

Dedan Kimathi University of Technology

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## **Synopsis**

The words of the Griot Munjiru wa Maina

It is I, Munjiru wa Maina, daughter of the Maina Mbatia and Mumbi wa Maina, the great mathematician of our days who have strong wisdom in numbers and an epitome of interest in the African language. Kikuyu is our culture. The art of eloquence has no secret for us; without us names of our forefathers would have vanish into oblivion, we are the memory of mankind; by spoken word we bring to life deeds and exploits of the ancestors for younger generations.

I derive my knowledge from my father, Maina Mbatia who also got it from his father Mbatia Njoroge, history holds no mystery for us, we are taught to the vulgar just as much as we teach, for it is we who have the keys to the kikuyu culture and Dedan Kimathi University of Technology.

My word is pure and free from all untruth, it is a synopsis of my experience in Kimaathi University. I will give you my words just as I experienced them, royal griots do not know what lying is. Listen to my words who you want to know; by my words you will learn the history of Dedan Kimathi University of Technology.

## **Beginning**

The story of my campus life is an epic one. To begin with campus was just a ritual to complete my 8-4-4 Kenyan system of being a learned fellow. I always admired each time I heard my parents teasing themselves and with their friends and all they said was my learned fellow. This made me grow up desiring the good of the land and to become the best thing every person desire by going

after my dream and believing in myself. I hate being a fool or receiving any actions that resemble fools.

Good friendship is the key to any successful life and the sweetest journey as one fulfills her desires. It is said a man who walks alone walks the fastest, but a man who walks with people walks the furthest. It is important to say that my campus life wouldn't be more perfect if my friends were not in it. I built strong friendship when I first joined campus. We have had all the phases of friendship, but what is worth while noting is that those experiences have shaped me to be who I am today.

I once attended a mentorship program and I was told that the first friends you make in campus will determine your four years stay or I rather say completion of campus. Honestly, I can say that I witnessed this firsthand as I watched my course mates, school mates, drop out of school for various reasons and one of them being bad company. It is therefore important to say that bad company ruins good morals.

Campus life fun moments are too personal to an individual and they differ from person A to person B. My campus story had different shapes and sizes but maximumly I have enjoyed it by lecturers, friends, course mates, school mates, hostels mate, business people, work places, and myself. I have seen all sides of a coin and as I complete my tenure, I would love to thank Dedan Kimathi University of Technology for spicing up my life and making a huge difference in it holistically. The mission statement is to provide academic stimulating, culturally diverse, and quality learning environment that fosters research, innovation and technology development towards producing relevant technical and managerial human resource and leaders to contribute to attainment of goal. The vision statement is to be premier technological university excelling in quality education, research and technological transfer for national development.

This mission statement has been a great pillar to me as a student and I can attest to the fact that through the diverse and quality learning environment has fostered my leadership, academic and spiritual nourishment. Dedan Kimathi as the mission says has bettered my life through self-actualization, and attaining solutions to global challenges through spirit of dedication, self-confidence, determination and best utilization of resources. I appreciate.

I would love to split my story in various phases as follow:

### **The Lion Man.**

Dedan Kimaathi Waciuri , born *Kimathi wa Waciuri* in what was then British Kenya, was the senior military and spiritual leader of the Mau Mau Uprising. Widely regarded as a revolutionary leader, he led the armed military struggle against the British colonial regime in Kenya in the 1950s . He fought for freedom struggle against British colonial rule, while the British government saw him as a terrorist. He was our freedom fighter, who was renowned by all for his vigilance in our country's freedom until his capture in 1956 and execution in 1957. Kimathi is credited with leading efforts to create formal military structures within the Mau Mau, and convening a war council in 1953. He, along with Musa Mwariama and Muthoni Kirima, was one of three Field Marshals.

Kenyan nationalists view him as the heroic figurehead of the Kenyan He fought in the Mau-forest for years and his reward was to be betrayed by one of our own and killed by a mzungu. Kimaathi had being reigning for a long time and has the best calculated moves and had great understanding of 'maat' that is truth and justice. He fought for my black color to be me. Dedan kimathi university was named after him as a way to celebrate him.

Dedan Kimathi University of technology was named and started after our hero Dedan Kimaathi Waciuri. It is a symbol or I rather say a reward to his family for producing the best seeds that saved our nation from the barbaric hands. The university started as a middle-level national technical and business-oriented learning institution in 1972 and was elevated in 2007 to a constituent university college of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology through a Kenya Gazette notice to become a full-fledged university in three years. Later on the late former president, Mwai Kibaki, a Nyeri resident located in Othaya, gave the university a charter to operate on its own as a university in Kenya. From 2019, the university in collaboration with the Kenyan government sponsored my education for the next four years.

### **Giving it away.**

Being a class representative of my class for several years is an uphill task. Maintaining a balance among what the lecturer wants, student wants and what I want is not easy. Misunderstandings were the better cake in a day and any day that lacked misunderstanding would be termed as a good day. I would love to speak about my favorite lecturer, who against all odds, spoke his mind on any given point and always had an upper hand on every matter.

Professor Osotsi, a Ph.D. holder always says, 'mwacha mila ni mtumwa'. Despite his vast knowledge and travelling abroad to teach his favorite subject as he said, he came to our prestige university to enlighten us, negros. His passion towards being proud Africans especially true Kenyan patriot is amazing and one of the things that drives me into tapping more into his ideas, views on every cultural matters. Culture has been neglected in our nation such that for us to know where we are heading or planning for our future, we consult other people (white people) to show

us the path. We do not know our roots (where we began). We now depend on social media, lecturers, to tell us our roots after ignoring our fore- father's instructions to pass knowledge from generation to generation. This information we obtain is not necessarily the truth. It is sad as we cannot distinguish the truth from lies.

Other cultures know us better than we do. For example, Africans are the inventors of mathematics, but, that truth is hidden from us and we are told the white are the inventors. Why should we not take back our ugali? Our white crown and be proud Kenyans, appreciate our leaders and fight for what is ours. Be our people's leaders where, we collect our manuscripts from our forefathers and stand tall like Dedan Kimaathi as say this is our nation, our blood, black is our color.

His wisdom of appreciating where we came from, knowing why we read certain subject, is it necessary for us to read or know our culture? are some of the things that were instilled in us in this course. Is it necessary to know our culture? the Chinese university student organized a rally where they challenge themselves by learning for example by learning mathematics and also the culture, history of where they came from. They remain royal to themselves as they ask the question how does these affect my people, communism.

### **Leadership.**

In my two weeks in campus, I was elected as the class representatives of the Bachelor of Commerce 1.1 class, which I am still the class representative. The same year, my passion to know more of the African language and the joy of hearing it from a different ear, made me the second representative of the communication class. I organized a class of two thousand students of different fields to a class that was basically held on Fridays from 8:00am to 6:00pm.

My passion for this leadership was especially built by Professor Ramenga Osotsi who gave me two books namely, Sundiata and African Literature .The best book of the days for me was the sundiata which talked about Sundiata a fearless crippled leader than lead an army to fight for his people and his fathers lineage. Despite his physical disabilities, he had an inner beauty that surpasses all human understanding and that lead the warriors to battles to win. My journey as a class representative met its own share of the struggles. I am not saying that I am physically challenged, but there were other physical challenges that I faced in it.

Having two classes to represent in campus, is an uphill task. When you say two it means a class of about 300 students then, because we combined classes a triple of that number. The interest of the people are different and there is this particular group of people where they know how to do things better than you in their speech mainly. They are so good in frustrating you as much as making you feel unwanted and they question your authority inhumanly. Moreover, there is also this group where they listen to you, they encourage you and support you. I do not know why the mind always records the negative experience only.

I was a class representative of two programs that is one that is fully established and the other that you establish as I may call it. The established program, you just blend in what they do, how they do it, there is nothing more to it. I call it the rule-based view as there is a structure of how things should run. The other you establish the rules, I call it principle based, here there is a policy that guide people, but you create your path. The problem is when you participate in the process of forming those principles, although, I enjoyed my experience.

My Bachelor of Commerce degree program journey as a class representative was rule-based. Everything was so eloquent, how things are done was easy and soft. Everything was at my disposal starting from how classes were running to the books in the library. The only challenge we faced

was that of classes, my class was so big that it could only fit in the freedom hall which at that time was under construction. The school management was of great importance to us and it heard our plea. My second-degree program, Communication Skills, as a journey as a class representative was principle based.

The desire to do two-degree courses when you are sponsored by another man's pocket is not an easy thing to convince them. Always proving that you are the best as much as selling your ideas to people and to a country of something that has never been done in Kenya requires a special grace. I learnt on how to write letters, be a good communicator, be patient, to work under little or no supervision as much as meet deadlines.

During my course work, it was like walking on egg shells, today you are doing two degrees, tomorrow, the program has been cancelled. The process of writing letters, hoping to be reinstated was an uphill task that often than not I gave up many times, but never talked about it. For those who know, it is not easy for people to believe in your vision and also assuring people of the vision when you clearly see all the signs of a losing battle. My mum always said that when you are almost winning, that is when the battle is the hardest and there is no sign of success. Her words were strong comfort to my ears during that period.

Skills I learned from my leadership were several, interpersonal skills, communication skills, convincing skills, I really worked on my temper. Communication skills was really embraced when conversing among the lecturers, administration and my fellow students. I sharpened my interpersonal skills when I faced various challenges, as I knew my true self. I learnt how to relate with different people by appreciating their ideas, knowing where they came from and coming with conclusion.



**Student association.**

Student associations are the best platforms through which the university sponsors and controls the activities of the school. Here we meet different students in different departments, different schools and build a connection. The university has given several platforms of being a whole student that is through various clubs, for inter-cultural, sports, departmental, academics.

I belong to Kirikusa club, where we are a family of kikuyu culture that are found in Kirinyaga region. This club is a place of opportunity as the alumni and us we interact. There are various activities that we participate such as visiting the children's home, hiking (visit temptation island), dinner dates among many fun activities.

I belong to the AFSA (Accounting Finance Student Association), this is the club where the accounting professionals meet, we get advised, we are told of what is the current issues that happens in the world today. I have attended the summits, got certificates of participations from various summits I attended. This has really shaped my career path as you can tell what to expect in life.

I belong to the sports club the taikwondo and I have attended the challenge course activities of visiting Mount Kenya, Nyeri Hill. Here we exercise our muscles, ensures physical health is maintained. From the exercise my blood circulation is improved. I was once told that the journey of a successful accountant is when they do activities that makes them sweat and especially in the morning. It reduces the stress level, fatigue, excess energies by enhancing concentration, reducing tension. This is important for a healthy being.

I have participated in several clubbing activities of various club such as Mukusa, Marketing club, Athletes club, inter-clubs competition through various groups events such as charity events, hiking, nature trails, bike riding, football matches. I must say, we severally won the goat from the interclub competition.

### **Religion.**

Every living being believes in a Supreme Being. Your Supreme Being may be different from mine. All that matters is that we have a supreme being that we believe in and none is superior to the other. There are different names or we use different names to call unto our Supreme Being (Him )or address Him. Some people call their God Ngai(Kikuyu. Enkai(Maasai), Mungu(Swahili), God(English).

People call their God in different ways. In the ancient days, although it is still practiced by some people , Mwenye Nyaga was the name was used in the past to refer to God. Mwenye Nyaga was believed to have been sought at Mount Kenya. Our forefathers prayed while facing Mount Kenya as it was believed that was the place God lived. Over the years the Agikuyu's pray to God facing the Mountain as he is believed to be or he lives there. Libation was poured to the ancestors and even to God as a way of thanksgiving for the meal they have given us, the rains, good harvest among many. The ancestors have always taught us various methods and the right way to praise and pray to our God. Our faith is grounded in what we were told and taught by our parents, grandparents, ancestors. We the Agikuyu believe that at the Mountain, specifically, Mount Kenya, is a holy place. Our respect to our God is through praise and exalting him. There were several

sacrificial worship seasons either before planting, at harvesting, and even the 'tithe' we give to that God or appease or request for the good of the land.

I am a Christian Believer. I grew up in a Christian home where we believe in Jesus Christ. My parents have brought me up knowing that My God is the God of heaven and earth and he owns everything and I am just a caregiver in his Kingdom. All He wants us to do is to be in obedience with him. Many have asked why I do not denounce my God and follow theirs especially that time they see you facing issues. What I can say is that, God teaches the heart of men to love Him and to honor Him, I pray for you. Therefore, in Kimathi, I belong to the Christian Union (CU) and I love it there.

## **Personality**

There are different personalities that each individual has and it is quite unique from the other, they describe us. These personalities represent the true self and are a reminder of us being keen with our actions. They show us or traits that are positive and negatives to us, I prefer calling it SWOT – strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat. Through showing our weakness, we become more aware of what causes the threat, and various opportunities to take to make it a strength.

My personality is protagonist that is these are individuals who are inspiring optimist, and are ready to take actions to do what feels right. I will classify their personality in various ways.

- a) Mind- you are either introvert or extrovert

They are extraverted individuals who enjoy group activities and value social interaction. They tend to be outwardly enthusiastic.

- b) Energy -you are either intuitive or observant

Intuitive individuals are very imaginative, open-minded, and curious. They value originality and focus on hidden meanings, and distance possibilities.

c) Nature – you either thinking or feeling

Individuals value emotional expression and sensitivity. They place importance on empathy, social harmony and cooperation.

d) Tactics – you either judging or prospecting.

Individuals are decisive, thorough, and highly organized. They value clarity, predictability, and closure, preferring structure and planning to spontaneous.

e) Identity – you either assertive or turbulent

Assertive individuals are self-assured, even-tempered, and resistant to stress. They refuse to worry too much and tend to be self-confident when striving to achieve goals.

Kindly take a personality test today. Here is the link for personality test.

<https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>

## **Friendship**

A common saying goes, ‘show me your friend and I will tell you the person you are.’ This I saw its true meaning here in campus with the friend I had made for myself and other people’s examples.

I value friendship as they are the people who you do every activity with freely without parental

guidance. There are the responsibility aspects, though I do not like it because the more you have freedom, the more you have responsibilities. One thing goes with the other.

On my first day in campus is similar to the first day in high school, only that here you are wearing home clothes and for some they have a national identity card. At least I was among those that belonged to both categorized of the national cards and wearing the home clothes. Peoples company are the best especially when it has to do with food. You can never sleep hungry when you have good buddies around you all the time.

My secret to good friendship has been one never over utilize them and help them when need be. Listening to people is another interesting thing especially when you know where they come from and where they head to and the decisions that they take. Luckily for me, I have maintained same friends for the four years and I must admit it was eventful, but generally beautiful. How have I turned out to be after the years of friendship, only you can tell me? However, for me I am a better version of me.

We maintained good performance as well as did a lot of travelling. Various places we travelled was the Mount Kenya, Mount Longonot, Lake Nakuru National Park, Nyeri hill, road trips, temptation island, and our own Dkut conservancy. We also had several moments we came together to eat, celebrate, be there for everyone. Bike riding, dancing, and every small events we did brought us together. We even ate 'mahindi choma' from our very own farmhouse. We believe in the bottom-up legacy.

This story I wrote to celebrate them and to encourage everyone to have pillars in their lives.

**African leaders**

I always draw strength from the infamous African heroes, Mau Mau freedom fighters, when I feel discouraged I look at their pictures and I draw inspiration from them. Especially when I look at the fearless women in a male dominated world, being very strong successful leaders. They encourage me to be me, a proud, black African lady who is fearless to speak her mind and work towards the source of greatness.

Wangari Maathai, saw the importance of the environment even when we did not see it. She ensured and created movements for Africans especially Kenyans to protect the environment. She ensured tree planting and came up with slogans of people to plant minimum of two trees a year.

## **Games**

### **i) Outdoor games**

#### **a) Hiking.**

Through the club climb to educate, I have been able to attend at least three events in my campus life, which the school sponsored. In my first month in Dkut, I attended the Nyeri Hill hike where we had so much fun. On the same year, I was sponsored to hike the Mt Kenya. This is symbolic as it is not only where our ancestors fought to gain independence but also, it's the highest mountain in Kenya. This is a way of promoting and advertising our country through domestic tourism as much as we appreciate our forefathers for the good they have done for us. Kimaathi, our hero is also remembered for his good works as much as his bravery and determination of the negroes to be independent. His history is passed to us in full via such visits.

Moreover, the DKUT conservancy together with the wildlife club, Kenya are partners who are continuously sponsoring the students and DKUT staff to visit the park. This has given us endless opportunities to visit the park at will. In cases of events such as thanking our teachers, loss of the loved ones, this is a good place to visit as we generally say 'nature answers all.'

#### b) Basketball

Being a part of the most amazing club the basket ball club Kimathi, formally known as.... Has taught me a lot in particularly sharing with others and communism that is ujamaa. This is a strong hold to the African culture especially in collectiveness and love towards our own. Here are some of the game rules that should be followed.

#### c) Netball

There is a netball field that is near the public lavatories of the school. I love this game as it has fewer rules than basketball. I find it more favorable and enjoyable as you play. I am a part of the netball club in Kimathi and I love the club as we play with each other both on the field as much as we do so outside the field. This is very important as it is part of my support system in campus life.

Bike riding, skipping rope, skating, swimming. All these activities are so much fun when they are done with many people as they become fun and enjoyable as much as physical fitness is enhanced and well maintained.

### ii) Indoor games

Cards, badminton, table-tennis. These are the games I love playing with my friends especially that now in Nyeri the weather is chilly. They are easy to play and you experience the love among it. We compete among ourselves and it really helps us in brainstorming.

Video gaming. This is a computer game that is fun to play and it broadens imagination though it may be addictive game. I love the game as it can be played anywhere as long as you have any screen whether a phone, television, or a computer. I really enjoy this games.

Listening to music and dancing, this an enjoyable way of enjoying activities. I was once told by an elder that the best way to begin your morning as an accountant is by doing any activity that makes you sweat. Any activity such as aerobics, dancing are applicable as long as you sweat and the aim is to ensure that you become active, alert, remove yesterday's stress and keen to details.

### **Charity activities**

As it is said charity begins at home. This is a common phrase I heard my mother telling my siblings and even her friends who came visiting. She was and still is a charitable giver of gifts and even organizing charity events. Her passion and zeal is to the teenagers, children and the aged, that is the minority group. As it is said like mother like daughter, I took after her passions in helping people in need at any particular point selflessly.

Often I have been told that you become poor with sharing and that it is good to invest the little you have and even grab the next or as I call it my neighbors property so that I become known in the society through theft or corruption. Africanism is all about 'ujamma' this is the pride of Africans.



Always being there for each other and always sharing so as to better yourself as much as the community is enjoying. Of what gain is there when you have two bread and your neighbor has none?

I must say that throughout my campus life, I have mainly spent it visiting and organizing charity events to various children's home, building houses to the aged as much as I am a student. I will only mention the latest charity events I have visited, cooked, washed clothers as much as tutoring the children there. The latest are the Huruma Children's Home and Thunguma Children's Home in Thunguma.

## **Volunteer**

Currently, I am volunteering in my church to teach the high school students various subjects for free. We organized a program that enables them to do their homework and also peer teacher them. This allows them to grasp concepts well as well as appreciate the growing concept. We also have gotten positive review of our works.

Moreover, I also tidy the church and its environment. I clean the church, wipe the chairs, clean the altar mats, sheets, cups and plates. Here we do it in communism, where we share out the duties and responsibilities among the youth. Afterwards once in a while we organize events such as bonfire, camps, sporting activities. These are joyous moments.

Moreover, there is keeping the environment clean. I sweep and cut grasses in the community I live in. This is because being clean environment is equal to a happy mind. There are no diseases, pollution of environment as the environment is well maintained.

## **Farmhouse**

In Kimathi there is a place we call the Farmhouse. It is in the outskirts of the school as it is the farming area for the school as much as an area where the school leaves and gives the students area to do various celebrations especially for different clubs. Various activities I have participated.

### **a) Plucking the coffee.**

On the coffee planting season which is mostly around the same period the school have gone for the inter-semester break, my friends and I go to pluck coffee and are paid by debe. We spend the whole period there doing the 'casual' jobs as they are widely known. For me I take it as the skills which my forefathers have passed to me. This is because after handpicking the coffee we always have our story telling moments, where we share our experiences as much as teach each other of basic things of life. We discovered that the secrets of being a true African is by us going back to the roots of our ancestors and doing the very things that they did in the past. By doing so, we will be better Africans who know what we exactly believe in.

### **b) Buying green groceries**

A king is never appreciated in his home town this is very true. For example Wangari Mathai, is our hero being the first African Woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Africa, but, here in Nyeri she

is not much recognized as much as she is the most recognized in foreign country as the best environmentalist. My greatest desire is to be a better me always. Therefore, I pride in buying most of my green groceries from farmhouse. The food there is fresh, green and friendly prices.

c) Clubs meeting and Tournaments and Gifts

I belong to various clubs in school the AFSA, KIRIKUSA, Netball. We participate in the school based tournament where various gifts are given such as the 'mbuzi', gifts of cash, ball, sweets. Just for you to know, we have severally won the mbuzi and sometimes there are up to four mbuzi. The mbuzi we cooked together the kikuyu way and also celebrated together. The only thing the club facilitated was 'ugali' and it was the one from 'kisiagi'. The ugali was cooked the African way where it was cooked as a whole, we used our hands to cut through it and we shared stories about the symbolic meaning of ugali. Ugali means the unity of Africans and the Kings would talk to his people dependent on the color that represented the people and their crowns has the same color.

## **Work experience**

NYERI LAW COURTS - October – December 2021.

*Accounting practitioner on attachment.*

- a) Preparing the cashbook both in excel and in the books.
- b) Preparing bank reconciliation accurately and efficiently and a comparison between the cashbook and the bank balance using the JFMIS system.
- c) Participated in filling the return for the firm and uploading it to the Kenya revenue authority.

- d) Collecting and issuing receipts for Court services, bonds, cash bail, cash refund.
- e) Booking suppliers in the JFMIS system and paying the suppliers after delivery of service or goods.
- f) Good filing system knowledge.
- g) Creating a back-up system for all accounts done at regular intervals.
- h) Good interpersonal skills, especially when talking with clients and explaining the process clearly.

### **Other Forms of Employment**

Academic writing through online platforms.

### **Partying shot**

Regardless of our personality, work, and intentions, we all matter and our nation matters. Do ordinary things in an extraordinary way to make our needs meet. I celebrate those who give their best and expect nothing in return. Because of our contribution in our nation, we continue to grow and we express our foundations categorically.