



THINK. BELIEVE. DREAM. AND DARE.
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“First, think. Second, believe. Third, dream. And finally, dare.”

“Gain time to think!” I will never forget the words that Jana Petri, the Scientific Coordinator at the College for Life Sciences, whispered to me early on during my fellowship at Wiko.

She insisted that it was very important to immerse myself in the Wiko experience completely to fully recharge and reset my mind. As soon as I began to dive into my Wiko journey, I decided to live by a Disney World mantra, “*First, think. Second, believe. Third, dream. And finally, dare.*” This quote that welcomes you to Disney World could very well hang on the door as you walk into Wiko. Wiko is like a Disney World for scholars. As soon as you leave where you are from and enter Wiko, you enter *the world of yesterday tomorrow and fantasy* as you encounter scholars from all over the world and from different disciplinary backgrounds and professional affiliations. Like Disney World’s Magic Kingdom with amazing lands to explore and attractions to enjoy, Wiko brings together scholars who together make up the breadth and meaning of life. Wiko is like an intellectual playground with so many swings and places to play and really nourish your intellectual curiosities. From the Wiko lunch and dinner conversations to the Fellows’ colloquia and conversations along the corridors and in the kitchen, minds are constantly sharpening minds.

One of the most significant experiences for me was participating in the Wiko choir. I never imagined that I would find myself joining a choir and singing different genres of songs every Wednesday before embarking on my writing. Being part of the Wiko choir really gave me time to think, believe, dream, and dare again. In fact, after spending time singing songs like “Time after Time” by Cyndi Lauper, “For the Longest Time” by Billy Joel, and others, I was inspired to write a song based on the constitution-making process in Kenya. 2022 marked the twelfth anniversary of Kenya’s Constitution, and I looked back on the journey toward making the constitution and the joyous day when Kenyans finally enacted the new constitution and ushered in a new dawn. The proverbial new dawn symbolized a shift from Kenya’s constitutional history in which Kenya’s story had been told through British colonial lenses to a period in which Kenyans told Kenya’s story in their own words and in their own tongues. A Constitution had just been passed and promulgated into law. I reflected on those moments when our vision, purpose, and feeling as Kenyans were one.

As I reflected on this journey and continued to attend the choir practices on Wednesday, a new idea was born, and I called it “Song of Wanjiku and Song of the Wig.” This song builds on earlier work I had done in which I described Kenya’s legal transformation process in the form of a dance. In this song, I reflected on the challenges of making a constitution that seeks to bring together the views and perspectives of men and women from all walks of life. The song captured the spirit and the heart of my own inner struggles with the law – a struggle to reconcile the tensions between the *law in the books* and the *law in action*, a struggle to reconcile the tension between *tradition and modernity, formalism and informality*,

the international and the local. The song uses the example of the constitution-making process in Kenya to tell a story about an encounter between two modes of legal consciousness. The song used two characters, *Wanjiku* and the *Wig*, to chronicle two opposed but mutually constitutive approaches to thinking about the future of law in Africa. The first character is the *Wig*; the *Wig* represents the lawyers, the judges, the magistrates, the elites, the rulers, the legal profession, and the legal discipline at large, all of whom are trained to value certainty, predictability, and objectivity – the hallmarks of legal formalism.

The second character is *Wanjiku*; *Wanjiku* is an allegorical historical artifact that depicts ordinary men and women. The song is inspired by the dualities that dominate individuals: minds, souls, and bodies in their encounter with foreign norms and institutions, double consciousness, as W.E.B. Dubois would say. What happens when the *Wig* encounters *Wanjiku*? How does the *Wig* experience *Wanjiku*, and what is *Wanjiku*'s reaction to the *Wig*? What kind of conversations will the two have? What types of negotiations will the two have? How do they perceive each other's realities? Is this a joyful union? Is there ever a meeting of minds? When *Wanjiku* encounters the *Wig*, the two are forced to discern a new way of thinking, a new way of describing their world, a new way that attempts to correspond to their realities.

At Wiko, I was constantly surrounded by Fellows, scholars, and wonderful staff who engaged each other in conversations ranging from poverty in China to quantum physics to youth unemployment in Namibia, to architecture. From music to literature to linguistics to religion, to racial politics. Despite our different backgrounds and interests, the Wiko family is committed to the joint pursuit of knowledge and to understanding and overcoming global challenges. Together, the Wiko family makes up the breadth and meanings of life.

Wiko is truly a creative space for the mind and soul. The silence in the office and the beauty of the scenery right outside my office window made for a very conducive environment to strive and thrive in. During my stay this year, I was challenged to think beyond binaries, to explore frontier conversations, to acknowledge the incompleteness of science, to acknowledge multiple identities in the quest for knowledge, to embrace "strangeness," and to adopt advanced hermeneutical and epistemological skills.

Finally, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the entire Wiko community for being so welcoming and supportive. I thank the entire community – it is because of you that I gained time to think, that I believed again in the power of community and scholarship, that I dreamed again about constitution making, and that I finally dared to write a song about the Law. Thanks a million.