

Alphabetical List of Inscriptions and Their Translations
Kanga & Kitenge: Cloth and Culture in East Africa

Erie Art Museum • 411 State Street, Erie PA 16501

Acheni majungu muogopeni Mungu

"Stop spreading rumors, fear God instead."

Asemae hajapata aliyepata hasemi

"Those who don't have it boast; those who have it keep quiet." Those who flaunt wealth are not truly wealthy and those who are do not make a big show of it.

Fimbo ya mnyonge haina nguvu

"The walking stick of the weak person wields no power."
Might makes right.

Hakuna mkamilifu

"No one is perfect."

Hali yangu masikini nifanye ari ya nini

"My fate is to be poor, so why should I be enthusiastic about anything?"

Hamadi kibindoni silaha mkononi

"Have a club in your hand, and a knife in your pocket."
The saying refers to traditional weapons and essentially reminds us to have contingency plans if our first strategy fails.

Hata ukinichukia la kweli nitakwambia

"I will tell you the truth even if you hate me for it!"

Heri wanaokimbilia Mungu

"Blessed are those who run to God." Where God goes, there blessings follow.

Heshima si utumwa

"Respect is not slavery."
Often respect is shown by subservience. This inscription reminds us not to confuse it with slavery.

Huu mkoba wangu ni fiche siri zangu

"This is my bag where I may hide my secrets."

Iddi ina furaha ya peke yake

"Id brings a special happiness." Id, also known as Eid ul-Fitr, is a major Muslim holiday.

Japo sipati tamaa sikati

"Even though I have nothing, I have not given up my desire to get what I want."

Japo wa zamani usisahau hisani

Nyumba hii ndipo mahali palipozawila TANU 1954–1974 TANU Miaka Ishirini

"Even though it is old, do not forget courtesy. This is the place where TANU (Tanzania's first political party) was founded, 1954–1974. TANU's 20th anniversary."

Jibu ninalo nasubiri uropoke

"I know the truth, I am just waiting for you to start blabbing." The target of gossip knows what actually happened, and has prepared herself for an onslaught of vicious rumors.

Jogoo la shamba haliwiki mjini

"The country rooster doesn't crow in the city." Power and authority in a village don't hold sway in a big city.

Karibu mgeni

"Welcome visitor."

Karibuni waalikwa shughuli yetu imefika

"Welcome to all the invited! Our party is ready."

Karibuni waunguwana nina harusi ya mwana

"Welcome to all who have gathered here for my child's wedding."

Kheri ya Krismas na Mwaka Mpya

"Merry Christmas and Happy New Year."

Liya na tabia yako usilaumu wenzako

"It's your disposition that makes you cry easily, so don't blame your tears on others." It is not your companion's fault if you easily burst into tears.

Majivuno hayafai

"Greed is never useful."

Miaka 10 ya uhuru

"Ten years of independence."

Mimi ni bata mzoefu wa kupata nikikosa bahahrani nchi kavu nitapata

"I am an old duck; if I can't get what I want in the water, I'll get it on land."

Mkipendana mambo huwa sawa

"Everything is all right if you love each other."

Mmesema sana sasa mtachemsha

"You gossipers, now you'll really stir things up (literally, make matters boil over)."

Moyo wangu sultani cha mtu sitaamani.

"I am comfortable with what I have."

Msema pweke hatolewi makosa

"One who talks to himself is never contradicted."

Mshukuru Mungu mengi katutendea

"Thank God, for he has done many things for us."

Msidharau kidogo ndicho huwa kikubwa

"Don't overlook small problems, they will get bigger."
A stitch in time saves nine.

Mungu atanizawadia kwa uvumilivu wangu

"God will reward me for my patience." Uvumilivu (patience) can also mean tolerance or forbearance.

Mungu atanizawadia siku yangu ikiwadia

"When my day arrives, God will reward me."

Mungu ndiye tegemeo letu

"We depend on God."

Mwanamke mazingira tuanataka, usawa, amani, maendelo

"We (women) want equality, peace, and progress."

Mwembe tayari

"The mango trees are ready."

Nalidumu letu pendo

"Let our love stand forever."

Naogopa simba na meno yake siogopi mtu kwa maneno yake

"I'm afraid of a lion with its strong teeth but not a man with his words." Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.

Nguvu mpya ari mpya kasi mpya

"New strength, new morale, new speed!" This is the slogan used by the current Tanzanian President, Jakaya Kikwete, in his campaign.

Ninachokipata kinanitosa

"That which I have satisfies me."

Nitazidi kumpenda mpate kusema sana

"Keep on talking. The more you gossip, the more I will love him."

Palipo na mema hapakosi baraka

"Where there is goodness, there will be blessings also."

Radhi za wazazi huleta furaha na amani

"Parents' blessings bring happiness and peace."

Riziki ya mtu hupangwa na Mungu

"One's blessings are planned by God."

Sina pingamazi yote ni mipango ya Mungu

"I've no doubts, for all is God's plan."

Sina pingamizi Mungu ndiye mwamuzi

"I am not disabled (I have no obstacles), for God is my judge."

Sintosahau fadhila za wazazi

"I will never forget my parents' compassion."

Sisi sote abiria dereva ni Mungu

"We are all passengers, God is the driver."

Sumu ya mahaba ni maneno mengi

"You can poison romance with too many words."

Too much talking can harm a relationship; over-analysis is unnecessary and can cause problems.

Tamaa si asili yangu naridhika na hali yangu

"I was not brought up to be greedy; I am content with the way I am."

Tenda wema mara mia adui akijua umeumia

"You will always have enemies, and they will hurt you, but even so, do hundreds of good works."

Tukae kwa usalama kusiwe na uhasama

"Let us live safely without hostility."

Tunaipenda Africa yetu

"We love our Africa."

Ubaya hauna kwao Mola nisitri na njama zao

Serengeti, Ngorongoro & Mikumi

"God protect me from their bad plans!" Ngorongoro, Serengeti, and Mikumi are the names of Tanzanian National Game Parks. Perhaps these kanga were prepared by the national parks for an anniversary or trade exhibition.

Uchungu wa mwana anaujua mzazi

"A parent understands the pain of her children."

Ukitaka radhi heshimu wazazi

"If you want to be blessed, respect your parents."

Ukulima bora ndio msingi wa maendeleo

"Excellent agriculture is the foundation of progress."

Usifadhake moyoni mama ndiye mlezi wako

"Don't be dismayed, your mother has raised you well."

Life in this world can be difficult, but your mother has prepared you to handle it gracefully.

Usigeuke mwiba ukanichoma

"Don't turn into a thorn (fish bone) and pierce me."

Watch what you are saying, you could cause me pain.

Usiwajali wambea kusema wamezoea

"Gossipers will never stop; don't pay them any attention."

Utakodolea macho hutokijua nilichonacho

"You know what I've got, so what are you staring at?"

The inscription rebuffs a jealous adversary.

Wakerekao hawamalizi vikao

"The annoyed can never get through a meeting."

Wapendanao ni sisi hebu tupeni nafasi

"We are in love, give us a chance."

Wazazi ni dhahabu kuwatunza ni thawabu

"Parents are gold; to take care of them is a blessing."

Wazazi ni kioo cha jamii

"Parents are the mirror of society."

Yote niya Mungu tuyavumilie

"All is from God, let us put up with it."

Yote yatendwayo namkabidhi Mola

"I surrender all that is done to God."

Zingatia mafunzo mwanangu usifuiaie ya

walimwengu

"My son, concentrate on your studies. Don't fall into the trap of worldly things."