MUI

Photocopies of *Muigwithania*, magazine of the Kikuyu Central Association, Kenya

25 items in 1 box, 1928-1929

Apparently made from originals in Kenyan National Archives, Nairobi (DC/MKS/10B (or 108)/13/1). Presented by Professor John Lonsdale, 1990s. Transferred from Library Collections to Archives before June 1997 (Acc.19/53)

Catalogued by Jane Gregory, Henry Martyn Centre Librarian. Catalogue revised with addition of introductory material by Philip Saunders, CCCW Archivist, March 2023

‘*Muigwithania*’, meaning both ‘Newsbearer’ and ‘Unifier’ in Kikuyu, was the principal organ of the Kikuyu Central Association, founded in 1924 by the anti-colonial agitators James Beauttah and Joseph Kang’ethe. The former brought his friend, the very talented and articulate Johnstone alias Jomo Kenyatta (1897-1978), destined to become first president of independent Kenya into the organisation as secretary from 1927. *Muigwithania* was started in 1927 or 1928. The series copied here comprises Kikuyu originals with translations made by the Church of Scotland missionary Arthur Barlow (who among Europeans was uniquely fluent in the language -see Anderson’s *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Mission*) for the colonial government and sent by him to the Police where forwarded by the Superintendent in charge C.I.D. to the District Commissioner of Machakos, in whose files they survive. It wants vol. 1 issue nos. 1 and 2 (apparently pre-dating Barlow’s interest) 5 (apparently lost) and vol. 2 no. 3 ‘due to a shortage of copies’ (though a translation exists), and a few pages of some issues, the latter probably just the result of careless copying. In a footnote to his first translation, of no.3, Barlow opines that the object of the publication ‘is avowedly that of unifying the Kikuyu people’. The British Governor, Edward Grigg, alarmed by the KCA’s opposition to his Land Boards, obtained approval for closing down the publication in late 1929.


Judging by paper quality, the title and first few pages of the original publication in MUI 1 and translations in MUI 2 were photocopied first on A4 paper and then the remaining pages of the original publication photocopied on A3. This later copying was careless and missed some pages.
MUI 1  Photocopies of the original Kikuyu Newspaper

MUI 1/1  Vol. 1 No. 3 (July 1928)
MUI 1/2  Vol. 1 No. 4 (August 1928)
MUI 1/3  Vol. 1 No. 6 (October 1928).  Pages 2-3 wanting.  Page 5 blurred.
MUI 1/4  Vol. 1 No. 7 (November 1928)
MUI 1/5  Vol. 1 No. 8 (December 1928 - January 1929).  Page 8 wanting, page 9 and inset illustration copied on A4, presumably at time of initial copying (see above).
MUI 1/6  Vol. 1 No. 9 (February 1929)
MUI 1/7  Vol. 1 No. 10 (February - March 1929).  Pages 8-9 wanting
MUI 1/8  Vol. 1 No. 11 (April 1929)
MUI 1/9  Vol. 1 No. 12 (May 1929)
MUI 1/10  Vol. 2 No. 1 (June 1929).  Pages 4-5 wanting, page 3 folded over so missed and slightly obscuring page 2.
MUI 1/11  Vol. 2 No. 2 (July-August 1929)

MUI 2  Photocopies of translations made by Arthur Barlow with memoranda of Superintendent of Police forwarding them to District Commissioner, Machakos

MUI 2/1  Vol. 1 No. 3 (July 1928), with memo 10 August.
MUI 2/2  Vol. 1 No. 4 (August 1928), with memo 20 September
MUI 2/3  Vol. 1 No. 6 (October 1928), with memo 24 November.  Refers to previous issue sent on 24 October, i.e. no.5.
MUI 2/4  Vol. 1 No. 7 (November 1928), with memo 30 December.
MUI 2/5  Vol. 1 No. 8 (December 1928 - January 1929), with memo 8 February.
MUI 2/6  Vol. 1 No. 9 (February 1929), with memo 8 March.
MUI 2/7  Vol. 1 No. 10 (February - March 1929), with memo 30 April.
MUI 2/8  Vol. 1 No. 11 (April 1929), with memo 13 June.
MUI 2/9  Vol. 1 No. 12 (May 1929), with memo 23 July.
MUI 2/10  Vol. 2 No. 1 (June 1929), with memo 6 August.
MUI 2/11  Vol. 2 No. 2 (July - August 1929), with memo 7 October.
MUI 2/12  Vol. 2 No. 3 (September 1929), with memo 25 October and ms.  Note that only the translation can be sent due to a shortage of copies.

MUI 3  Correspondence about Muigwithania between the District Commissioner and Superintendent of Police, C.I.D., Nairobi

MUI 3/1  Copy note of Commissioner to Superintendent, pointing out that the printer’s name and publisher was missing from the issues of Muigwithania recently sent and asking if he can share content with other colonial officers, e.g. of Education Department.
10 May 1929

MUI 3/2  Reply of Superintendent thanking him and seeing no objection to his showing the publication to other Administration officers. 21 May 1929