangu juu.	I lift up my hands.
Nahitaji msaada wako.	I need your help.
Magonjwa mengi yamenitesa.	Many diseases have tormented me.
Yesu nipe uvumilivu.	Jesus, give me endurance.
Dhiki nyingi zimenisonga.	I am overwhelmed by sufferings.
Baba nipe uvumilivu.	Father, give endurance.
Watoto wangu wanahangaika.	My children are in troubles.
Yesu nipe uvumilivu.	Jesus, give me endurance.
Walonizalisha wamenikimbia.	The fathers of my children have run away from me.
Baba nipe uvumilivu.	Father, give endurance.
Maisha yangu yamo mashakani.	My life is uncertain.
Baba nipe uvumilivu.	Father, give endurance.
Chorus:	**Chorus:**
Baba Baba,	Father, Father,
Mungu nipe uvumilivu.	God, give me endurance.
Baba Baba oo,	Father, Father,
Mungu nipe uvumilivu.	God, give me endurance.
Bwana Bwana ii,	Lord, Lord,
Yesu nipe uvumilivu.	Jesus, give me endurance.
Bwana Bwana,	Lord, Lord,
Nipe uvumilivu.	Give me endurance.
Stanza 2:	**Stanza 2:**
Hata ndugu zangu wamenigeuka.	Even my relatives have turned away from me.
Nahitaji faraja yako.	I need your comfort.
Wamejitenga mbali nami.	They have distanced themselves from me.

Original Version in Kiswahili	**English Translation**
Nasogea kitini pako.	I come nearer to you (to your chair).
Mbele yangu kuna kiza kubwa.	There is a deep darkness ahead of me.
Ndiwe mwanga wa njia zangu.	You are the light of my ways.
Wewe ni Bwana mume wa wajane.	Lord, you are a husband of widows
Yesu nipe uvumilivu.	Jesus, give me endurance.
Tena wewe ni baba wa yatima.	Also you are a father of orphans.
Baba nipe uvumilivu.	Father, give me endurance.
Pia wewe ni Mungu wa maskini.	And you are a God of the poor.
Yesu nipe uvumilivu.	Jesus, give me endurance.
Chorus:	**Chorus:**
Baba Baba,	Father, Father,
Mungu nipe uvumilivu.	God, give me endurance.
Baba Baba oo,	Father, Father,
Mungu nipe uvumilivu.	God, give me endurance.
Bwana Bwana ii,	Lord, Lord,
Yesu nipe uvumilivu.	Jesus, give me endurance.
Bwana Bwana,	Lord, Lord,
Nipe uvumilivu.	Give me endurance.
Stanza 3:	**Stanza 3:**
Adui zangu wamenizunguka.	My enemies have surrounded me.
Wanataka roho yangu.	They want my soul.
Wamenitegea mitego mingi.	They have set many traps.
Wanawinda roho yangu.	They hunt my soul.
Nafsi yangu inazimia.	My soul freezes.
Njoo hima. Nisaidie.	Come urgently. Help/rescue me.
Chorus:	**Chorus:**
Baba Baba,	Father, Father,
Mungu nipe uvumilivu.	God, give me endurance.
Baba Baba oo,	Father, Father,
Mungu nipe uvumilivu.	God, give me endurance.
Bwana Bwana ii,	Lord, Lord,
Yesu nipe uvumilivu.	Jesus, give me endurance.
Bwana Bwana,	Lord, Lord,
Nipe uvumilivu.	Give me endurance.
Spoken words (spoken simultaneously with the singing of the above chorus):	**Spoken words** (spoken simultaneously with the singing of the above chorus):
Nakuhitaji Yehova Shalom	I need you Jehovah Shalom.
Mungu uliyaketi mahali pa juu.	God who dwells on high.
Wewe mume wa wajane.	You are a husband of widows.
Wewe ni Mungu wa yatima.	You are a God of orphans.
Wewe uliyeketi na maserafi na makerubi.	You who sit with the Cherubs and Seraphs [angels].
Wakati wa msaada wangu.	The time of my help.
Oo ndiwe mwanga wa njia zangu.	You are the light of my ways.
Oo unipendaye, ninakimbilia kwako.	You who love me, I take refuge in you/I run to you.
Oo tazama watoto wako Bwana.	Lord, Look at your children.
Unitazame hata mimi Yesu.	Look even at me Jesus.
Oo Yee.	Oo Yee.
Oo nakupenda.	I love you.
Oo nakuhitaji.	I need you.
Oo mfalme wangu.	

Original Version in Kiswahili	English Translation
Oo haleluya.	My King.
Oo nakupenda Yesu.	Hallelujah.
Oo ninakukimbilia Bwana.	I love you Jesus.
Unisitiri na adui zangu.	I take refuge in you Lord/ I run to you Lord.
Wewe umekuwa ngome yangu	Protect/hide me from my enemies.
siku zote za maisha yangu	You are my fortress
Uliwavusha wana wa Israel bahari ya shamu.	during all the days of my life.
Univushe nami katika jaribu langu.	You took the Israelites across the Red Sea.
Oo haleluya.	Take me across my temptation.
Oo haleluya.	Hallelujah.

A song by Rose Muhando available in her album *Uwe Macho* (my translation).

In the video, the song begins with a family conflict: a man (a husband) carries a stick and chases a woman (his wife) who carries a baby (maybe two years of age). He also chases away three other children who run away with the woman. The chasing is brutal, that is, the man pushes the woman who falls down with the baby. He lifts up the stick (almost beating her), which makes the woman stand up quickly and run away. During this introductory section there is no music background but there are other sounds. Perhaps they are a different kind of music. We hear the sound of the woman falling on the ground, the sounds of steps and some cries of the children. In addition, when the woman falls down and when the man pushes the children out of the house, we hear the voices of some people from a distance who shout sorrowfully, *oo jamani!* (my goodness!). The scene ends as the woman and the children disappear out of the frame and the man speaks angrily, *nendeni, toka* (an impolite way of telling someone to leave). Then the instrumental introduction begins (in the audio cassette and CD this is the first part). During this section in the video we see the woman walking with four children on a path. They are carrying some loaded baskets with them.

When she starts to sing we see her sitting down outside a little hut with the four children (holding one in her arms and the others sitting close to her). She begins by addressing God saying that she has run to Him or taken refuge in Him since the Lord is her rock and her fortress. She sees God as the only help so she asks Him to help her. The reason for this need of help, as the opening scene in the video suggests, is that she has been passing through "*mapito*" (to use a term that a newspaper reporter uses in the same way as used in the previous song by Bahati Bukuku). She mentions a number of various tribulations that she and her children have been experiencing including diseases and *dhiki* (sufferings or distress) caused by the lack of

basic needs after being neglected by the fathers of her children and the parents of these men. These *mapito* make her feel that her life has no bright future. As Muhando puts it, "there is deep darkness ahead of me."

In the newspaper interview she describes these experiences in more detail. She says that when she was a little girl of six years she began to experience pains in her head which had a swelling and some wounds. "It was as if I had two heads," she says. She also narrates how she was rejected and abandoned not only by the fathers of her children (when they found that she was pregnant) but also by the parents of these men. She says that two of those men were pastors' sons and the pastors did not want her pregnancies to scandalize their pastoral families. As she explains:

> Two of my children were fathered by pastors' sons. Unfortunately, both of them and their parents sacrificed (abandoned) me and threw me out like rubbish in order to protect their children. That is why I ask God to give me endurance. . .. [T]hey sacrificed (rejected) me in order to protect the honour of their families (*Nyakati* of February 6–12, 2005 page 9, my translation).

Let me note the difficulty I faced in translating this passage. Rose Muhando uses a phrase "*walinitoa muhanga*" [sic]. In the above passage I have translated it as "they sacrificed me." I have also provided alternative translations as "they abandoned me" or "they rejected me" (perhaps this translation is influenced by the lyrics of the song in which she says that the fathers of her children ran away from her). However, I find these (alternative) translations inadequate for expressing the sentiments in her Kiswahili phrase "*walinitoa muhanga*." The term *muhanga,* used in its religious context, refers to a blood sacrifice in which an animal is slain particularly for a purification ritual. In Christianity, the death of Jesus at the cross and his blood are considered to be a sacrifice that purifies the sins of those who believe in Him. He suffered not for His own sins but for the sins of other people so that they become saved. When used in the context of Muhando's narrative, it sounds as though by rejecting or abandoning her and the pregnancies, those fathers of her children and their parents sacrificed Rose Muhando. She was made a "sacrifice" to hide or protect the families of those pastors. For the honor of those families she was, to use her own words, "thrown out like rubbish." In short, while I am convinced that the phrase *walinitoa muhanga* is used metaphorically to mean "they rejected or abandoned me," I also see in her phrase *walinitoa muhanga* the sentiments that are not captured in the

alternative translations I have provided: "they rejected or abandoned me." The transference that takes place between these layers of metaphor loses some of the sentiments that I consider important in understanding the story of Rose Muhando, that is, being forced to suffer for other people's honor.

In this incident the interaction between religious space and gendered space seems to play a significant role in her suffering. According to Christian teachings, being pregnant outside marriage is considered a sin. This is also the case with many traditional cultures in Tanzania. Rose Muhando states this in the interview. She says: "Although I was a sinner for bearing children out of marriage because of being tempted and life hardships, those pastors sacrificed me. . ." (*Nyakati* February 6–12, 2005: 9). Given this background, pregnancy outside this officially recognized system or institution (as marriage is normally referred to in Christian teachings) seems to be a social problem, a social deviation, and hence often people would like to escape from it. When a girl becomes pregnant in this situation, a school would expel her, her parents would chase her away from home (telling her to go to the man who impregnated her), the man involved would also reject her (normally for fear of shame and of the expenses of taking care of her), and in the church the terminology *amejitenga* (she has excluded herself from the church) is used to show that she is a deviant. Although she may not be barred from attending Sunday services, normally the church authorities ensure that she does not share in Holy Communion. I am not aware of any incident of a pregnant girl (under these circumstances) before she delivers a child being allowed to repent and continue to share Holy Communion (as is normally the case with other kinds of sins). In short, when a girl becomes pregnant outside marriage she becomes an outcast and is forced to live in the spaces of outcasts. Let me once again re-contextualize Foucault's terminology for a place of social deviants or outcasts. Foucault uses a terminology "heterotopias of deviation" to refer to places reserved for those individuals "whose behaviour is deviant with respect to the mean or the required norm." Foucault has in mind places like rest homes, psychiatric hospitals, and prisons (1994: 180). These are concrete physical spaces. Sometimes the girls I am discussing here are allowed to live in normal physical spaces (as is the case with the church mentioned above) and sometimes even at home with their parents (as was the case with Rose Muhando). However, they continue to be treated as outcasts or deviants. For this reason, following Foucault, I would like to refer to these psychological, spiritual, or mental spaces in which they are placed as "mental heterotopias of deviation." Therefore, I call "physical heterotopias of deviation" those places where they go to after being

physically dislocated; for example, when a girl is forced to leave her home, school, or church. These places in Tanzania normally include the houses of relatives or other people (good Samaritans) who may feel pity for the girl and decide to allow her to stay in their houses.

Muhando asks God's help since she believes that only God is a rock, a fortress, or a refuge; in short, a place where an outcast or a social deviant (in our case, a girl who becomes pregnant out of marriage) can run to without feeling that she is in mental or physical "heterotopias of deviation." So she asks God to give her endurance against all the distress she faces, she asks God to comfort her for the sorrows and pains she suffers, she asks God to be a light against a deep darkness ahead of her, and she asks God to be an immediate savior to rescue her when she is surrounded by enemies and when she faces temptations. In most parts of the song when she mentions a problem, then (in the sentence that follows) she mentions a need for God to be a solution to the problem mentioned (see stanzas 1and 2). Let me quote a few lines from the song to illustrate the point.

> Even my relatives have *turned away* from me.
> *I need your comfort.*
> They have *distanced themselves* from me.
> *I come nearer to you* (to your chair).
> There is a *deep darkness* ahead of me.
> You are the *light of my ways* (my emphasis).

The metaphor of light seems to play two functions in this song. First, as noted above, there is darkness ahead of her. This may be understood to mean that the future seems to be uncertain due to the lack of financial security and social neglect or exclusion. God the light, seems to be a provider of both financial security and spiritual refuge. I have argued above that this spiritual refuge transforms the experience of mental "heterotopias of deviation" into mental spaces where one feels at home. In other words, it accommodates and cares for those who have been "thrown out like rubbish," to borrow a phrase from Rose Muhando. Second, since she sings that God is the light of her ways, God the light seems to be a provider of guidance or directions in her life; that is, to guide her thinking and actions according to His will.

In addition, God is believed to be a solution for the problems of diseases (and He is portrayed so in this song). In a newspaper interview Rose Muhando describes how she became healed from her serious disease at the age of nine, which she had suffered for three years. Before then she, like

her parents, was a Muslim. She says that the healing was a miraculous one and that the miracle came from Jesus. Let me quote her reply to the reporter's question: "*Sasa Yesu alikuokoaje*?" (Now how did Jesus save you?).

> One day when I was sleeping something marvellous happened to me. A great light gleamed to the whole house in which we were living and everyone saw it. And we all, even my parents, heard a voice saying: *Bwana Yesu amekuhurumia* (Lord Jesus has granted mercy on you). After a little while we went back to sleep. In the morning I asked my mother about Jesus who had granted mercy on me but she didn't explain it adequately.
>
> From that day on, the swelling was healing [on the head], the wounds were becoming better and after some time I discovered that I had been healed. But the question that continued to disturb me was: Who is this Jesus? I didn't know anything about Jesus. . .. One day when I was on my way and asking myself, that voice came again. I decided to find out the truth. So I went to the Anglican Church at Dumila [in Dodoma] and I explained this incident to the pastor. Then I was baptized and became a Christian.

When asked if her Muslim parents had any objection to her being baptized, she said:

> My parents did not have any objection because they saw everything in my life and I believe that they knew about Jesus when I was healed but they were not ready to explain it to me, maybe because of their Islamic faith (Rose Muhando's interview *Nyakati* February 6–12, 2005: 9, my translation).

Since God seems to be a solution to all problems, such as financial, social, and health problems, He is portrayed in this song as a husband of widows, a father of orphans, and a God of the poor. A comment has already been made in my analysis of the previous song, Bukuku's "Mapito," about the gendered nature of the first two metaphors. However, two observations can be added in relation to this song and Muhando's story. First, Rose Muhando uses both metaphors in her prayer to ask for God's help; that is, during her *mapito* she considers herself to be both a widow and an orphan. Since she was abandoned (thrown out) by the parents of the fathers of her children she

became like an orphan (without parents to take care of her). Since she was abandoned by the fathers of her children she became like a widow (without a husband to take care of her and the children). I evoke the gendered meaning of "husband" and "father" I discussed earlier; since "husband" and "father" are synonymous with the owner of properties and provider of daily needs, she needed God who is a "husband" and God who is a "father." She did not need a God who is a "mother." The reason is that in the gendered space expressed in this song, being a "mother" means being denied the right to property ownership and being chased out with a stick.

Second, let me note the interaction between various layers of gendered space in Muhando's narrative. The mental gendered space, which is itself informed by religious teachings, cultural norms, and sometimes even government laws, influences the lived gendered space, that is, the real experiences of gender such as marginalization, oppression, subjugation, and lack of daily needs, among other experiences. Similarly, the mental gendered space sometimes causes people to be physically dislocated to "physical heterotopias of deviation." This dislocation is a lived space; that is, an experience of physical marginalization or exclusion. However, it should also be pointed out that, on the other hand, the mental space that is informed by religious teachings and other cultural moral values provides a refuge for marginalized persons. A belief in God, for example, leads "good Samaritans" to accommodate the pregnant girls who are thrown out. The belief in God's forgiveness makes one feel that a return to normal religious space is possible no matter what sin one commits.

Returning to the issue I began with (i.e., Rose Muhando's interaction with three kinds of media in telling this story about her life), while all the narratives are similar in many respects with regard to major incidents in her life, one notices a few differences or contradictions. While in her newspaper story, she says she has three children and she mentions the names of all the three children, in the video she is seen to have four of them. Similarly, while in the video we see her in conflict with only one man who chases her and the children from the house (which leads us to think that the husband is chasing his wife), in the newspaper interview she says she had been abandoned by three men (the three fathers of her children) and that she was not married (i.e., none of the three men became her husband as the video may make us believe). However, as I have pointed out, these media (including individual directors or reporters) have their techniques, aesthetics, and conventions with which she had to interact in order to tell her story. We may think of the need for one antagonist and a protagonist in movies and other dramatic works. For

this reason, we should not be surprised to have one man as the antagonist of her, the hero. We may also think of the need to make the movie or a video dramatic. Thus the family conflict is made more bold by her "playing" the part of a wife and mother of four children. In short, while I am highlighting the influence of media in shaping her story and our reaction to it, I am also underscoring her creative interaction with these media (with all their powers, aesthetics, and conventions, sometimes so rigid as to bend facts) to let her story out. Of course, it may be the case that through these conventions her message acquires sentimental and critical value that would not be attained by telling the story using plain facts.

Conclusion

This article discusses the relationship between gender, *Muziki wa Injili*, and Christian religious ideas and practices in Dar es Salaam. Using the theory of spatial trialectics, I have argued that the lived gendered space, which includes experiences of gender marginalization, gendered property ownership, and gendered violence (experiences that the songs analyzed address) are shaped to a large extent by the mental gendered space that includes ideas about gender and various forms of communication and representation through which ideas about gender are constructed, expressed, or/and communicated. The reading of the three songs by female musicians in Dar es Salaam illustrates how, on the one hand, mental gendered space is informed by and, on the other hand, itself informs religion, politics, cultural norms, and education among others. In addition, the mental gendered space accords gendered meanings and values to various physical spaces (places and structures), which in turn participate in shaping people's gendered experiences. I have argued that the dismantling of undesirable gendered experiences takes place by transgressing gendered space (as exemplified by Jennifer Mgendi's narrative) and by questioning, negotiating, or contesting mental gendered space in the lyrics of *Muziki wa Injili* (as exemplified by the three songs analyzed in this article).

Finally, it should be noted here that songs that deal with gender issues—and particularly in a personal way (e.g., songs about one's own gendered experiences or about one's mother)—were not commonly performed during church services. This was the case partly because most women musicians operated outside of organized church choirs, that is, by recording their own albums and attending concerts as independent musicians, and partly because most songs performed during church services had to conform to the

yearly church calendar in which these issues hardly became the main topics of the services.

Notes

1. Mercy Nyagwaswa translates the titles of her songs into English (or gives English titles) in the album on a cover of her CD. I have adopted her translation or alternative title here.

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2. Chediel Nyirenda. Personal Communication on January 1, 2005.
3. Jennifer Mgendi. Interviews conducted on September 14, 2004 and on September 18, 2004.
4. Mercy Nyagwaswa. Interview conducted on November 1, 2004.
5. Nestory Ihano. Personal Communication on December 21, 2004.

Discography and Videography

1. Bahati Bukuku
   Audio:
   Yashinde Mapito (Vol. 1). Distributed by GMC Wasanii Promoters Ltd.
   Video:
   Yashinde Mapito (Vol. 1). Distributed by GMC Wasanii Promoters Ltd.
2. Jennifer Mgendi
   Audio:
   Nini? (Vol. 1).
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3. Mercy Nyagwaswa
   Audio:
   Mbingu Zahubiri.

4. Rose Muhando
   Audio:
   Uwe Macho. Distributed by GMC Wasanii Promoters Ltd.
   Video:
   Uwe Macho. Distributed by GMC Wasanii Promoters Ltd.
5. Saint Mary's Choir (Chimuli Anglican Church Dodoma)
   Audio:
   Kitimutimu. Distributed by GMC Wasanii Promoters Ltd.