

A COLLECTION OF 100 TORO (UGANDA) PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS



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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research to parents Roseline Okubo and Nicolas Obuyu and the entire African Proverbs Community.

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INTRODUCTION

Location

The **Toro** also spelled Tooro, are also called Batoro. They speak **Rutooro**. Other alternative names of this language are *Orutoro*, *Rutooro*, *Rutoro*, *Toro*. Rutooro has different dialects, namely, *Tuku*, *Rutuku* and *Hema*. Rutooro has a lexical similarity of 78%–93% with Runyoro language. They are Bantu-speaking people who inhabit the high plateau between Lakes Albert and Edward that is bounded on the west by the Ruwenzori Range in south-western Uganda. Toro lands include rainforest, dense bamboo, papyrus swamps, plains of elephant grass, and the shores of Lakes Albert and Edward.

The Batoro inhabit the districts of Kabarole and Kasese. Their area has been infiltrated by many migrants from other parts of western Uganda, particularly the Bakiga. To their east live the Banyoro; to their north are the Bamba and Bakonjo; to their south-east and west live the Banyankore and to their east live the Baganda.



Myth of Origin

There existed conflicting legends about the Batooro. One legend asserts that the Batooro are indigenous of their land and that they originated from the Batembuzi and the Bagabu who are said to have been pioneer inhabitants and rulers of the earth. Some other traditions assert that the Batooro are related to the Bachwezi and the Babito line. What can best be said is that the Batooro being Bantu originated from the Congo region where the other Bantu groups is said to have originated.

Culture

The Society of the Batooro was divided into the Bairu and the Bahuma and the relationship amongst the two was much of economic activity other than differentiation of class. The Bahuma carried out pastoralism while the Bairu were cultivators. These two groups lived symbiotically with the Bahuma providing milk, meat, hides along with other cattle products while the Bairu provided beer along with other products of agriculture.

Besides their family names, the Batooro like the Banyoro have pet names called *empaako*. These pet names are said to be of Luo origin though the Luo do not use them. *Empaako* was a sign of social identity. When greeting each other, the Batooro use the *empaako*, when people who were related greeted each other, the younger would sit on the lap of the elder. Among the Babiito, the younger would touch the forehead and chin of the elder before announcing the *empaako*.

Marriage occupied an important position in the cultural life of the Batooro man would not be regarded as complete before he got married. Formerly, marriage would be arranged by the parents of the boy and the girl without their knowledge with or without their consent. During the preparations however, the consent of the girl would have to be sought.



A Toro traditional marriage ceremony

A middle-man was usually sought by the boy's side and his role was socially recognized and rewarded. He was known as *Kibonabuko*. He had the duty of making investigations about the character of the girl, her family background and her ability to work. After such ground work was completed, the *kibinabiko* would proceed to secure the girl from her parents on behalf of the boy's family. The *Kibonabuko* would wake up one morning and go to the girl's family and declare his intentions to marry their daughter. He would make the following statement to the father of the girl: "*Sir, I come to you that you should build a house for me. I would like you to be part of my clan; I have come to ask for a wife, the builder of the house.*" The normal response from the girl's father was: "I don't have any child". The *Kibonabuko* would insist that the child was there, and on being asked who exactly he wanted, he would name the girl. If the father consented, the *Kibonabuko* would thankfully kneel down as a sign of appreciation. The next step would be for the boy's family to take beer to the girl's parents for the bride wealth to be fixed.

The bride wealth was normally in the form of cows. It varied between the Bahuma and the Bairu. For the Bahuma, it ranged from six to twenty cows. For the Bairu, the ceiling was about eight cows. They would often make payments in goats and hoes. All or part of the bride wealth would be received during a ceremony known as *Okujuka*. It was a very important ceremony involving a lot of eating, drinking and merry making. Thereafter, the young man's family could send bark cloth and some skins for the bride's dress. Meanwhile other formalities would be finalized for the wedding.

On the wedding day, another big feast was organized. The bride would be collected around six or seven o'clock in the evening. Before leaving, she would first perform a ritual of sitting on her parents laps. This ritual was known as *okubukara*. She would then be lifted onto a litter and carried to the bridegroom's home. On arrival, she would perform a ritual of being carried on her parent's in-laws laps. There she would be sprinkled with some herbal water (*endemezi*) to welcome and bless her. Before the feasting started, the bridegroom would go to bed with the bride, to perform another ritual, *okucwa amagita*. Thereafter, the guests were given coffee berries, smoking pipes, beer and later food. If the girl was found to be a virgin during *okucwa amagita*, a gift of a cow or a goat would be sent to her mother to congratulate

her on raising her daughter well. On the third day, the bride's friends and relatives would give her gifts from home. They would come to see where she had been taken. The bride would spend some days in confinement and, at the end of it all, an elaborate ceremony would be held to bring the girl out and to initiate her into the art of cooking and house-keeping. In the event of a divorce, bride wealth would be refunded. However, part of the bride wealth would be retained if the woman had already had some children with her husband.

The Batooro, like their Banyankole neighbours, practiced blood brotherhood, but a man could also make blood brotherhood with a woman. The main ingredients of the ceremony included coffee berries, a new bark-cloth, a knife, two branches of a fig tree and sprouts of a grass called *ejubwe*. The climax of the ceremony was the taking, with coffee berries of one's blood from a cut made just below the navel. Then the two blood brothers would take an oath to behave as real brothers in all respects. Two men and one old woman would usually act as witnesses to the occasion.

The two celebrants would pronounce the following words to each other during the ceremony: *"Brothers fight and shave each other; they cut each other's nails; they beat each other and help each other. If you become dishonest to me your stomach will swell. When come to you with horrible disease, you will not send me away. When I come naked you will not send me away. When I come to your home, I will not go away hungry. We shall not do evil to each other, nor shall our children and clans."*

To convey messages and teach traditional norms and positive behavior to community members who are young, or give warnings and advice, proverbs and wise sayings are used to convey these messages. Sometimes even in settling disputes, the elders of the community may use such sayings. Messages may also be carried through songs and dances, and folklore which make the people recall them easily.

Examples of Toro Proverbs

1. Otaribara enkojo zaawe otakafiire.

Kiswahili: Usihesabu vidonda vyiako kabla hujakufa

French: Ne comptez pas vos cicatrices avant de mourir

English: Do not count you scars before you die

Meaning: No one knows about tomorrow, you should not anticipate too much about what is unknown.

2. Okubuza tibushema.

Kiswahili: Kuuliza sio ujinga

French: Demander n'est pas une stupidité

English: Asking is not stupidity

Meaning: When you ask it does not mean that you are not wise or knowledgeable. Learning is an everyday process.

Religion

The Batooro had a concept of a supreme being Ruhanga. Ruhanga was believed to have created all things. He was believed to be a good and benevolent being who unless wronged could not do harm to the people. However, it was believed that the world was full of evil

doers; evil spirits and sorceress who could employ their magic to undermine Ruhanga and cause disease, misfortune, barrenness, death and droughts or even bad weather.

The Batooro believed that there existed mediums some of whom were agents of the devil while the good ones were agents of Ruhanga. The Batooro also believed in the *Mambwa* cult. Shrines were constructed for the worship of emandwa in every home. The *Mandwa* were usually worshipped and praised by playing of *entimbo* (drums) and trumpets). In the actual process of worship, people would wear skins (*emikako*) knitted with beads and cowrie shells. An important medium of the Mandwa would wear a six centimeter bark-cloth material with horns on the head (*ekisingo*). The whole process of worshiping involved a lot of eating and drinking.

In the event of disease, death or misfortune, a *mufumu* (diviner) would be consulted to interpret the demands of emandwa. Thereafter, appropriate measures would be taken to appease the mandwa. Supplications to the Mandwa were normally effected at night. A man would put fire in front of the house and pronounce his problems to the Mandwa. The language used to in addressing the emandwa was slightly different from the common one used in ordinary parlance. The pronunciation of certain words was slightly altered. Surprisingly; in talking to emandwa the Batooro would use Runyankole terminologies. For instance Omukama was pronounced as *omugabe, okurora, as okureea, omwaana omwerere*, and several others.

Economy

The economy of Bunyoro was partly agricultural and partly pastoral. The Bahuma were agriculturalists while the Bairu were pastoralists. Cows were much valued by both groups and besides providing milk and beef, cattle were a symbol of wealth. The Batooro cultivated millet, sorghum, bananas, peas and a variety of green vegetables. They also had local industries to produce iron complements such as spears, hoes, knives and arrowheads, bark-cloth and salt. Besides, they also had a number of potters who produced a variety of household utensils such as waterpots, beerpots and sauce pots.

The women were good at basket weaving and they produced a wide assortment of basketry such as winnowing trays, plate baskets, bags, harvesting baskets and several baskets for routine household work. The men constructed houses, cleared bushes and hunted wild animals. Certain activities like hunting, and house construction were done on a communal basis. House construction involved eating, drinking and dancing. Batooro built circular huts with grass thatched roofs.



Toro cattle

Political set-up

The Batooro had a centralized system of Government. Toro had until 1830 been a part of Bunyoro. In 1830, Prince Kaboyo declared Toro independent of Bunyoro and recognized it into another Kingdom.

At the head of the Kingdom was a king known as *Omukama*, the first being Kaboyo Kansunsunkwanzi, the actual founder of the Kingdom. He was succeeded by his son Nyika who was in turn succeeded by Kasagama. Kasagama ruled until he was dethroned by Kabalega but was later reinstated in 1891 by Sir Lugard an agent of the imperial British East African Company (IBEAC Co) which was trying to extend British Imperialism to Uganda. The King was hereditary and he had to be from the Babiito dynasty which was ruling Bunyoro. He was assisted by a hierarchy of chiefs and a standing army. But in times of war, all able bodied men would be called upon to serve in the defense of the Kingdom. The chiefly regalia included drums, iron forks, spears, wooden spoons, chairs, crowns, beads, axes and knives.

The county of Mwenge was of particular importance to the Kingdom. It contained a school of political education when Toro was still part of Bunyoro. When Toro broke away from Bunyoro, Mwenge maintained its function. The sons of the Kings were sent to Mwenge to learn the art and the language of government. It is said that there were also special tutors for the king's daughters. When the King's wives were about to give birth, they would be sent to Mwenge. Rebellious princes were also sent to a school in Mwenge and it is perhaps because of the political and social importance of Mwenge that no war was fought in Mwenge.

The Toro Kingdom suffered the same fate as Bunyoro, Buganda and Ankole with the event of republicanism in 1967. However, the institution of Omukama was reinstated in 1993 albeit without its former political and administrative powers. Omukama Olimi Kaboyo was installed as the fifth Omukama of Toro. He reigns as the cultural head of the Batooro.

A COLLECTION OF 100 TORO PROVERBS

1. Banza wayeyerera enju yawe otakagyire kugamba eyabandi okweteyerire

Kiswahili: Kwanza fagia nyumba yako kabla kufagia nyumba ya mtu mwingine.

French: Tout d'abord balayer votre propre maison avant de vous méprisez la maison des autres.

English: First sweep your own house before you despise someone else's.

Meaning: You should not be too fast to judge others before looking at your own actions first.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 7:5

"You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye"

2. Bintu byokubanza nibyo byomugasho munonga

Kiswahili: Kitu cha kwanza nidicho chenye umuhimu sana.

French: La première chose est la plus importante.

English: The first thing is the most important.

Meaning: People always remember the first thing or person who undertook an action.

Biblical Parallel: Psalm 25:7

"Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord!"

3. Bakiri arikurya munonga kusingaho omushuma

Kiswahili: Afadhali anayekula sana kuliko mwizi.

French: Mieux glouton que voleur.

English: Better a glutton than a thief.

Meaning: When left to choose between two evil, it's better to choose the lesser evil.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 23:20

"Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat"

4. Bakuha nyina ekyitinisa naba atakukiha nanyina wondijo muntu

Kiswahili: Mtu ambaye hutua kinyesi kandokndoko ya bara bara hafanyi mara moja pekee.

French: Une personne qui excrète en route ne le fait seulement pas une fois.

English: A person who excretes by the roadside does not just do it once.

Meaning: When you have a bad behavior you occasionally repeat it all the time.

Biblical Parallel: 1 Corinthians 15:33

"Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals."

5. Emihande ebiri ekabuzabuza empisi

Kiswahili: Njia mbili panda zilimchanganya fisi.

French: Deux chemins confond la hyena.

English: Two paths confused the hyena.

Meaning: Always be a decisive person in life and follow your principle in everything you do.

Biblical Parallel: 1 Corinthians 10:21

“You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons”

6. Ebisero byingi ebikukwata ebyenyanja byaba biri omumizi tibikakuzibira kwibika ekisero ekyawe

Kiswahili: Nyavu nyingi majini, haziwezi kukuzuia kuzamisha yako.

French: Trop de panier de pêche dans l'eau ne peut pas vous empêcher de plonger le vôtre.

English: Too many fishing baskets in the water cannot prevent you from dipping yours.

Meaning: In life you should try your luck and don't stop yourself from doing something just because others have done it and may be failed.

Biblical Parallel: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope”

7. Habanyabwengye babiri nibabasa kwotsyeshohora

Kiswahili: Gwiji wawili wanaweza kuchoma inzi.

French: Deux génie rôtiront une mouche facilement.

English: Two geniuses will successfully roast a fly.

Meaning: When people work together they can achieve any problem that facing the community

Biblical Parallel: Ecclesiastes 4:9

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil”

8. Hakenyanja kache tikakahabura ekyenyanja ekyihango

Kiswahili: Samaki mdogo hawezi kumpa mawaitha samaki mkubwa.

French: Un petit poisson ne peut pas conseiller un grand.

English: A small fish cannot advice a big one.

Meaning: An elder is always wise and experienced and there is nothing he has not experienced in life before you as a young boy.

Biblical Parallel: Hebrews 13:7

“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith”

9. Hashabahebwa

Kiswahili: Anaye uliza hupewa.

French: Celui qui demande reçoit.

English: He who asks is given.

Meaning: Whenever you have a need or problem, it's good that you say or ask to fulfill your needs.

Biblical Parallel: Luke 11:9

“And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you”

10. Khurimuntu nayegura omugamba gwe

Kiswahili: Kila mtu huchukuwa mzigo wake.

French: Chaque personne porte son propre fardeau.

English: Each person bears his own burden.

Meaning: If you make mistakes or do something bad, you should always be ready to accept the consequence that come with the decision that you make in life.

Biblical Parallel: Luke 9:23

“And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me”

11. Kikuruga omuka akaza omundijo nibamushuka ebyizi bigubire.

Kiswahili: Mjinga huficha kitakacho mkula baadaye.

French: Le fou caché qui devait le manger ce dernier.

English: The fool concealed that was to eat him latter.

Meaning: A stupid person will always defend or hide someone who at the end will destroy him/her.

Biblical Parallel: Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”

12. Kikirungi kutandiika nobworo kusinga okutandika nobugiga

Kiswahili: Afadhali kuanza ukiwa maskini kuliko kuanza na utajiri.

French: Il est préférable de commencer par la pauvreté plutôt que de la richesse.

English: It is better to begin with poverty rather than riches.

Meaning: It is better to start from down in life as you learn what it takes to be at the top compared to start and finding yourself lowered. You may not survive.

Biblical Parallel: James 1:12

“Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him”

13. Khukazi omuyombi tashemereire kuba nyoko

Kiswahili: Mwanamke anayependa kugombana asikuwe ni mama yako.

French: Une femme querelleuse ne devrait pas arriver à être votre mère.

English: A quarrelsome woman should not happen to be your mother.

Meaning: It takes wisdom to handle your elders who do not have proper manners. You need to too be conscience when dealing with them.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 20:3

“It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife, but every fool will be quarreling”

14. Kurekyera amatungo ge ondiyo nabara empu zaago

Kiswahili: Mtu anayeweka n'gombe wake kwa jirani, huhesabu ngozi pekee.

French: Une personne qui laisse sa fortune avec quelqu'un d'autre aura rien.

English: A person who keeps his heard with someone else count skins.

Meaning: Whenever you are not ready to take responsibility of your wealth, you may lose it to someone else's and become poor because of your irresponsibility.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 18:9

“Whoever is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys”

15. Kubuza tibushema

Kiswahili: Kuuliza sio ujinga.

French: Demander n'est pas une stupidité.

English: Asking is not stupidity.

Meaning: When you ask it does not mean that you are not wise or knowledgeable. Learning is an everyday process.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 21:22

“And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.”

16. Kukuraganisa ekyihuro kyihango nabasa kukwisa enjara

Kiswahili: Mtu anayekuahidi vitu vikubwa anaweza kukuua na njaa.

French: Celui qui te promet une grande portion peut te laisser mourrir de faim.

English: He who promises you bigger share may starve you to death.

Meaning: When someone always promises you of good things, they rarely fulfill their promises.

Biblical Parallel: Romans 14:16

“So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil”

17. Khuzengyerezi arikuruga omuka akaza omundijo nibamushuka ebyizi bigubire

Kiswahili: Mtu anayetembea kutoka nyumba hii hadi nyingine humwagiwa maji chafu.

French: Celui qui de vagabonde de maison en maison projète de l'eau sale à son visage.

English: He who roams from home to home get dirty water spattered on his face.

Meaning: If you are rumor monger, talking about other people from neighbor to neighbor you will find yourself in trouble.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 20:19

“Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with a simple babbling”

18. Khuti murungi nigukurira omumiti endijo

Kiswahili: Mti mzuri hukuwa kati ya ingine.

French: Un bon arbre pousse parmi les autres.

English: A good tree grows among others.

Meaning: If you have good friend or company they will always be of good influenced to your character.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 13:20

“Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm”

19. Khutumwa tashemereire kuribwa

Kiswahili: Mjumbe huwa hapigwi kamwe.

French: un messenger ne doit pas être battu.

English: A messenger should not be beaten.

Meaning: If someone is sent bring to you bad news by someone else, you should not vent your anger on them but the sender.

Biblical Parallel: Acts 3:22

“Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you’”

20. Khushuma tayine biiro makumyana

Kiswahili: Mwizi ana siku arubaini.

French: un voleur a quarante jours.

English: A thief has forty days.

Meaning: If you have bad behavior one day you will get the results of your bad behavior.

Biblical Parallel: John 10:10

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly”

21. Khumonwa murungi niguza kukuyamba kurya nomugabe

Kiswahili: Mdomo na kunena kuzuri kutafanya ukule na Mfalme.

French: Une bonne bouche te fera manger avec un roi.

English: A good mouth will make you eat with King.

Meaning: When you have good behavior, one day it will raise you to a position you never expected.

Biblical Parallel: James 4:10

“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you”

22. Khumuzeyi nakwata omwana wemichwe mibi baba nibarya.

Kiswahili: Mzee hushika mototo mtukutu wakati wa chakula.

French: Le vieux homme attrape l'enfant vilaine pendant le repas.

English: The old man catches the naughty child during meal time.

Meaning: The elder always use their wisdom to solve problems which may appear difficult to the young ones.

Biblical Parallel: Job 12:12

“Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days”

23. Khukono gumwe tigukachiriza enyungu yamizi gukagita ahamutwe

Kiswahili: Mkono mmoja hauwezi kuinua nyungu ya maji kichwani.

French: La main de soi ne soulève le pot à la tête.

English: One hand does not raise the water pot to the head.

Meaning: People need to work together to achieve or find a solution to the problem in a community.

Biblical Parallel: Ecclesiastes 4:9

“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil”

24. Khumukazi arikuruga ahamushija akaza ahandijo naba atine micwe

Kiswahili: Mwanamke anaye toka kwa mbwana mmoja hadi kwa mwingine hana tabia njema.

French: une femme qui change d'un mari à un autre n'a pas de manière.

English: A woman who moves from husband to husband has no manners.

Meaning: The society has values and norms that should be adhered to, anyone who goes against the culture and values exhibit deviant behavior which is not allowed at all.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 30:20

“This is the way of an adulteress: she eats and wipes her mouth and says, “I have done no wrong.”

25. Khumutayayirwa nagobera aha mushenga gwomugyenyi

Kiswahili: Mwenyeji hufaidika kwa sherehe ya mgeni.

French: l'hôte bénéficie de la fête des visiteurs.

English: The host benefits from the visitors feast.

Meaning: When hosting guests, you will have to cook in plenty leading to leftovers which will also enjoy in the delicacy like the visitor did.

Biblical Parallel: Psalm 37:4

“Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart”

26. Khumuti ogukwera ebijuma nigwe gukurekyerwaho amabare

Kiswahili: Mti uliyo na matunda, ndio hutupiwa mawe.

French: Un arbre qui produit des fruits et celui où les pierres sont lancées.

English: A Tree that bears fruits is the one stones are thrown at.

Meaning: When you have potential in life, those who don't want you to succeed will always try to pull you down.

Biblical Parallel: Philippians 4:13

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me”

27. Khumutego gwomuzeyi, nigutegwa omurundi gumwe

Kiswahili: Mtego wa mzee huteguliwa mara moja tu.

French: La piège d'un vieux homme est seulement déclenché une fois.

English: The old man's trap is only triggered once.

Meaning: When you are experienced in life, whatever activity you undertake you do it perfectly.

Biblical Parallel: Job 12:12

“Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days”

28. Khathe ekurebwa nezara akachwamutwe kakurebwa

Kiswahili: Wadudu wanao paa huvutia msichana wa harusi aliyetoroka.

French: Les fourmis volants succombe une future mariée qui a échappé.

English: Flying ants lured a bride who was escaping.

Meaning: When you have good character you always attract good people close to you

Biblical Parallel: Hebrews 10:25

“Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near”

29. Khashura eibanja reero otungye otiine akukukwata ahamukono

Kiswahili: Lipa deni zako ndio usikuwe mfungwa.

French: Paie ce que tu dois et mange avec liberté.

English: Pay what you owe and graze freely.

Meaning: You should always repay and fulfill your promises to avoid any embarrassment in life from others.

Biblical Parallel: Romans 13:7

“Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed”

30. Katakahikyire ahakuza takaruha

Kiswahili: Ongea kuhusu nyati na huenda ikatokea mara hiyo.

French: Parlez le buffle et il peut apparaître soudainement.

English: Talk about the buffalo and it may suddenly appear.

Meaning: This proverb is used in a situation when you are gossiping somebody and they suddenly appear without notice.

Biblical Parallel: Exodus 23:1

“You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness”

31. Menshobi yomwana nibagivunana nyina weye

Kiswahili: Makosa ya mtoto hulaumiwa mama yake.

French: Les erreurs d'un enfant sont imputés à la mere.

English: A child's mistakes are blamed on the mother.

Meaning: The person who spends a lot of time with a child is the mothers, the was she nurtures her children is how they will carry themselves.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 23:13

“Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die”

32. Membwa tekumoka ekaruma

Kiswahili: Mbwa hawezi kubweka na kuuma kwa wakati mmoja.

French: Un chien ne peut pas aboyer et mordre en même temps.

English: A dog cannot bark and bite at the same time.

Meaning: You should always focus on one thing before you do another. You cannot serve two masters at the same time.

Biblical Parallel: Luke 16:13

“No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

33. Meshagama nekira amaizi

Kiswahili: Damu ni mzito kuliko maji.

French: Le sang est plus épais que l'eau.

English: Blood is thicker than water.

Meaning: Despite everything, your family will always be there for you in difficult times.

Biblical Parallel: 1 John 4:20

“If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen”

34. Momurungi timurungi hatariho nkojo mbi.

Kiswahili: Hata mrembo huwa na doa mbaya.

French: Même la jolie n'est pas sans une vilaine cicatrice.

English: Even the pretty one is not without an ugly scar.

Meaning: Everyone has a weakness and no one is perfect.

Biblical Parallel: Ecclesiastes 7:20

"Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins"

35. Momanya akaze komuntu omubwire bwenjara

Kiswahili: Utajua tabia halisi za mtu wakati wa ukame.

French: Vous connaissez le vrai caractère quelqu'un lors de la famine.

English: You know someone true character during famine.

Meaning: When you have a difficult situation in life that's when you will know your true friends.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 10:9

"Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out"

36. Muntu wekitinisa kwakushisha omwoya nibagira ngu abagubiire nibo bagushisha

Kiswahili: Mtu aliyeheshimiwa akichafuwa hewa, mtu asiye heshimiwa ndio huwekewa lawama.

French: Quand une personne respectable pollue l'air, souvent la personne sale est reproché.

English: When a respectable person pollutes the air, often the dirty person is blamed.

Meaning: The society mostly misjudge us depending on the social and economic status that we possess in the society.

Biblical Parallel: John 7:24

"Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

37. Mwana nakura omumuringo gubamukuzamu

Kiswahili: Mtoto hukuwa vile amelelewa.

French: L'enfant grandit dans la façon dont il est élevé.

English: The child grows up in the way he is brought up.

Meaning: Whatever you teach your child is what they will show when they are adults.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 22:6

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it"

38. Mkurinza okukora, okwo okukora nikugaruka kumurinda

Kiswahili: Anaye chelewesha kitendo, bado huwa kinamgonja.

French: Celui qui retarde les actions que l'action l'attend toujours.

English: He who delays actions that action still waits for him.

Meaning: You should always undertake an action when it is required, postponement does not change anything.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 27:1

“Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring”

39. Muntu ayigusi takatechera abiine enjara

Kiswahili: Mtu aliyeshiba hawezi kumpikia aliye na njaa.

French: Une personne rassasié, ne cuisinera pas pour les faims.

English: A person who is satisfied will not cook for the hungry.

Meaning: When you have never faced with a certain problem, you may not understand the problem of another person.

Biblical Parallel: Philippians 2:3-4

“Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others”

40. Mkuririra ekyeye tibakamutanga

Kiswahili: Anaye omboleza mtu wake hazuiwi.

French: Celui qui pleure à cause de son propre n'est pas stoppé.

English: He who mourns his own is not stopped.

Meaning: Whenever someone is in bad situation, do not stop them from crying but comfort them.

Biblical Parallel: Psalm 119:76

“Let your steadfast love comfort me according to your promise to your servant”

41. Muntu wenjaara tibakamusindiika omukitara

Kiswahili: Mtu aliye na njaa hatumwi kwenye gala.

French: Un homme qui meurt de faim ne doit pas être envoyé au granaire.

English: A hungry man is never sent to the granary.

Meaning: Someone who has a problem cannot be trusted to solve it by him/herself. You should try and help when you are in a position to help.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 19:17

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed”

42. Muntu nabanza yakwetegyereza atakakwetsire kumutayayira

Kiswahili: Mtu hukuchunguza kwanza kabla ya kukualika kwake.

French: Une personne t'observe toujours avant de t'inviter.

English: A person will always observe you before he invites you.

Meaning: Before you allow any person to become your friend and know your deepest secret you must know their behavior if they are acceptable to you.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 18:24

“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother”

43. Muntu atari baaro nobasa kugyira ngu ayine emichwe mirungi.

Kiswahili: Mtu ambaye sio bwana yako unaweza kusema ni mwenye heshima.

French: Une personne qui n'est pas votre mari, vous pourriez le dire qu'il est poli.

English: A person who is not your husband you may say he is polite.

Meaning: If you do not know a person very well, you may misjudge them of be fooled by their first expression.

Biblical Parallel: John 7:24

“Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”

44. Mkurime ekyina namaririza ariwe akyirimu

Kiswahili: Anayechimba shimo hujipata ameingia mwenyewe.

French: Une personne qui fait un trou, arrive a être dans le meme trou.

English: A person who digs a hole ends up in it himself.

Meaning: If you plan something bad for your friend or neighbor, you may end up being the one who get hurt instead of them.

Biblical Parallel: Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”

45. Mtakahikyire ahakuza takaruha

Kiswahili: Mtu ambaye hajafika mwisho wa safari yake huwa hachoki.

French: Celui qui n'a pas encore atteint sa destination ne sera jamais fatigué.

English: He who has not reached his destination can never get tired.

Meaning: Whenever you are in need of something, you can always work-hard until you get what you need.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 13:4

“The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied”

46. Mtakuha nyina ekyitinisa naba atakukiha nanyina wondijo muntu

Kiswahili: Asiye heshimu mama yake hawezi kuheshimu mama ya mtu mwingine.

French: Celui qui ne respecte pas sa propre mère ne peut pas respecter la mère d'une autre.

English: He who does not respect his own mother cannot respect another person's mother.

Meaning: When you do not value someone who is close to you, it is rarely that you will value your neighbor.

Biblical Parallel: Colossians 3:20

“Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord”

47. Mkukurisa naba nakutegyeka

Kiswahili: Anayekulisha hukutawala.

French: Celui qui vous nourrit vous contrôle.

English: He who feeds you controls you.

Meaning: Whenever you have anyone who takes care of you, you always obey their command and instructions.

Biblical Parallel: Ephesians 6:1

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right”

48. Mwamani najuma mama wawe niwe oriho aho

Kiswahili: Mtu aliye na nguvu kukushindai humtusi mama yako ukiwa hapo.

French: Une personne puissante abusera ta mere en ta presence.

English: A stronger person abuses your mother in your presence.

Meaning: When someone has power over you, they will always control you.

Biblical Parallel: Psalm 9:9

“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble”

49. Muchezi takagaruka omuka nengaro nsha

Kiswahili: Mtu anayeamka mapema haji nyumbani mkono mtupu.

French: La personne matinale ne rentre pas à la maison la main vide.

English: The early person does not come home empty-handed.

Meaning: Whenever you take time and effort to do something you will always get positive results.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 12:24

“The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor”

50. Musheija arikutunga ente emwe nakira arikugyira nti nayija kutunga eisyo rihango ryente nyinyi

Kiswahili: Mtu anaye mlea ng’ombe mmoja ni afadhali kuliko anayesema “Nitaweka ng’ombe wengi”.

French: Un homme qui prend soi d’une vache est mieux que la personne qui dit:je prendrai soi d’un grand troupeau.

English: A man who rears one cow is better than the one who say “I will rear a large heard”.

Meaning: It is good to take initiative and take steps to achieve your goals instead of not taking any step.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 16:3

“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established”

51. Mwana takarizibwa busha

Kiswahili: Mtoto hali bure tu.

French: Un bébé ne pleure pas pour rien.

English: A baby does not cry for nothing.

Meaning: When a wise man does not just speak or accuse without evidence. There must be a good reason for saying.

Biblical Parallel: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope”

52. Mwana niwe burugo bwebintu ebirungi

Kiswahili: Mtoto ni chanzo cha vitu vizuri.

French: Un enfant est une bonne de chose.

English: A child is a source of good things.

Meaning: When you have a child, when he grows up he will always give you a lending hand to create wealth.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 15:20

“A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother”

53. Muriro nigwotsya arikuguhemba

Kiswahili: Moto huchoma anayeiwasha.

French: Le feu brûle le fabricant.

English: The fire burns the maker.

Meaning: If you are involved in initiating something then you become the first beneficiary of its positive or negative results.

Biblical Parallel: Philippians 2:14-15

“Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world”

54. Muntu wobusingye niwe mukozi wobusingye omukayeye

Kiswahili: Mtu mpenda amani huteleta amani bomani kwake.

French: Une personne pacifique est un artisan de paix dans sa maison.

English: A peaceful person is a peacemaker in his home.

Meaning: Someone who love a certain way of doing things, will always practice everywhere and in everything that he does whenever he goes.

Biblical Parallel: 2 Thessalonians 3:16

“Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all”

55. Muntu orikusingayo kwenda kurya niwe akubanza kunaba engaaro ze

Kiswahili: Mtu mlafi ndiye huwa wa kwanza kuosha mikono yake.

French: Une personne avec un bon appétit est la première qui lave ses mains.

English: A person of great appetite is the first one to wash his hands.

Meaning: If someone has bad habits or behavior, you will always notice from the way they carry themselves.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 28:22

“A stingy man hastens after wealth and does not know that poverty will come upon him”

56. Mubusigazi ninka oruho rwakasheshe, niruhwaho omumwazyo

Kiswahili: Ujana ni kama umande wa usubuhi, huyeyuka joini.

French: La jeunesse est comme un matin de rosée, ça évapore le soir.

English: Youth is like morning dew, it evaporates in the evening.

Meaning: You should always grab opportunities as they come, you never know the same opportunity will not be there tomorrow.

Biblical Parallel: 2 Timothy 2:22

“So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart”

57. Nabashuma nibiba bahika nokwiba ahubakurira

Kiswahili: Wezi huiba hata kutoka pale wanakula.

French: Les voleurs volent même de l'endroit où ils mangent.

English: Thieves will steal even from where they eat.

Meaning: When you have a bad behavior you may end up even hurting the people that you love and the even yourself.

Biblical Parallel: Ephesians 4:28

“Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need”

58. Nabariho nibo babarwa

Kiswahili: Walioko ndio wenye huhesabiwa.

French: Ceux qui sont présents sont celui qui sont comptés.

English: Those who are present are the one who are counted.

Meaning: You should always make effort to be present to be where you need to be do no use proxies. Always be prepared.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 24:44

“Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect”

59. Nahariho omwika tihakaburaho omuriro

Kiswahili: Palipo na moshi pana moto.

French: Là où il y a la fumée il y aura le feu.

English: Where there is smoke there is fire.

Meaning: When a wise elder talk about something, however much you may deny eventually it will come to light.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 20:19

“Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with a simple babbling”

60. Nabafu bonka nibo bakusingwa omurinyaruju yamateka

Kiswahili: Walikufa ndio hushidwa na kesi kortini.

French: Seuls les morts sont battus dans une affaire Judiciaire.

English: Only the dead are defeated in a court case.

Meaning: People who are dead or who are poor cannot be able to defend themselves from any accusations and oppression against them.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 24:24-25

“Whoever says to the wicked, “You are in the right,” will be cursed by peoples, abhorred by nations, but those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, and a good blessing will come upon them”

61. Namuntu wekitinisa kwakushisha omwoya nibagira ngu abagubiire nibo bagushisha

Kiswahili: Mawaitha mengi yalifanya siafu kutoroka.

French: Trop de conseils conduisent à la fuite des fourmis ours de Ogema’s.

English: Too much advice led to the escape of the ant-bears from Ogema’s snare.

Meaning: You should not follow advice of every person’s; they may mislead you making you to make the wrong decision.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 10:23

“Doing wrong is like a joke to a fool, but wisdom is pleasure to a man of understanding.”

62. Nakukwanga nakuteka omumwanya omumwanya ogurikusingaho noguwaba oriimu

Kiswahili: Anaye kukana hukuweka mahali pema zaidi.

French: Celui qui vous rejette vous met dans un meilleur endroit.

English: He who rejects you puts you in a better place.

Meaning: If a person takes advantage of you bad situation to oppress you, he propels you to working hard and attaining your goals.

Biblical Parallel: Philippians 2:14-15

“Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world”

63. Namihande ebiri ekabuzabuza empisi

Kiswahili: Aibu ilimfanya sungura kufa ndani ya chumba chake.

French: La timidité a tué le lièvre et sa tanière.

English: Shyness made the hare to die in its den.

Meaning: You should always work hard to avoid your fears, so that it may not work on your disadvantage.

Biblical Parallel: Ecclesiastes 7:20

“Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins”

64. Nente ekurebwa nezara akachwamutwe kakurebwa

Kiswahili: N’gombe iliye na madoa huzaa ndama mwenye madoa.

French: Une vache tachetée donne naissance à un veau tacheté.

English: A spotted cow gives birth to a spotted calf.

Meaning: The habits and behavior of a parent is mostly likely to be seen in his/her children.

Biblical Parallel: Ephesians 5:1

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children”

65. Nengyesho nungyi zomutabani nizihisa ishe ekitinisa

Kiswahili: Tabia nzuri ya mototo humpa baba yake heshima.

French: Le père gagne du respect et de louange par la bonne conduite d’un fils.

English: A son’s good conduct earns his father respect and praise.

Meaning: A good parent is known from the behavior of his children. Good parented children will make their father proud, and a bad child will make his parents shameful.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 10:1

“A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother”

66. Nimutahiwawe arikubasa kukwagura omugongo

Kiswahili: Njirani yako ndiye anayeweza kukugwara mgongo.

French: C’est votre voisin qui peut gratter votre dos.

English: It is your neighbor who can scratch your back.

Meaning: You should be good to people who are close to you because they are the one who can help you when you are in trouble.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 27:9

“Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel”

67. Nutabani nabonabona ahabwebibi byishewe

Kiswahili: Kijana huumia kwa sababu ya dhambi za baba yake.

French: Le fils souffre à cause du péché de son père.

English: The son suffers because of his father's sins.

Meaning: In life all the wrong things you do as a parent, the children or grand-children are the one who bare the punishment of your sins.

Biblical Parallel: John 8:44

“You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies”

68. Nomuyembe tigukagwa haare nekiti kyagwe

Kiswahili: Maembe hayaanguki mbali na mti.

French: La mangue ne tombe pas loin de son arbre.

English: The mango does not fall far from the tree.

Meaning: Children mostly behave and act like their parents. It is up to the parent to direct and teach their children the right ways.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 22:6

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it”

69. Noburwire bwondijo muntu tibukakuzibira kubyama

Kiswahili: Ugonjwa wa mwenzio haukuzuii kulala.

French: La maladie d'une personne ne t'empêche pas de dormir.

English: Someone's illness does not prevent you from sleeping.

Meaning: Everyone has their own life and own problems. You cannot carry someone else's burden.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 16:24

“Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me”

70. Nokayesiga omuntu omwe wenka owamani wabanoyenda kuhangura

Kiswahili: Huwezi kutegemea mtu mmoja mwenye ujasiri kushinda vita.

French: Tu ne peux pas dépendre de la victoire d'un autre home.

English: You cannot depend on one brave man for victory.

Meaning: It takes working together as a community to resolve a problem, one person cannot do it.

Biblical Parallel: 2 Corinthians 6:1

“Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

71. Okwenda kwombeka enju entsya nabanza yashenya enju enkuru.

Kiswahili: Unayetaka kuanza kujenga nyumba mpya lazima abomoe nyumba mzee.

French: Celui qui veut commencer une nouvelle maison doit se détacher des vieux.

English: He who wants to start a new house must demolish the old one.

Meaning: When you want to change your bad behavior, you should be ready to leave your old behavior behind and change to new habits.

Biblical Parallel: 2 Corinthians 5:17

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come”

72. Okwenda kuziina nabanza yatera engoma.

Kiswahili: Anayetaka kucheza demsi lazima aanze kupiga ngoma.

French: Celui qui veut dancier doit commencer à taper les tambours.

English: He who wants to dance must starts beating the drums.

Meaning: If you need anything to be done, you should take initiative to start and others will follow.

Biblical Parallel: Philippians 4:5-6

“Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God”

73. Oyanza wayeyerera enju yawe otakagyire kugamba eyabandi okweteyerire

Kiswahili: Jogoo wawili hawafai kupikiwa kwa nyungu moja.

French: Deux coqs ne doivent pas être cuit dans une même cocotte.

English: Two cocks must not be cooked in one pot.

Meaning: Always be a straight forward person; do not mix issues which may create problems in the future.

Biblical Parallel: Ecclesiastes 3:17

“I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every matter and for every work”

74. Omuntu arikukukyira aryaguma nakukyira

Kiswahili: Mtu aliyekuzidi kwa umri daima atakuwa mkubwa wako.

French: Une personne plus vieux que vous restera toujours vieux.

English: A person who is older than you always remains older.

Meaning: However power, riches or authority you should always respect your elder.

Biblical Parallel: Leviticus 19:32

“You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the Lord”

75. Omuntu akwegura oruhu rweye takabura ahokubyama

Kiswahili: Mtu anayebeba malazi yake hawezi kukosa pakulala.

French: Une personne qui porte sa peau ne manquera jamais un endroit à dormir.

English: A person who carries his skin will never lack where to sleep.

Meaning: When you are always prepared, whatever happens you will always be ready to tackle anything.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 24:27

“Prepare your work outside; get everything ready for yourself in the field, and after that build your house”

76. Omuntu aha muhanda nabasa kurahuka kwebwa kwonka okuribaata omumazi we takayebwa

Kiswahili: Mtu aliyekunya mahali husahau, lakini aliyekanyaga mavi hayo huwa hasahau.

French: La personne qui excrète oubliera tôt ou tard mais pas celui qui marche sur le caca.

English: The person who excretes may sooner or later forget but not the one who steps on the faeces.

Meaning: When you do something wrong to someone, after a while you always forget but the one who was done wrong rarely forgets.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 6:14-15

“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”

77. Okukurabura akabi naba arimunywani wawe

Kiswahili: Anayekujulisha kuhusu hatari ni rafiki.

French: Celui qui te prévient du danger est ton ami.

English: He who warns you of danger is your friend.

Meaning: A person who is truly a friend will always advise you accordingly even if you are on the wrong path in life.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 27:5-6

“Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy”

78. Okwitwa omwiguto takugarukyira abasigara enyima

Kiswahili: Anayekufa kwa kukula sana huwa harudi kusumbua walio hai.

French: Celui qui est mort à cause de la gourmandise se fou la tête de ceux qui meurent de faim.

English: He who dies of over-eating will not haunt those left behind.

Meaning: Whenever you do an action that make you harm yourself, you cannot blame anyone else.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 23:2

“And put a knife to your throat if you are given to appetite”

79. Omukazi ayamara kuzara tashemereire kukwata enyungu yibakutekyeramu

Kiswahili: Mwanamke ambaye amejifungua hafai kushika vyungu vya kupikia.

French: Une femme qui vient d'accoucher ne doit pas toucher la cocotte.

English: A woman who has just given birth should not touch the cooking pots.

Meaning: When you are unclean its better you do not handle food for which may affect the family members in a bad way.

Biblical Parallel: Leviticus 15:19

“When a woman has a discharge, and the discharge in her body is blood, she shall be in her menstrual impurity for seven days, and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening”

80. Omuti niguterezibwa gwaba gukyiri muto

Kiswahili: Mti hunyoroshwa ungali mchanga.

French: un arbre est redressé quand il est encore jeune.

English: A tree is straightened while it is still young.

Meaning: Whenever you want to solve a problem, you should address it when it is still minor because when it becomes major it may not be solved.

Biblical Parallel: Hebrews 12:11

“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it”

81. Omurogi naroga ente erikumuha amate

Kiswahili: Mgaga huganga hata n'gombe anayemkamua.

French: un sorcier ensorcèle la vache qu'elle presse.

English: A witch bewitch the very cow she milks.

Meaning: If you have hatred in you, you may end up even hating your own.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 10:12

“Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses”

82. Omukumi wobusingye namaririza ariiwe ayine omushango

Kiswahili: Anyetaka kutuliza mgogoro huenda akawa mwathiriwa.

French: Un concilateur finira par être le victim.

English: A peacemaker may end up being the victim.

Meaning: You should always assess and know which battles to be involved in. You may be the one who suffer because of your kindness.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 5:9

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God”

83. Omuteguzi webintu niwe akumaririza narya amagufa

Kiswahili: Mtu anyepatiana mwishowe hula mifupa.

French: Celui qui grâte finira par manger les os.

English: He who dishes out ends up eating the bones.

Meaning: You should always be mindful of yourself. Arrange everything in order on your side before you help others.

Biblical Parallel: Galatians 5:1

“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery”

84. Otakayoreka omushaho mugyenzi wawe oburugo bwomubazi gwawe, muhereze omubazi gumazire okujungwa

Kiswahili: Usionyeshane ulikotoa mimea yako kwa mgangai mwingine, mpatie uliyo tairisha.

French: N'expose pas ta source d'herbe à un autre docteur, donne-lui un échantillon préparé.

English: Don't expose your source of herbs to another medicine man, give him a prepared sample.

Meaning: You should not expose to everyone your source of livelihood; they may take advantage and throw you out of business.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 3:9

“Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce”

85. Rukukora hamwe nibwo burugo bwa amani

Kiswahili: Kufanya kazi pamoja ndio chanzo cha nguvu.

French: Travailler ensemble est la source de la force.

English: Working together is the source of strength.

Meaning: As a society, when you work together you can be able to achieve a lot compared when you work alone.

Biblical Parallel: Philippians 2:2

“Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind”

86. Rufu tekwezira omuntu omwe

Kiswahili: Kifo hakimkujii mtu mmoja pekee.

French: La mort n'attaque pas seulement une personne.

English: Death does not come only to one person.

Meaning: Death does not choose and can come to anyone at any time.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 7:13

“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many”

87. Sotakatera omukazi wawe ahabwokuremwa kutayayisa omugyenyi atakakutayayisaga

Kiswahili: Usimpige mke wako kwa kukosa kumkaribisha mgeni amabaye hajawahi kualika kwake.

French: ne frappe pas ta femme d'avoir échoué d'inviter un visiteur qui ne t'a pas invité.

English: Do not beat your wife for failing to host a visitor who has not hosted you.

Meaning: You should always be reasonable as a man, a wise woman always advice her husband accordingly.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 12:4

"An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rotteness in his bones"

88. Sotakayehutzya okuhaburwa kwomwana

Kiswahili: Usiyapuuzze mawaidha ya motto.

French: N'ignore pas le conseil d'un enfant.

English: Do not ignore a child's advice.

Meaning: If a person has advised you in an area of expertise; do not ignore their advice by only considering their age.

Biblical Parallel: Ephesians 6:4

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

89. Tura owomuntu okusingaho kutura omwitagyi ryekiti

Kiswahili: Afadhali kupata makao kwa mtu badala ya tawi la mti.

French: Prend abri à une personne au lieu de le prendre sous un arbre.

English: Take shelter in a person rather than in a tree branch.

Meaning: In life it is good to have friends who can be able to assist you during hard times. Do good to people so that you have good relationship with them.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 7:12

"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets"

90. Taribara enkojo zaawe otakafiire.

Kiswahili: Usihesabu vidonda vyako kabla hujakufa.

French: Ne comptez pas vos cicatrices avant de mourir.

English: Do not count your scars before you die.

Meaning: No one knows about tomorrow, you should not anticipate too much about what is unknown.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 27:1

“Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring”

91. Wokurya naawe niwe arikukwita.

Kiswahili: Unaye kula naye ndiye hukuaa.

French: Celui avec qui vous mangez est celui qui vous tue.

English: The one you eat with is the one who kills you.

Meaning: Those people who are close to you are the one who know your secrets and can destroy you.

Biblical Parallel: 1 John 4:1

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world”

92. Wayesigyire obugiga bwamukuruweye akafa obworo

Kiswahili: Aliyetegemea mali ya nduguye alikufa akiwa fukara.

French: Celui qui regarde la fortune de son frère mourra pauvre.

English: The one who relied on his brother’s wealth died poor.

Meaning: You should always take initiative to create your own path in life, you should not rely on others people.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 10:4

“A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich”

93. Yine abaana namara ekiro aha muhanda

Kiswahili: Walio na watoto hutumia wakati wa usiku njiani.

French: Celui avec des enfants passe leurs nuits en route.

English: The ones with the children spend their nights on the road.

Meaning: If you have people under you especially your children, you will do anything however dangerous it may be to ensure they are safe and ok.

Biblical Parallel: 1 Timothy 5:8

“But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever”

94. Yibakugurize nibabasa kukyikwaka kandi okyakyenda

Kiswahili: Kitu ulicho azima kinaweza kuchukuliwa hata kama bado unakihitaji.

French: Ce qui vous a été prêté peut être pris de vous, même lorsque vous en avez encore besoin.

English: What is loaned to you can be taken from you even when you still need it.

Meaning: When you have something that is not yours, the owner will treat you badly without mercy. You should always strive to have your own.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 13:4

“The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied”

95. Zayine abaana namara ekiro aha muhanda

Kiswahili: Hakuna mtu huichukia tumbaku yake hata kama ni mbaya kiasi gani.

French: Personne ne méprise son propre tabac si mauvaise qu'elle peut être.

English: No one despises his own tobacco however bad it may be.

Meaning: No person sees their bad behavior that they have, they do not heed to good advice.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 7:3

“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye”

96. Zebifera nibitura okumara obwire bwingi.

Kiswahili: Waoga huisha kwa muda mrefu.

French: Les lâches vivent plus longtemps.

English: Cowards live longer.

Meaning: Those people you are conscience and wise in the action that they take live longer than those who resolve their entire problems with violence.

Biblical Parallel: Ephesians 5:15-16

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil”

97. Zurinamanyire eija bwanyima

Kiswahili: Afadhali ningejua, huja baadaye.

French: Si je le savais, viens plus tard.

English: I wish I knew, comes later.

Meaning: You should always take good advice and make the right decisions in life before you come to regret later.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 11:14

“Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety”

98. Zimuti ogukwera ebijuma nigwe gukurekyerwaho amabare

Kiswahili: Hata mapacha tumboni wako na utando unao wagawanisha.

French: Même les jumeaux dans l'utérus ont une membrane qui les sépare.

English: Even the twins in the womb have a membrane separating them.

Meaning: Everyone is accountable to what they do with their life; no one will be punished for his brothers or sisters mistakes.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 11:21

“Be assured, an evil person will not go unpunished, but the offspring of the righteous will be delivered”.

99. Zuyembe tigukagwa haare nekiti kyagwe

Kiswahili: Afadhali kuteleza unapotembea kuliko kuteleza kwa mdomo.

French: Mieux trébucher ans tes pas que de trébucher dans ta bouche.

English: Better stumble in your steps than stumble in your mouth.

Meaning: It is good always to mind what you say because you can never take it back.

Biblical Parallel: Proverbs 29:20

“Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him”

100. Zokureberera ente yamutahi wawe kusinga okwokureberera eyawe

Kiswahili: Usimchunge n’gombe wa jirani kwa makini sana kuliko wako.

French: Tu ne regardes pas les vaches de ton voisins mieux regarder les tiennes.

English: You do not look at your neighbor’s cow better than your own.

Meaning: You should always look after you family first before helping your neighbor. Know how to prioritize everything that you do.

Biblical Parallel: Matthew 6:33

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you”

SUMMARY

The Toro people have some of the most interesting proverbs in Africa. The collection of the proverbs has been educative and challenging at the same time. The collection of Toro proverbs and wise sayings had some challenges. The main one was communication barrier and lack of reliable internet services. Due to the main collaborator being occupied by other activities, the whole activities took a lot of time to complete the collection.

The exercise proved to be educative, informative, exciting and a great experience. Despite the challenges faced, the main goals and objective of collection of the 100 proverbs and wise sayings was achieved.

CONCLUSION

The Toro people incorporate basic human values in their daily life. This is evident in their proverbs and wise sayings which are used daily, to educate, inform and harmonise the community. Through the entrenchment of the core human values in their culture and lifestyle, each member of the community knows their role towards ensuring that these values are safeguarded. The human core values among them; Happiness, love, peace, freedom, intelligence, respect, justice, safety among others are taught and passed on from one generation of the community to another.

The proverbs and wise sayings among the Toro community brought out the whole spectrum of core human values. Teaching or educating the community on core values such as self-control as illustrated by proverb No.99 - "*Zuyembe tigukagwa haare nekiti kyagwe*"- translated as "Better stumble in your steps than stumble in your mouth", explaining that as an individual you should be careful about what you say to those people whom you associate with in the community. The Toro proverbs played a major role in ensuring the community remained harmonized.

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APPENDICE

A RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR THE COLLECTION OF TORO (UGANDA) PROVERBS AND WISE SAYINGS

By Kevin Namatsi Okubo

INTRODUCTION

Location

The **Toro** also spelled Tooro, are also called Batoro. They speak *Rutooro*. Other alternative names of this language are *Orutoro*, *Rutooro*, *Rutoro*, *Toro*. Rutooro has different dialects, namely, *Tuku*, *Rutuku* and *Hema*. Rutooro has a lexical similarity of 78%–93% with Runyoro language. They are Bantu-speaking people who inhabit the high plateau between Lakes Albert and Edward that is bounded on the west by the Ruwenzori Range in south-western Uganda. Toro lands include rainforest, dense bamboo, papyrus swamps, plains of elephant grass, and the shores of Lakes Albert and Edward.

The Batoro inhabit the districts of Kabarole and Kasese. Their area has been infiltrated by many migrants from other parts of western Uganda, particularly the Bakiga. To their east live the Banyoro; to their north are the Bamba and Bakonjo; to their south-east and west live the Banyankore and to their east live the Baganda.

The Ethnographical Location of The Toro Ethnic Group In Uganda



Myth of Origin

There existed conflicting legends about the Batooro. One legend asserts that the Batooro are indigenous of their land and that they originated from the Batembuzi and the Bagabu who are said to have been pioneer inhabitants and rulers of the earth. Some other traditions assert that the Batooro are related to the Bachwezi and the Babito line. What can best be said is that the Batooro being Bantu originated from the Congo region where the other Bantu groups is said to have originated.

Culture

The Society of the Batooro was divided into the Bairu and the Bahuma and the relationship amongst the two was much of economic activity other than differentiation of class. The Bahuma carried out pastoralism while the Bairu were cultivators. These two groups lived symbiotically with the Bahuma providing milk, meat, hides along with other cattle products while the Bairu provided beer along with other products of agriculture.

Besides their family names, the Batooro like the Banyoro have pet names called *empaako*. These pet names are said to be of Luo origin though the Luo do not use them. Empaako was a sign of social identity. When greeting each other, the Batooro use the empaako, when people who were related greeted each other, the younger would sit on the lap of the elder. Among the Babiito, the younger would touch the forehead and chin of the elder before announcing the empaako.

Marriage occupied an important position in the cultural life of the Batooro man would not be regarded as complete before he got married. Formerly, marriage would be arranged by the parents of the boy and the girl without their knowledge with or without their consent. During the preparations however, the consent of the girl would have to be sought.



A Toro traditional marriage ceremony

A middle-man was usually sought by the boy's side and his role was socially recognized and rewarded. He was known as *Kibonabuko*. He had the duty of making investigations about the character of the girl, her family background and her ability to work. After such ground work was completed, the *kibinabiko* would proceed to secure the girl from her parents on behalf of the boy's family. The *Kibonabuko* would wake up one morning and go to the girl's family and declare his intentions to marry their daughter. He would make the following statement to the father of the girl: "*Sir, I come to you that you should build a house for me. I would like you to be part of my clan; I have come to ask for a wife, the builder of the house.*" The normal response from the girl's father was: "I don't have any child". The *Kibonabuko* would insist that the child was there, and on being asked who exactly he wanted, he would name the girl. If the father consented, the *Kibonabuko* would thankfully kneel down as a sign of appreciation. The next step would be for the boy's family to take beer to the girl's parents for the bride wealth to be fixed.

The bride wealth was normally in the form of cows. It varied between the Bahuma and the Bairu. For the Bahuma, it ranged from six to twenty cows. For the Bairu, the ceiling was about eight cows. They would often make payments in goats and hoes. All or part of the bride wealth would be received during a ceremony known as *Okujuka*. It was a very important ceremony involving a lot of eating, drinking and merry making. Thereafter, the young man's family could send bark cloth and some skins for the bride's dress. Meanwhile other formalities would be finalized for the wedding.

On the wedding day, another big feast was organized. The bride would be collected around six or seven o'clock in the evening. Before leaving, she would first perform a ritual of sitting on her parents laps. This ritual was known as *okubukara*. She would then be lifted onto a litter and carried to the bridegroom's home. On arrival, she would perform a ritual of being carried on her parent's in-laws laps. There she would be sprinkled with some herbal water (*endemezi*) to welcome and bless her. Before the feasting started, the bridegroom would go to bed with the bride, to perform another ritual, *okucwa amagita*. Thereafter, the guests were given coffee berries, smoking pipes, beer and later food. If the girl was found to be a virgin during *okucwa amagita*, a gift of a cow or a goat would be sent to her mother to congratulate her on raising her daughter well. On the third day, the bride's friends and relatives would give her gifts from home. They would come to see where she had been taken. The bride would spend some days in confinement and, at the end of it all, an elaborate ceremony would be held to bring the girl out and to initiate her into the art of cooking and house-keeping. In the event of a divorce, bride wealth would be refunded. However, part of the bride wealth would be retained if the woman had already had some children with her husband.

The Batooro, like their Banyankole neighbours, practiced blood brotherhood, but a man could also make blood brotherhood with a woman. The main ingredients of the ceremony included coffee berries, a new bark-cloth, a knife, two branches of a fig tree and sprouts of a grass called *ejubwe*. The climax of the ceremony was the taking, with coffee berries of one's blood from a cut made just below the navel. Then the two blood brothers would take an oath to behave as real brothers in all respects. Two men and one old woman would usually act as witnesses to the occasion.

The two celebrants would pronounce the following words to each other during the ceremony: "*Brothers fight and shave each other; they cut each other's nails; they beat each other and*

help each other. If you become dishonest to me your stomach will swell. When come to you with horrible disease, you will not send me away. When I come naked you will not send me away. When I come to your home, I will not go away hungry. We shall not do evil to each other, nor shall our children and clans.”

To convey messages and teach traditional norms and positive behavior to community members who are young, or give warnings and advice, proverbs and wise sayings are used to convey these messages. Sometimes even in settling disputes, the elders of the community may use such sayings. Messages may also be carried through songs and dances, and folklore which make the people recall them easily.

Examples of Toro Proverbs

3. Otaribara enkojo zaawe otakafiire.

Kiswahili: Usihesabu vidonda vyiako kabla hujakufa

French: Ne comptez pas vos cicatrices avant de mourir

English: Do not count you scars before you die

Meaning: No one knows about tomorrow, you should not anticipate too much about what is unknown.

4. Okubuza tibushema.

Kiswahili: Kuuliza sio ujinga

French: Demander n'est pas une stupidité

English: Asking is not stupidity

Meaning: When you ask it does not mean that you are not wise or knowledgeable. Learning is an everyday process.

Religion

The Batooro had a concept of a supreme being Ruhanga. Ruhanga was believed to have created all things. He was believed to be a good and benevolent being who unless wronged could not do harm to the people. However, it was believed that the world was full of evil doers; evil spirits and sorceress who could employ their magic to undermine Ruhanga and cause disease, misfortune, barrenness, death and droughts or even bad weather.

The Batooro believed that there existed mediums some of whom were agents of the devil while the good ones were agents of Ruhanga. The Batooro also believed in the *Mambwa* cult. Shrines were constructed for the worship of emandwa in every home. The *Mandwa* were usually worshipped and praised by playing of *entimbo* (drums) and trumpets). In the actual process of worship, people would wear skins (*emikako*) knitted with beads and cowrie shells. An important medium of the Mandwa would wear a six centimeter bark-cloth material with horns on the head (*ekisingo*). The whole process of worshiping involved a lot of eating and drinking.

In the event of disease, death or misfortune, a *mufumu* (divinera) would be consulted to interpret the demands of emandwa. Thereafter, appropriate measures would be taken to appease the mandwa. Supplications to the Mandwa were normally effected at night. A man would put fire in front of the house and pronounce his problems to the Mandwa. The language used to in addressing the emandwa was slightly different from the common one used in ordinary parlance. The pronunciation of certain words was slightly altered. Surprisingly;

in talking to emandwa the Batooro would use Runyankole terminologies. For instance Omukama was pronounced as *omugabe*, *okurora*, *as okureea*, *omwaana omwerere*, and several others.

Economy

The economy of Bunyoro was partly agricultural and partly pastoral. The Bahuma were agriculturalists while the Bairu were pastoralists. Cows were much valued by both groups and besides providing milk and beef, cattle were a symbol of wealth. The Batooro cultivated millet, sorghum, bananas, peas and a variety of green vegetables. They also had local industries to produce iron complements such as spears, hoes, knives and arrowheads, bark-cloth and salt. Besides, they also had a number of potters who produced a variety of household utensils such as waterpots, beerpots and sauce pots.

The women were good at basket weaving and they produced a wide assortment of basketry such as winnowing trays, plate baskets, bags, harvesting baskets and several baskets for routine household work. The men constructed houses, cleared bushes and hunted wild animals. Certain activities like hunting, and house construction were done on a communal basis. House construction involved eating, drinking and dancing. Batooro built circular huts with grass thatched roofs.



Toro cattle

Political set-up

The Batooro had a centralized system of Government. Toro had until 1830 been a part of Bunyoro. In 1830, Prince Kaboyo declared Toro independent of Bunyoro and recognized it into another Kingdom.

At the head of the Kingdom was a king known as *Omukama*, the first being Kaboyo Kansunsunkwanzi, the actual founder of the Kingdom. He was succeeded by his son Nyika

who was in turn succeeded by Kasagama. Kasagama ruled until he was dethroned by Kabalega but was later reinstated in 1891 by Sir Lugard an agent of the imperial British East African Company (IBEAC Co) which was trying to extend British Imperialism to Uganda. The King was hereditary and he had to be from the Babiito dynasty which was ruling Bunyoro. He was assisted by a hierarchy of chiefs and a standing army. But in times of war, all able bodied men would be called upon to serve in the defense of the Kingdom. The chiefly regalia included drums, iron forks, spears, wooden spoons, chairs, crowns, beads, axes and knives.

The county of Mwenge was of particular importance to the Kingdom. It contained a school of political education when Toro was still part of Bunyoro. When Toro broke away from Bunyoro, Mwenge maintained its function. The sons of the Kings were sent to Mwenge to learn the art and the language of government. It is said that there were also special tutors for the king's daughters. When the King's wives were about to give birth, they would be sent to Mwenge. Rebellious princes were also sent to a school in Mwenge and it is perhaps because of the political and social importance of Mwenge that no war was fought in Mwenge.

The Toro Kingdom suffered the same fate as Bunyoro, Buganda and Ankole with the event of republicanism in 1967. However, the institution of Omukama was reinstated in 1993 albeit without its former political and administrative powers. Omukama Olimi Kaboyo was installed as the fifth Omukama of Toro. He reigns as the cultural head of the Batooro.

WRITING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research on Toro ethnic group are:

- i. To collect one hundred proverbs and wise sayings from the Toro people, from the elders and their general community.
- ii. To translate these proverbs and wise sayings into English, Kiswahili and French, for reference by a wider group of readers.
- iii. To find Biblical parallels to complement the Christian point of view.

JUSTIFICATION

This will help people to enrich their communication skills by using these proverbs and wise sayings and finding their application in their real lives.

METHODOLOGY

The writer will research and collect Toro proverbs and wise sayings from the Toro community in Kenya. The teaching and a Bible parallel will be added to each. One hundred of these proverbs will then be recorded for translation into Kiswahili, English, and French and be published in a booklet.

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