

**IMAGES OF ENVIRONMENT IN KIPSIGIS '*TUMDO*' SONGS**

**DOMINIC KIPKOECH NGETICH**

**A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
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**OCTOBER 2014**

**Declaration**

This project is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university.

Candidate

  
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Date: 28/10/2014.....

Dominic Kipkoech Ngetich

This project has been presented with our approval as University supervisors.

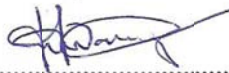
First Supervisor:

  
.....

Date: 31/10/2014.....

Prof Wanjiku Mukabi Kabira

Second Supervisor:

  
.....

Date: 31/10/2014.....

Dr Miriam Musonye

### **Dedication**

For my parents, who took me to school and allowed me to go through the traditional rite of *tumdo* which provided a base to my study on the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs; my wife Gladys, who gave me the much needed moral and material support and my children, Kibet and Cherono whose future knowledge of Kipsigis community is shaped by this study.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	ix
Chapter One: Introduction and Context of the Study .....	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Definition of Terms.....	6
1.2 Problem Statement.....	6
1.3 Objectives of the Study .....	7
1.4 Hypotheses.....	8
1.5 Justification of the Study .....	8
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	14
1.7 Limitations of the Study.....	14
1.8 Theoretical Frame Work .....	16
1.9 Literature Review.....	20
1.10 Methodology of the Study .....	37
1.10.1 Introduction .....	37
1.10.2 Research Design .....	37
1.10.3 Data Collection and Analysis.....	38
Chapter Two: Environmental Images in Kipsigis Tumdo Songs .....	40
2.0 Introduction.....	40
2.1 Background to the Tumdo songs .....	40
2.2 Months and Seasons.....	42
2.3 <i>Tumdo</i> .....	43

2.3.1 <i>Kerotyin</i> (The introductory rite) .....	47
2.3.2 <i>Keyatita</i> (The Circumcision Ceremony) .....	48
2.3.3 <i>Labetab Eun</i> (The Cleaning of hands) .....	49
2.3.4 <i>Ketienjin</i> ( <i>Singing</i> for ‘them’) .....	50
2.3.5 <i>Kayaet</i> (The swinging Ceremony) .....	51
2.4 <i>Tumdo</i> and its relationship with the environment.....	51
2.5 Attitudes towards Animals, Plants and Topography.....	52
2.6 Significance of Environmental images in Kipsigis tumdo Songs.....	58
2.6.1 Plant Imagery .....	59
2.6.1.1 The Pordocarpus tree ( <i>Saptet</i> ) as an image of the Supreme Being .....	61
2.6.1.2 Kelyot tree as an image of fertility .....	63
2.6.1.3 Ketiiyot grass as an image of Favourable Weather conditions. ....	64
2.6.1.4 Bamboo plant as an image of Strength and Endurance.....	66
2.6.1.5 <i>Chepkomon</i> thorn plant as an image of human conflict .....	70
2.6.1.6 Kelyot tree as an image of beauty .....	71
2.6.1.7 The Palm tree branch as an image of Authority .....	73
2.6.1.8 Lelechwet tree as an image of home .....	75
2.6.1.9 Grass as an image of refuge and safety .....	76
2.6.2 Topographical images .....	77
2.6.2.1 Grazing place as an image of responsibility.....	77
2.6.2.2 Water as an image of Transition.....	78
2.6.2.3 Hill as an image of home.....	79
2.6.2.4 Water as an image of life.....	81
2.6.2.5 Rocky area as an image of home.....	82
2.6.2.6 Forest as an image of home .....	83

2.6.2.7 Route as an image of Lineage .....	84
2.6.3 Animal imagery.....	84
2.6.3.1 Rhino as an image of Power.....	86
2.6.3.2 Elephant as images of strength.....	86
2.6.3.3 The hare as an image of wit and intelligence .....	87
2.6.3.4 Interit (Squirrel) as an image of Satisfaction.....	88
2.6.4 Images of Birds .....	88
2.6.4.1 The Ostrich as an image of fierceness.....	88
2.6.4.2 Mashelelet bird as an image of freedom. ....	90
2.6.4.3 Crane Bird as an image wisdom.....	91
2.7 Summary .....	93
Chapter Three: The Philosophy of Kipsigis People in Relation to their Environment.....	95
3.0 Introduction.....	95
3.1 Issues Raised through Environmental Images in Kipsigis <i>tumdo</i> songs.....	96
3.1.1 Issues raised through animal imagery.....	97
3.1.1.1 Courage and Truth .....	98
3.1.1.2 Morality.....	100
3.1.2 Issues raised through plant imagery.....	101
3.1.2.1 Religion and Faith.....	101
3.1.2.2 Peace and economy.....	103
3.1.2.3 Talent and Wisdom .....	106
3.1.3 Issues raised through topographical imagery.....	108
3.1.3.1 Conservation .....	108
3.1.3.2 The Concept of Community and its Responsibility.....	114
3.1.3.3 The utilitarian value of rocks .....	116

3.1.3.4 Water as life Giving .....	117
3.1.3.5 Nature as a common Resource.....	119
3.1.3. 6 Human relationship.....	119
3.1.3.7 The concept of Freedom .....	120
3.1.3.8 Self motivation.....	121
3.2 Summary .....	122
Conclusion .....	123
Works Cited .....	128
Appendix 1: Fieldwork Analysis Guide .....	134
Appendix 2(a): Research Questionnaire .....	135
Appendix 3: People Interviewed.....	137
Appendix 4: Collected songs .....	139
Appendix 5: Analytical Table.....	152
Appendix 6: Map of the study area.....	160
Appendix 7: Menjo Hut Used to House Initiates During Seclusion.....	161



## **Abstract**

The study set out to identify and analyse images of the environment in selected Kipsigis *tumdo* songs, identify environmental issues raised through these images, and finally discuss philosophy of the Kipsigis people as espoused in the songs.

This study used content analysis, and ethnomethodology. Ethnomethodological approach was used to interview *tumdo* participants as well as *tumdo* graduates on their view of the images contained in the songs and their general outlook. Tabulation method was used to analyse important aspects of *tumdo* songs relevant to the study while the structured interview guide was applied in interviewing the chosen community contacts. After the recordings, transcription and close analysis of *tumdo* songs was done. I then proceeded to translate the songs to English language and went through the songs to identify images of environment.

The study was guided by three theoretical approaches. The functionalism theory; as a way of explaining the utilitarian value of the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs under study, ethnopoetics; which assisted me to transcribe and translate the *tumdo* songs as well as ecocriticism; which led to the identification of images of environment in the selected songs.

The findings of this study indicate that; plants, animals, as well as topographical features project images that point out the community's view of these environmental features. Instructively, Kipsigis *tumdo* songs communicate social issues through the use of images of environment. The philosophical issues raised includes; courage and truth, morality,

community's economy religion and faith, conservation, the utilitarian value of rocks, water as a key resource and good inter-relationship among the people.

An area that requires further research is if girls' *tumdo* songs also contain images of environment and project the philosophy of the Kipsigis people as compared to the boys' *tumdo* songs. The girl initiation is no longer practised but the results of this study indicate that the socio- cultural aspects of the *tumdo* process are valuable. Application of wise sayings in Kipsigis *tumdo* process to enhance environmental conservation would also need further work. In Kipsigis *tumdo* songs we can be able to find images drawn from the immediate physical environment. Indeed environment is not only central to the Kipsigis culture but also significant to its poets and song composers among other oral literature artists.

## **Chapter One: Introduction and Context of the Study**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The physical world is quite significant in literature. Over a long period of time writers, poets and playwrights have either commented on or used nature to create their art. Indeed the emphasis of nature has been reflected in literature of all epochs from classical, medieval to modern and this has continued to the 21<sup>st</sup> century literature. African oral as well as written literature demonstrates this feature. Nature cannot be left out in these literatures; nature is everywhere and without it we cannot have literature. The basis of literature is therefore found in our environment.

While commenting on the English poetry Beach J. W, points out that;

For nearly two centuries it was a fashion among poets to sing praises of abstract nature in terms that to our own critical spirit seem extravagant and often well-nigh ridiculous. And yet these romantic poets were in general men of strong and cultivated and unusual subtlety of mind. What they wrote, it is reasonable to suppose, cannot have been sheer nonsense. Indeed, we continue to read their nature-poetry with deep sympathy and an emotional response which we cannot altogether repudiate, however apologetic we may feel about it in our more rationalistic moods (Beach 3).

He further observes that;

The refining influence of nature is a constant theme with Wordsworth. It is... a central motif of 'The Prelude' in his account of his own spiritual development... addressed to the 'wisdom and spirit of the Universe' Wordsworth congratulates

himself that, in his childhood the ‘passions that build up the human soul’ were intertwined, Not with the mean and vulgar works of man;/ But with high objects, with enduring things, /with life and nature; purifying thus/the elements of feeling and of thought...” (Beach 31)

It can be deduced that environment is a significant feature in literature: We cannot study a text without reflecting on its setting. On the same note an oral literature piece cannot be removed from its context without losing its literary meaning. Literature needs the environment for its content and context. In other words in describing the immediate environment the poets points out the elements of environment. Worthwords is among the early English poets to have discovered that environment is really important to literature.

Gerald Moore in his article; ‘Literature and Environment in East Africa’ points out that; “...one feature of our... literature ...is ...a gentle love of the fields, groves ,hills and an embrace of all living things that walk upon them or grow within them” (Kavila 13). Moore whose study is focused on Ngugi Wa Thiongo’s text,*The River Between*, brings out the significance of environment in human psychological development. Moore has therefore led us to realize the key inter-relationship between literature and environment.

CiarunjiChesaina postulates that;

Climatic and other geographical characteristics influence, not only people’s settlement patterns but also their world view. The Sebeei for example, revere Mount Elgon (Mount Kony) because it gives them a point of reference and refuge. The grass around the mountain gives sustenance for their cattle. In the traditional era, the caves on the mountain provided shelter and refuge for the Sebeei. The

sun, *Asis* (also referred to as *Chebet* or *Cheptalel*), is regarded as a divine and powerful supernatural force in the universe. The sun is invoked in times of need and it is believed that it affects the turn of events in the people's lives (2).

All these scholars demonstrate that the environment is a central phenomenon in literature. It is therefore necessary to study Oral literature and environment. This study dwells on Kipsigis *tumdo* songs whose composition depends a lot on environment. The images of environment have been represented well in most Kenyan poems, songs and other genres of oral literature.

Peter Wasamba, in his paper; 'Conservation for Sustainable Development: The unexplored potential of Kenyan Folklore,' claims that, "...oral artists in Kenya are inspired in their compositions and renditions of folklore by their immediate environments. This in part explains why our songs, epics, narratives, proverbs and riddles are replete with imagery from the landscapes we are familiar with" (11)

Environment and its application in oral art can be adequately handled first, by tracing the history of the Kipsigis. This will reveal the significance of the environment in the community in question and specifically its application in oral literature. Orchardson charts the Kipsigis history by commenting that;

In the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the fathers of Maina age set, were warriors, the Kipsigis, Nandi, Tugen, Keiyo and Marakwet were one people. They lived in the land called To, situated probably north of the present day Tugen and Keiyo and not far from the lake called Camos (Baringo). There were people living in that country called the Miot, Teremut, Lutyay and Mwitan who may have been

the ancestors of the Kipsigis and Nandi people. They are remembered as splendid, well conducted people and to this day when the children are praised they are called the children of the Miot, Teremut, Lutyay and the Mwitan' (Orchardson 4).

It is my view that, To could be the present day Tot in Elgeiyo Marakwet County, but it is beyond the scope of this study to expand on this assumption.

The Kalenjin is not a single tribe but a group of linguistically related communities. The formation of the term 'Kalenjin' can be traced to Alliance High school at Independence when a group of students sat down to coin it. As Robert Daniels comments;

A few years after World War II, a small number of students from Kipsigis, Nandi, Tugen and Keiyo tribes were attending Alliance High School near Nairobi... Recognizing their common cultural and linguistic ties, and responding to at least in part to the presence of Kikuyu Student Association and Luo Student Association, they formed their own society. There was no traditional name for the set of 'Nandi-speaking' tribes, and so after considering several terms they chose to call themselves Kalenjin(Daniels 199-200).

Kipsigis is therefore one of the communities of the Kalenjin of Kenya with its own independent culture.Kipsigis area is composed geographically of three parts: Belgut in the North, Bureti in the Middle and Sot (ik) in the south. Sot is the present Bomet Central, Sotik and Chebalungu Sub Counties within Bomet County. Belgut, whose name means, warm mouth, meaning a good grazing land is the present day Kericho County. (See, Map appendix 6).

As Orchardson comments;

Every hill, river ridge and space between two streams which can be differentiated has its own name. These names are derived from geographical features, a tree or plant, or from some now forgotten man or incident. Such small localities are called '*korosiek*' (singular *koret*). '*Kokwet*,' means a group of people living in several adjoining '*Korosiek*'" (Orchardson 2)

Taaita Towet explains that; 'On the Eastern side of Londiani, is a big and rather steep hill which the Kipsigis call *Tulwaap Ng'heetik*(the hill of circumcision/ boys), where the Kipsigis circumcised their boys immediately they separated from the Nandi group' (Taaita Towet 11).

Geographical features used to name a village could arguably mean that environment is a very important feature in the Kipsigis philosophy. Geographical features also are significant in the social institutions of the Kipsigis and particularly to the rite of *tumdo*. In this study I have chosen Kipsigis *tumdo* songs based on the fact that there are identifiable images of environment in them. These environmental images have drawn my attention especially when I contemplate the relationship between environment and literature. I have also been persuaded to carry out this study with an intention of finding out if traditional singers also encouraged their audience to conserve their environment. In addition to this I have noted cases of environmental degradation in the areas occupied by modern day communities.

I wish to identify features derived directly from environment in oral literature particularly in the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs .The environmental significance in the Kipsigis world view

will be subjected to our investigation. Since the Kipsigis society resides in water catchment areas, my concern is to find out whether their *tumdo* songs calls for conservation of environment since the ignorance of environmental conservation may lead to what Glotfelty refer to as; ‘...the troubling awareness that we have reached...a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet’s basic human life support systems’ (Kavila 7).

### **1.1 Definition of Terms**

This section defines key terms as used in the context of the project. The key words defined are, *tumdo*, image and philosophy.

***Tumdo*** is the Kipsigis initiation ritual. It includes the circumcision rite, ‘the singing for them rite,’ ‘the swinging rite’, ‘the hands cleaning rite’ and the ‘opening the way rite.’ All these five rites define the *tumdo* process. In this study I have therefore used *tumdo* songs to refer to the songs sung during the five stages of *tumdo* process.

An **image** refers to ‘a concrete representation of a sense of impression, a feeling or an idea. Imagery refers to; the pattern of related details in a work of art,’ according to Di Yanni (1745). Imagery therefore according to our study is a pattern of related details in the *tumdo* songs.

**Philosophy** has been used in this study to refer to the most basic beliefs, concepts, and attitudes of an individual or group.

### **1.2 Problem Statement**

Scholarly works on oral literature of the Kalenjin have placed their focus on Kalenjin community in general without giving Kipsigis community much focus. It is therefore necessary to study the Kipsigis oral literature and in particular *tumdo* songs since the



*tumdo* songs contain elements that are specifically from the Kipsigis community and rich in terms of environmental features.

Issues of environment in Kipsigis oral literature have also received little attention. The study therefore will bring to focus the images of environment in Kipsigis oral literature. This study aims at investigating environmental images in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. It seeks to relate these images with the philosophy of the Kipsigis people.

Preliminary survey carried out by myself indicates that Kipsigis *tumdo* songs, is a very rich area in terms of images of environment. The study in this area has however not received enough attention. The locality occupied by the Kipsigis is a rich environment which acts as a water tower for the better part of Western Kenya and Lake Victoria. They occupy areas that border Mau forest which has been reported to be facing depletion. This is a concern of ecocritics and as a result this study aims to find out if the community's folklore and in particular *tumdo* songs address these concerns.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

This study has three objectives to;

- (i) Identify and analyse images of the environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.
- (ii) Identify key environmental issues raised by the Kipsigis *tumdo* singers through the use of these images.
- (iii) Discuss philosophy of the Kipsigis people particularly in regard to environment as presented through the images of environment in their *tumdo* songs.

#### **1.4 Hypotheses**

- (i) Kipsigis *tumdo* songs contain images derived from the environment to communicate their messages.
- (ii) These images can help us understand the Kipsigis way of life and their attitude towards environment.
- (iii) The philosophy of the Kipsigis community in regard to the environment can be understood through images of environment in their *tumdo* songs.

#### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

Nature occupies a central place in literature. Classical Greek drama which began at the festivals in honour of Dionysus (Bacchus), god of fertility celebrated nature. The seasons which are aspects of environment were taken into considerations during the festivals. According to Baldry, H. C; 'Two main festivals of Dionysus provided the setting for drama. At the Great Dionysia, the spring festival of the god, and again on a minor scale at his winter festival, the Lanaea...' (65-66).

Rose, H.J, comments on the contribution of Athens herself to literature of Greece;

The geographical position of Attica made it easy for the inhabitants to enter into relations at once with their Kinsfolk in Ionia and with the neighbouring peoples of Boiotia and the Peloponnesos... At these festivals all manner of feats including...mental skills such as recitations, vocal and instrumental music and especially various kinds of concerted performances such as dithyramps were performed... the native good taste which seemed to have marked Athenians even more than the generality of Greeks, together with a certain reverence for antiquity

prevented the fondness for novelty from running to absurd lengths and neglecting what the past had to teach... one great and abundantly successful innovation resulted in the creation of drama.(127-128)

Romantic period poets too such as; Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley and Mary Shelley, also foregrounded nature in their works. Wilson Milton says of Percy Bysshe Shelley;

When he represent our common world (for example, in Lines Written among the Euganean Hills, The Invitation, Ode To the West Wind or The Cloud), Shelley gives us a screen of process and change, full of images fusing and unfusing, against a nature reduced, abstracted, geometrized – permanence fighting change, the skeleton visible through the veil of flux, “Demogorgon’s mighty law” intersecting the abyss. It reduced, skeletal side of Shelley’s view of nature that was stimulated by his appreciation of Italian poetry particularly ‘The Deep Truth’ by Pulos;

*On the beach of the northern sea  
Which tempests shake eternally  
As once the wretch there lay to sleep,  
Lies a solitary heap,  
One white skull and seven dry bones,  
On the margin of the stones,  
Where a few grey rushes stand,  
Boundaries of the sea and land.*

(287-288)

*Frankenstein*, a novel by Mary Shelley places the created monster in the natural world and because of this; his creator finds it difficult to destroy it. Likewise the Kipsigis *tumdo* singer uses nature to create his or her *tumdo songs*. The *tumdo* singer appreciates nature and comments on it.

On Ralph Waldo Emerson, for instance, Sculley notes that;

the poet, the orator, bred in the woods, whose senses have been nourished by their fair and appeasing changes year after year, without design and without heed, shall not lose their lessons altogether, in the roar of cities and the broil of politics. Long here-after, amidst agitation and terror in national councils-these solemn images shall reappear in their morning luster, as fit symbols and words of the thought which the passing events shall awaken. At the call of the noble sentiment, again the woods wave ...the pines murmur, the river rolls and shines and the cattle low upon the mountains as he saw and heard them in his infancy. And with these forms, the spells of persuasion, the keys of power are put into his hands (Sculley 1049).

Baldry, Rose, Emerson and Milton are scholars who studied the western poetry. They all agree that nature is an important aspect in literature. They therefore reinforce the focus of this study which is images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. Indeed environmental aspects have attracted many scholars attention since the early times. We cannot overemphasize this significance by focusing on environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

Miriam Maranga while commenting on the works of Soyinka states that;

In Soyinka's drama one finds rituals that are performed in traditional Yoruba ceremonies. By using them in his creative works Soyinka transfers these rituals from their original contexts and brings them to the context of his drama ...one set of ritual which is used to transform individuals in society is the rites of passage. These are ceremonies of status transition and they include rituals of parenthood, birth, youth, marriage and death... In Soyinka's creative works we see characters attempting to negotiate desired results by engaging in rituals. Elesin in '*Death and the King's Horseman*' hopes to make transition from the world of the living to that of ancestors through engaging in various rituals such as dancing and making ceremonial journey through the market square. In '*The Road*', Professor and other characters engage in rituals, in an attempt to come to terms with their existence (19-22).

Within this ritual of creativity abounds. This is especially seen in the creation of songs. The songs' audiences, as well as performers are similar to the characters in Soyinka's creative works whose transformation result from their indulgence in rituals. The Kipsigis also transform their initiates through the rituals of *tumdo*. They transform individual's outlook to his / her environment through the literature found within the ritual and specifically the *tumdo* songs.

According to Sterling in his article 'The (Un) Broken Cycle in *Death and the King's Horseman*';

...what Soyinka hopes to underscore and tap into his construction of ritual archetypes, is the collective understanding of unique metaphysical traditions that bring God to life in the body of the human agent...it is for this reason that African

writers, poets and thinkers look at them as paradigms for creative inspirations...It requires the African intelligentsia to delve into the communal repository of knowledge, not just for creative inspiration or engagement, but for alternative ways in which to consider and correlate Africa's fragmentary identities, seen through the nexus of social and political transformations, fields of place in the global dynamic (5).

In the poem *Song of Lawino* sub titled 'The graceful giraffe cannot become a monkey,' he employs images of nature such as; leopard, hyena, and the pumpkin;

*No leopard  
Would change into a hyena  
And the crested crane  
Would hate to be changed  
Into the bald-headed,  
Dung eating vulture  
The long-necked graceful giraffe  
Cannot become a monkey  
Let no one  
Uproot the pumpkin (P' Bitek 34).*

Okot P' Bitek also acknowledges the significance of environment in his poems when he talks of the images of 'pumpkin in the old homestead' and 'that the graceful giraffe cannot become a monkey'. In Okot P' Bitek's view we should not allow ourselves to uproot our traditions and replace the western modes of life. Like the society losing the pumpkin, we only lose by uprooting them. This is also the case with the changes which result from Westernization. Okot P' Bitek uses the physical features like animals to point out that our African image is more fulfilling than the western image which we yearn for.

The environmental images in the poem such as that of 'crane bird', that of the 'bald headed' ugly vulture, the 'long-necked giraffe' and the 'monkey,' brings out this so well

Tom Michael Mboya in his article; 'The Pained Face in the Cracked Mirror: Postcolonial African Identity in the form of Okot P' Bitek's Song of Ocol' suggests;

The disparate ideas in the whole poem are held together by recurring images, the most important of which are the 'old homestead and the city.' The 'old homestead' is the repository of everything traditional African, which in Ocol's view must be discarded... These things traditional have been '*Vanguished*'... *the village world/... is gone/ swept away/ by fierce fires/ of progress and civilization...*The "city" is home to everything European; is "civilization". Being such it must be embraced...The point about Ocol's awareness of the unease that comes with his(and, generally the postcolonial African elite's) inevitable embracing of the west really only comes through in the form of Song of Ocol. As does the point about the impossibility of his repudiating traditional Acholi culture ... (17- 21)

Tom Michael Mboya has identified the environmental images in Song of Lawino and has pointed out the fact that African poets cannot avoid using images from their immediate environments to create their poems. In Song of Lawino the village and the city environments are mentioned and described. I therefore wish to underscore the significance of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs and hence point out the importance of engaging critical attention on the images of environment in the songs under study.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The major focus of the study is the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. The songs that are sung during the *tumdo* period are studied in this research. During the December 2013 initiation period, I collected ten songs which have been subjected to study. These songs were collected during the *tumdo* ceremonies and from the secluded initiates after their circumcision that took place in December 2013. I also collected more than ten additional *tumdo* songs from the Kipsigis community contacts. I then interviewed and recorded the feedback of eleven *tumdo* participants on their views on the images of environment found in the songs they performed for me and the songs already collected. I sought their comments on environmental images found in the songs. Our interest was on the uses of these images.

I also collected and analyzed documented *tumdo* songs which I came across in published texts, such as *The Kipsigis* by I.A Orchardson, *Social Institutions of the Kipsigis* by J. G Peristiany. These two texts have documented the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs which are useful to the study. All these were examined to pick and analyze the various images of environment that are contained in them. The songs that were analyzed are the songs that are sung during the initiation of the boys. These songs were studied to identify the philosophy of the Kipsigis community.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The study examined a selected variety of *tumdo* songs. The limitation of this study is that the Kipsigis *tumdo* period is full of secrecy and the respondents seem to be reluctant in performing the songs outside the context of initiation. As observed by Chesaina; “songs



related to ritual have restrictions not only of time and place but also of qualification of the participants...it is a taboo to sing songs related to ritual outside their social context”(18).

Beidelman, also comments that initiation is;

...often surrounded by a veil of secrecy. Yet most of what is learned during initiations is not a profound revelation of new knowledge, but rather a poetic and imaginative reconsideration of the familiar. Beidelman is concerned about secrecy in initiation and how imagery enhances this secrecy (Peek and Yankah 408).

Our study sought to address how these images portray the societal philosophy and way of thinking.

Secondly interpretation was hampered by individual interpretations since the community contacts responded according to their own individual interpretation which may be different from the common societal interpretation. The researcher sought to overcome this limitation through the use of ethno methodological concepts advocated by Okoth Okombo where the society is given a chance to point out the best in their literature Okombo in his article “The Place of Ethnomethodology in the Study of Oral Literature,” suggest that; ‘The spirit of ethnomethodology is based on the recognition by social scientists of the fact that human communities are not just communities of naive actors, they are also communities of analysts, who reflect and pass judgements on their own actions’ (22).

The focus of this study was on the images of environment. The study was also, limited by the fact that few studies have been carried out on the relationship between environment and the *tumdo* songs of the Kipsigis.

### **1.8 Theoretical Frame Work**

This study employs three theories in its quest to approach the problem of the study. These are functionalism, ethno poetics and ecocriticism. Functionalism views oral poetry as an embodiment of beliefs, customs and rituals that need to be maintained. For functionalists emphasis is on the idea that the purpose and use of an object should bring out its shape and construction. The main proponents of functionalism are; Bronislaw Malinowski, Radcliffe Brown, and Emile Durkheim. According to Hezekiel Njau Njoroge in his article ‘Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to Riddling,’

...this theory emphasizes that in order to explain a social phenomenon, one must first discover the cause that produces it and the function that it fulfills in the total social activity” (128).

Miruka concurs with Njau by concluding that; “...any cultural activity must have utilitarian value for its people. Functionalist sees society as a stable entity perpetuated by various cultural activities. This theory places its emphasis on the need to look for the causes of an aspect.

According to Miruka, functionalism is; ‘by far the most persistent theory in the study of oral literature. It in effect proposes absolutist way of looking at life as a construct maintained by selected immutable principles and perhaps processes that must be perpetuated” (136).

The society has however been said to be dynamic. As Observed by Miruka;

...neo-functionalists Raymond Firth and Edmund Leech states that society is not a functional unity but there are always mitigating 'emergent conflicts'. From a sociological point of view, conflict is in fact necessary and inevitable for society to function. In which case, the fact that there is always conflict when there is apparent consensus mean that the society is in a functional disunity, a view held by structural functionalists' (Miruka 136).

The study shall therefore place the society in its focus and in agreement with the functionalist and neo-functionalist take both the features of unity reflected in the poems and the elements of disunity as areas of our concern and study. Functionalism in this study will also help us in the identification of images of environment and their uses in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

The study also uses the theory of ecocriticism to understand the research findings. Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Ecocriticism and green studies are terms used to denote a critical approach which began in the USA in the late 1980s and in the UK in the early 1990s.

In the USA the acknowledged founders are Cheryl Glotfelty, Michael P Branch and the prominent US Eco critic Karl Kroeber. According to Branch both terms; "eco criticism and ecological lay dormant until the 1989 WLA conference in Coeur d' Alene, USA, when CherylGlotfelty not only revived the term Ecocriticism but urged its adoption to diffuse critical field that had previously been known as the study of nature writing" (264).

Cheryl Glotfelty in her paper; 'What is Ecocriticism'? In Association for the study of literature states that; "...We are facing a global crisis today...because of how our ethical systems function. Getting through the crisis requires understanding our impact on nature as precisely as possible, but even more it requires understanding these ethical systems and using that understanding to reform them. Literary scholars specialize in questions of value, meaning, tradition, point of view and language and it is in these areas that we are making a substantial contribution to environmental issues"(Glotfelty 1). Glotfelty's concerns are pointing out the value of literature to environmental conservation.

Ecocriticism as it now exists in the USA,takes its theoretical bearing from three major nineteenth- century American writers whose work celebrate nature, the life force and the wilderness as manifested in America, these being transcendentalists.By contrast the UK version of Eco Criticism or green studies takes it's bearing from British Romanticism. The founding figure on the British side is Jonathan Bate.

Ecocritics read literary works with particular attention to the representation of the natural world. They apply a number of ecocritic ideas. They also give special emphasis to the writers who foreground nature as major parts of their subject matter. In addition they extend the range of literary critical practice by placing emphasis on relevant factual writing especially reflective topographical material.Furthermore they turn away from the social constructivism and linguistic determination of dominant literary theories (with their emphasis on the linguistic and social contractedness of the external word) and instead emphasize egocentric values of meticulous observation, collective ethical responsibility.

In my study, I have analyzed songs and identified images of environment using the ecocriticism theory. By placing my focus on the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs, we hope to have addressed the issue of regional literature which is a concern of ecocritics. The study was guided by ecocriticism since our focus was to identify aspects of nature in the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. The study also aimed at identifying images which the song composers used to advocate for care of environment in the Kipsigis situation.

Ethno poetics is a third theory that was applied to this study. It is a theory whose origin is the USA. Ethno poetics focuses on the aesthetic and poetic structuring of oral art. Its methodology and theoretical foundations lie in pragmatics, phenomenology, sociolinguistics, ethno/methodology conversion analysis, the ethnography of speaking and the performance approach in American folklore studies.

This approach is advanced along two lines of perception by two researchers of the texts collected from American Indians. These are Dell Hymes and Dennis Tedlock. The Dell Hymes' strand of ethno poetics is based on the idea that works of verbal art are subtle organizations of lines and verses and that the lines and verses are organized in ways that are not only poetic but also a kind of rhetoric action in that they embody an implicit cultural scheme for the organization of reports on that experience. The Hymes' strand therefore focuses on the stylistic and grammatical features in order to find out the formal poetic structure of a text and the underlying rhetoric form in the text it also employs a structural form and mainly bases on written texts.

Dennis Tedlock's strand places emphasis on the oral nature of texts and the dependence of the organization of texts upon lines. In presentation each line is put forth in such a way

as to render is fullest available charge of texture: rhythm, nuance, phrasing and metaphors; factors which may depend on relation to other lines by parallelism, redundancy and grouping. This approach stresses on the aural qualities in performance (variation in pitch, volume, vowel length among others) are central to the organization of speech.

Tedlock and his followers advocate for fieldwork, insisting that all the material studied must have been collected and transcribed by the researcher studying it, who presents and interpret the text as it was heard during performance. The Tedlock strand thus recognizes the role of paralinguistic and supra-segmental features in interpretation of real meaning of an oral performance. Our study of the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs employed the Tedlock's strand of ethno poetics to inform the study. It did this by ensuring that the *tumdo* songs were recorded as heard and transcribed.

### **1.9 Literature Review**

This section aims to review, literature and nature, literature and imagery, oral literature and environment, the Kalenjin oral literature, and oral literature of the Kipsigis with an aim of contextualizing the study.

#### **Studies on Literature and Nature**

Beach (1956) carried out a study on the concept of nature in the Nineteenth-Century English poetry and concluded that;

...the conception of nature as the animating principle of the universe is dominant on Goethe, who...makes more of the mere energy of nature than most poets do.

Nature as the animating principle of things is the subject of much Eighteenth-Century poetry such as the passage in Cowpers 'table Talk' beginning;

*Nature exerting unwearied power form*

*Forms open and give scent to every flower*

(Beach 48).

Beach's focus is on English poetry and elements of nature within the works of English poets. He is out to prove the influence of nature on Eighteenth Century English poetry. This study was however aimed at looking at the way environment is portrayed in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs which is part of African oral literature. On my part I aimed to identify images of environment and discuss the issues that they bring out in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

Faith Kavila (2013) in her study entitled 'The Theme of Environmental Conservation in Different Colours and Terrorist of Aberdare by Ng'ang'a Mbugua' posits that environmental critics in literature encourage others to think seriously about the relationships of human beings to nature, the ethical and aesthetic dilemmas posed by environmental crisis and how language and literature transmits values with profound ecological application.

Whereas Kavila focuses on the written literature of *Different Colours* and *Terrorist of Aberdares* this study looks at how the *tumdo* singer use imagery from immediate environment to address their major concerns and project the philosophy of the Kipsigis people.

Wanjiku Mukabi Kabira in her article ‘Story tellers and the Environment. Groundwork: African women as Environmental Managers’ points out that; “...artist... depends so much on environment to make its performance complete...the ...story teller preserves the environment through her stories”(70). Kabira’s focus is on women narratives unlike the focus of this study which is on *tumdo* songs.

Hellen Oronga Mwanzi in her article; ‘Conjuring back the Ecosystem for Posterity’ in *Our Landscapes, Our Narratives*, holds that,

...the environment is there for us to exploit, for we rely on it entirely for our very existence – air, food and water. Nonetheless the environment must be treated with caution. It has several dos and don’ts which human beings must obey if they hope to live in harmony with their environment; otherwise they will face the fate of Adam and Eve – being chucked out of the Garden altogether ... In the oral literature of Luyha communities of East Africa, this interaction - **between man and his environment** (my own emphasis) is dominant. Animal stories are based in an environment that is secure and assuring both man and beast security. These stories were told with a view of enhancing respect for environment and with the long objective of preserving it for posterity (3-4).

Mwanzi’s study is on Luyha narratives and songs while this study is on Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. Mwanzi in her study advocates for environmental care as her major objective. My study was however focused on imagery formed from environment and environmental conservation only came out as an issue. Other issues that were brought out by the images of environment in *tumdo* song are courage, religion and morality among others.



Arthur I Luvai, in his article; ‘The Environment and the Lulogooli proverb’ in *Our Landscapes, Our Narratives*, decries the changes in environment that makes the lulogooli proverb irrelevant by stating,

...a changed and changing environment threatens the well being of the traditional lulogooli proverb. Change in economic activities for livelihood has resulted in changes in culture and vice versa. The movement of Maragoli people in search of land means that some of the proverbs make reference to the environments that have been left behind in history and space. The situation is compounded by the fact that presently, the language itself is not guaranteed mother tongue status in an ever – increasing number of homesteads. The impacts of formal education and Christianity have been the most powerful agents of this overall change. In this regard it is doubtful that the proverb can be used directly as a tool for environmental conservation efforts (39).

Luvai’s study is on the use of Lulogooli proverb to conserve environment. He also comments on the effects of Christianity and changing language on the stability of the proverb as a genre used to encourage environmental conservation. . My study takes a different trajectory. It deals with images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

Ciarunji Chesaina in her paper, “Perspective on the Oral narrative as appropriate Tool for Children’s Education on Environment” postulates, ‘...the narratological techniques of the oral narrative genre capture and maintain children’s attention in such a way as to persuade them on various issues. The interaction of the narration with singing makes it possible to involve children’s emotions and involve them at various points of

conflict. Fantasy transports children into surreal worlds, and thus inspiring them to give critical attention to environmental issues' (37 – 38)

Chesaina's focus is on the effect of both narratives and accompanying song on the attitudes of children towards their environment. This study is however focused on the effect of images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs on the philosophy of the Kipsigis young and old adult on the issues of their environment.

Emily Ogutu, while commenting on the relationship between proverbs and environment in her article "Our Flora and Fauna in our Proverbs and Sayings," states,

Human language is used to indicate the objects and express ideas of the physical and social worlds. The natural world contains the flora and fauna, which lend themselves, to the symbolic use in proverbs. The proverbs communicate the people's basic beliefs and values and help to link, in a clear manner, the physical environment and the social life of the people. When the proverbs full ... images from environment are used in everyday discourse then people interpreting proverbs have to refer to the environment all the time ... The imagery used displays similarities and differences among, people, plants and animals... The people are able, not only to observe the cultural norms conveyed by the proverbs, but also to know and be consciously aware of the plants and animals used in the genre. The proverbs carry the wisdom and wit of the ancestors, their cultural ways and their world view. The environment is clearly understood and cherished. This lead to a close link between people and the environment, as it is seen to be helping in the communication of wisdom (51 – 52).

While ogutu's focus is on the link provided through the proverbs with people and environment, this study is basically investigating the images of environment in *tumdo* songs. This study is therefore focused on song as a genre in oral literature as opposed to proverbs which is also a different class of oral literature.

Catherine Muhoma and Wangari Mwai, in their paper "Behind Every Natural Landscape: A Re –Telling of Realistic orature from Luo Nyanza," points out,

There are 'real' or tangible sites that have narratives behind them. This is not an isolated case for Lake Victoria region. Indeed every landscape has a story protecting it. Sometimes such a landscape may be used to sustain a social and a real historical landscape. For instance the Lwanda Magere stone can be said on one hand to record the historical wars between the Luo and the Lang'o and on the other to teach the young people against marriages with people belonging to tribes that are at war with their own (76).

Muhoma and Mwai's study is on narratives that present landscapes of Siaya, a rural area in Nyanza in western region of Kenya. This study on the contrary is focused on *tumdo* songs from the Kipsigis community. It aims to find out if the environment is used in the *tumdo* songs to discuss other contemporary issues.

Sangili in his paper "Shifting towards East African Ecological Criticism in Oral Literature: An Ecoanalysis of the Maragoli songs" points out that; "...the birth of ecocriticism as a field was to acknowledge the existence of... nature in all kinds of artistic works" (Kavila 10). Sangili's focus is in The Maragoli songs and nature in them.

The focus of this study is however on the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. The gap which I aim to fill is whether nature is used to point out other societal issues.

Muleka in his article, *Our Physical and Oral Heritage: A link*, observes that,

‘Civilisation’ does change folklore but it does not destroy it. Likewise the adulteration or destruction of the physical heritage does not ‘kill’ the oral heritage. It simply changes it. Our concern therefore, is not that we are ever going to lack oral literature (there will always be oral literature). Instead our concern is that with the continued depletion of environment, the dependant oral literature may change to the extent that it does not own what we would like to consider as the archetype model, i.e. oral literature born from the traditional Knowledge of our environment. If we allow this heritage to change face completely, our old fables to which we attach so much importance may become an empty shell leaving us no better than people without heritage...the relationship between the physical and the oral heritage... the two are interdependent, the oral describing the physical and the latter providing the former with its raw material (61 - 62).

Muleka’s study attempts to demonstrate that destruction of environment does not eliminate oral literature but changes its contents and loses its values. This study is however narrowed down to the images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. In contrast with Muleka’s study it looks at how the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs aid in the development of a particular attitude and way of thinking of the Kipsigis community towards their environment.

## **Studies on Imagery**

Imagery in literature has been widely studied. Chesaina (1991) comments that; ‘the intention of a circumcision song is achieved through the use of imagery’ (Chesaina 117-118). Our study will seek to identify the relationship between the observed images and the community’s way of thinking.

In the article “Okot p’ Bitek and the use of Oral Literature,” Monica Mweseli points out that Okot P’ Bitek “utilizes Acoli images successfully... use of the African images in his poems helps him retain the meaning of the African ideas he is presenting. For instance the proverb ‘The pumpkin in the old homestead/Must not be uprooted’... is central to the whole poem, *Song of Lawino*” (160).

Mweseli’s study focuses on the way African images makes P’ Bitek’s poems meaningful. She makes a statement; that the environment is embedded in African life and philosophy. My study will however look at the way images of environment will address issues related to environmental conservation and in particular focus on Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. I also intend to study other issues emerging as a result of the images of environment in the *tumdo* songs. Unlike Mweseli’s study who takes environment as part of the African philosophy my study is that environment is a channel through which we can identify the philosophical concepts within the Kipsigis community as a representative of African communities.

According to Tve in her study of Elizabethan and metaphysical imagery, ‘...images carry into poetry the sights and sound of the physical world’ (Tve 3). Tve is however

interested in Elizabethan and metaphysical poetry. Our study, on the other hand places its emphasis on Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

Trivedi (1991) carried out a study on imagery and children's literature in Kenya and confirmed that imagery is 'a literary agent which fulfills a cognitive function and, thus helps in positively shaping the value system and the outlook of children.'(104). While our study is geared towards the use of imagery to enhance a specific way of thought it is on the other hand focused on the *tumdo* songs and the Kipsigis initiate in particular.

Muleka (2007) carried out a study on images of women in Abakhayo, Bweya Oral Poetry and found out that;

Messages which were often wrapped in images are gently put forward ...some of the messages are rendered in persuasive language, others ... prescriptive ...it is impossible for girl children to resist the messages in the poems. The poems are communal affair; it is for example the marrying girl versus the community. Similarly to the role Bweya poetry plays in the effort to communicate the same expectations to the very girl child is clear...the poems contribute significantly to the behaviour of the girl child and their total interaction in society" (Muleka 156).

Our study though mainly dealing with images on the initiation of boys is however focused on images of environment in the songs. The assumption made here of course is that each member of the society is accessed to the performance of some if not all the *tumdo* songs performed. It should be noted that some songs were sung in presence of all members of the family while others were sung in seclusion.

Studies have been carried out to show how images have been used to express psychological concerns of certain social groups. Musonye (2010) carried out a study on images of peace, conflict and displacement in refugee children and found out that;

Although the narratives of refugee children dealt with a wide range of issues they revolved around three core themes: food / resource management and distribution, the relationship between children and adults and finally socio-economic relationships (186).

Musonye also makes a statement on images that;

The narrative images used by the refugee children to express the phenomena of peace, conflict and displacement were based on elements in the lives of children that were related to meeting of their survival, safety and belonging needs. Consequently different aspects of food, friendship and quarrels were the dominant images used to express peace and conflict. Availability of food, fairness in harnessing it and equitability in its distribution were the key elements that cast food as an image of peace... scarcity/lack of food, unfairness in its harnessing and inequity in its distribution were the key factors that transformed food from the image of peace to an image of conflict... peace can only occur when resources are adequate and equitably distributed (189).

Our focus is on the other hand is geared towards oral literature and specifically, Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. It aims to address how images are used to inculcate in an audience certain ways in which the circumcised boys ought to behave and especially as concerns with their environment.

Solomon Waliaula and Tobias Otieno, in their Paper “Proverbs and Ecological Balance: A case of Bukusu Proverbs,” points out that,

As evident in the imagery of the Bukusu proverbs, this community has been exposed to wildlife for a long time. Their patterns of migration led them around Mount Masaba (Elgon)...This region is covered by forested land, which is habitat to wild life. Indeed the Babukusu totem is *lirango lienjofu* (thigh of the elephant). Most of the clans also have wild animal totems (79).

Waliaula and Otieno’s study is on Babukusu proverbs. They observe that the Babukusu proverbs have been affected by the environment in which the community lives in. They also point out that the community has totems from the wild animals. This study is on images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. Its focus is on how images of environment influence the philosophy of the Kipsigis people.

### **Studies on Oral Literature**

Mbiti (1966), comments that;

The Akamba live very close to nature and this fact permeates much of their literature. Man is not divorced from his total environment, and drama of life involves every created object. He has a chance to observe the habits of animals living around him and to give meaning to nature to awaken and activate it. The stories provide among other things, an opportunity to articulate this knowledge. As a result animals, birds, trees, and stones are given human characteristics and made to act like people... in this way moral lessons are drawn from nature, satire



is driven home in disguise, human folly and wisdom are exposed and the working of the mind is explored through these different creatures (Mbiti 2- 3).

Mbiti's study is on oral narratives. He points out that the Akamba people are in touch with their environment and this is reflected in the narratives. The focus of this study however is on *tumdo* songs.

According to Naomi Kipury; "... poets ... make liberal use of figures of speech... a symbol is an object that embodies an abstract idea. The **Oreteti** tree among the Maasai embodies long life because of its sturdy nature. When used as a blessing as it often the case, the tree symbol is understood without any interpretation (14).

Kipury also comments that;

...circumcision is an essential operation in Maasai society. The song '*Esuiyore*' (a teasing song to taunt uncircumcised boys) ...is sung to the candidate on the eve of the operation, and is accompanied by spitting, pinching and exposing the nakedness of the initiate. This is to make him build up courage, so that he can go through the operation without flinching...uncircumcised boys are said to be dirty, incapable of holding a council...they are compared with dirty "brown birds" and "puppies", and their skin is said to peel like "the bark of a tree"(205).

Kipury has studied the oral literature of the Maasai and also brought out the use of images in oral literature in general. Kipury has provided the function of circumcision songs among the Maasai. She has also dwelt on how singers use images of environment to come up with their songs. Our study, on the other hand focuses on the Kipsigis *tumdo*

songs and in particular how the physical environment is portrayed in the songs under study.

Kabira and Karega Mutahi (1988) carried out a study on *Gikuyu Oral Literature* and commented that; 'Behind the seemingly simple songs a people's philosophy and aesthetics can be directly and indirectly communicated' (Kabira 20)

Kabira and Karega's study is on Gikuyu oral literature. They point out that the philosophy and aesthetics of the community can be reflected from the songs. The focus of this study is on Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

### **Studies on Kipsigis Oral Literature**

Chesaina (1991) notes that; the song is one of the most versatile genres of Kalenjin oral literature as it pervades all walks of life in Kalenjin culture. Play, work, rest festivities are all occasions for songs. Songs are very important component of rituals such as those connected with birth, naming ceremonies, initiation and weddings...Kalenjin songs are not mere appendages to the various occasions they accompany; they have specific social functions to serve ...initiation into adulthood or *tumdo* for both men and women is a very important institution of the Kalenjin culture. Initiation is considered such a crucial stage in life that before going through this rite, a young person is not considered a Kalenjin but a child of a Kalenjin. This is obviously recognition of the fact that it is only at initiation that a person is fully immersed into Kalenjin culture' (Chesaina 5- 11).

Chesaina further state that; 'the intention of a circumcision song is achieved through the use of imagery and contrast ...Metaphors are used to refer to matters related to sex. This use of imagery sharpens the attack on immoral people, men and women alike. Those who

are guilty flee with shame because they are made aware that the community is aware of their immoral activities' (Chesaina 118).

On her comments on circumcision poetry Chesaina studies the songs; '*Kitakekonin Chepkorir*' (Did they give you Chepkorir) and comments that; "The song satirizes women who are promiscuous... use of imagery sharpens attack on immoral people, men and women alike," '*Lego Lalego*' a song which ; "The community reminds itself that Kalenjin circumcision is a serious ceremony whose secrets should not be divulged to outsiders,"; '*Osim Karkenyo*' (Cheer our mother), "sung during and after circumcision to Cheer girls as they go bravely through the rite, " '*Kokam Kulo*'(Shake the hat) a song "sung during the male circumcision ceremony as an encouragement for young men to go through the rite bravely"

Chesaina's study is focused on the social functions of the circumcision poetry. She does not mention the issue of environment which this study aims to tackle, particularly the imagery derived from environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. Chesaina is also looking at the Kalenjin songs in general as opposed to the focus of this study which is looking at Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. Our study will therefore seek to identify the relationship between the observed images and the community's way of thinking.

Some studies suggest songs have had a great value in the lives of the Kalenjins. To Fish and Fish, the Kalenjin consider songs to be of greater value than that of stories. (Fish and Fish 184) The comparative value of songs to that of narratives is however beyond the scope of our discussion since we are concerned with the imagery in the songs and their significance.

The Kipsigis oral tradition is composed of songs, narratives, riddles, wise sayings among other forms of oral literature. All these genres are rich in the symbols that are embraced and portrayed in the community. The songs like other forms of oral literature have in their composition imagery that is derived in the community's immediate environment.

The Kipsigis initiation season is full of singing. Songs are used to educate the initiates on the importance of this rite as well as other practices in the society. In some of these songs initiates also entertain themselves as they grow and get used to their new status after circumcision.

There is reason to believe that the very thing that makes individual to identify with the community is in fact a product of individual effort. Rotich (2011) in his study of the songs of Kipchamba arap Topotuk comments that; 'There are few individual endowed with collectivizing idea while others have the rhetoric to marshal people to the idea ...most of those who have vigorous thought about collectivization are politicians' (Rotich124).

Rotich (2011) further adds that; "Kipchamba's songs are of dual origin. Some of the ideas are sourced from his own experiences but have been appropriated into the community's folkloric archive -communalconsciousness -and have been appropriated into the realm of artist lyrical and popular expressions" (5). Our study however takes on a different perspective that; it is the responsibility of the whole community to inculcate in its members a sense of communal consciousness especially in the use of *tumdo* songs and specifically images drawn from the immediate environment.

Korir (2013) carried out a study on ‘Appropriation of Kipsigis idiom in selected Gospel songs of Joel Arap Kimetto’ and commented that; “It appears that Kimetto’s personal experience have a great influence on his songs for he emerges as a strong advocate of the past while appreciating the inevitability of the present...Kimetto has paid fidelity to his roots by retaining the folkloric connection” (110).

Korir, further notes that; “Most of his (Kimetto’s) songs carry in them narratives and proverbs as the foundation upon which songs are created... visits the community’s rich oral tradition as well as communal memory and consciousness from where he sources the (Kipsigis) idioms”(112).

Korir adds that; “Kimetto used the tune and style of Kipsigis female circumcision song in ‘*Tilil Kipsengwet oiye...*’ wanted to tell the world that...traditional practices were not that evil as they were branded. In as much as circumcision (**of girls**) was undesirable, not everything around it was detestable” (104 my own emphasis)

Korir takes an eclectic approach to analyse the idioms in the songs of Kimetto. My study though taking an eclectic approach will take a different direction. It will approach *tumdo* songs from an ecocritical perspective, ethnopeotic stance as well as functionalist view. The study will also focus on Kipsigis *tumdo* songs unlike Korir whose focus is on the Kipsigis gospel songs of Joel arap Kimetto.

Taaita Towett (1979) comment, “The Kipsigis used to admire their great and brave men...such great men would be people who had looted cattle, sheep or goats from the nearby ‘enemy’ tribes... mothers, sisters and even sweethearts of such brave men used to

compose songs of praise to them and sing to their praise” (Taaita Toweett 2). Toweett’s study is on Kipsigis folk songs while my study is on Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

Orchardson (1961) reports that, The Kipsigis circumcision ceremony (which is part of the whole process of initiation) occurs in the early morning but the crowds begin to gather at dusk on the evening before and spend most of the night singing and dancing, chaffing and joking and generally making merry. A crowd gathers at the home of the initiate’s parents or guardians, where a fire is lit at the *Mabwaita*. Around this the female relatives, garlanded with *sinendet* creeper and carrying eight feet wand of *kerundut* plant, sing the praises of their husband’s clans and improvise in praise of the initiate. Few men join this family group, except the father and brothers who also wear *Senendet* garland and the boy himself. The other men decorated with red and white clay paint, form one or more circles and sing *Chepketilet* song. Some of the children join the group around the *Mabwaita*; others form circles and sing by themselves. Gradually by about ten in the evening all the visitors congregate at the central opening space near the house of the ceremony. Hundreds of men form an immense circle, link arms and sing *Chepketilet* in chorus while in the middle stand those who take it in turn to lead the song (Orchardson 60). Orchardson’s study of the Kipsigis initiation has taken an anthropological dimension unlike my study which will be focused on the images of environment in the songs sung during this stage of initiation. Evidently the use of sacred plants, attests to our assumption that we cannot miss to link environment with the whole process including the singing process.

After circumcision, the daily singing of the initiates begins. They sing the morning and evening song called in the case of boys’ *kipoyesit* and of girls’ *Chelimen*, only sung at

sunrise and at sunset. The girl's song is beyond the scope of this study. Our interest lies in the boy's poems or songs. During the day another type of song called *Kaandet* is sung in which they express their thanks or respect to their fathers and mothers in initiation and other friends who may pass by. They also sing in praise of their *puriet* and clan and also express their preference for highlands or lowlands. In these songs the lead is taken in turn, with the rest of the singers forming a chorus. Interspersed among verbal passages are periods of wordless song; the chorus accompaniment also wordless (Orchardson 62). Like Orchardson, this study focuses on the songs performed during the period of *tumdo*, but my study is focused on the images of environment that are applied to these songs. It is notable to add that the study goes beyond the history of the Kipsigis which Orchardson brings out and analyses the *tumdo* songs from a literary perspective.

## **1.10 Methodology of the Study**

### **1.10.1 Introduction**

This section explains the methodology that was used during the research process. In this study methodology refers to all decisions, undertakings and ways in which data was handled to arrive at given conclusions. All major and minor processes of analyzing and interpreting research information are taken into consideration.

### **1.10.2 Research Design**

This study was based on the Kipsigis community of Bomet County and its neighbouring counties. It employed; content analysis, and ethnomethodology. Ethnomethodological approach was used to interview *tumdo* participants as well as *tumdo* graduates on their view of the images contained in the *tumdo* songs and their general outlook on the images

of environment in *tumdo* songs. The philosophical thoughts on environment as portrayed in the songs in question were pursued through interviews.

### **1.10.3 Data Collection and Analysis.**

Some of the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs were collected in December 2013 during the *tumin* period while others were collected during the interview of community contacts after the initiation season had expired. I attended *tumdo* ceremonies where I participated in the live performance of ten *tumdo* songs. I also prepared group interviews and discussions to elicit information and oral testimonies on images of environment in the songs. I collected data through participation and observation. In order to identify the community contacts, I attended the *tumdo* ceremonies and singled out leading performers. These were participants who lead the ceremonies through performances. I later consulted them and sought their permission to interview them.

This step involved listening to performances and carrying out transcription and close analysis of *tumdo* songs. I then proceeded to translate the songs to English language. I employed two Kipsigis speakers to assist translate the songs as effectively as possible. I subsequently went through the songs to identify images of environment and while reading field notes. I then interpreted these messages by applying the theoretical tools mentioned in the theoretical framework section. The thematic concerns of the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs were taken into consideration. I collected twenty two songs ten from the *tumdo* performances, twelve from community contacts interviewed and documented sources. I then used a method of tabulation as advocated by Miruka who claims that; “this could be done by having a detailed table listing all the aspects considered and the title of



the poem” (106). The questions leading to the creation of classification table is in appendix 1.

A Structured interview guide was used to interview the chosen community contacts. I filled in my findings as the respondents answered the questions asked. The questionnaire with set questions is in appendix 1.

## Chapter Two: Environmental Images in Kipsigis Tumdo Songs

### 2.0 Introduction

Chapter one, of this study provided the research problem and its setting by giving the theoretical framework and the objectives of the study. This chapter aims to discuss and illustrate the images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. The study of Kipsigis *tumdo* songs is significant especially for literary ecocritic scholars and nature conservationists in Kenya. However before we discuss the images we need to discuss the Kipsigis community as an ethnic group and also mention features of its *tumdo* ceremonies with an aim of contextualizing the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. The songs under study are; *elego laleiyo*, *sulacha*, *sabarinyon*, *uye uye*, *onkiam kimyet*, *indaria sulei*, *sinyanja sire* and *matororyet* among others. We also place our focus on the images present in the songs; *chepketilet*, *purku kurgung* as well as *chepkibol*.

### 2.1 Background to the Tumdo songs

Ethnicity is a cultural concept centered on sharing of norms, values beliefs, cultural symbols and practices. The formation of ethnic groups relies on shared cultural signifiers that have developed under historical, social and political contexts. They encourage a sense of belonging based, at least in part on a common mythological ancestry. Another outlook in which ethnicity is formed is by the way we speak about group identities and identify with the signs and symbols that which constitutes ethnicity (Baker 249).

It is from this spring board that we begin our discussion on the Kipsigis as an ethnic sub division of the Kalenjin group, whose oral literature begs our critical attention. According to Orchardson, Kipsigis is the correct name of the people who are also called the

*Lumbwa*, from a corruption of a nickname applied to them by the Maasai. They form the largest tribe of the Nilo-Hamitic group (1).

The Kipsigis of Western Kenya belong to the Kalenjin cluster of southern Nilotes (Manners 258). They have a Nandi – type age set system. It is agreed by many scholars that the Kalenjin ethnic groups share a uniform age set system, but due to circumstances specific to each, they charted different directions. Since the late nineteenth century, the Kipsigis society underwent social and political changes with the entry of British colonial rule and in particular the imposition of administrative chiefs by colonial administrators. The Kipsigis society is a federation comprising of four military units which migrated southwards to occupy its present residence in Kericho, Bomet, parts of Nakuru and parts of Narok counties. A few Kipsigis people are also found in sections of Uasin Gishu County. Peristiany notes that; "... the kipsigis also called... *Kipsigisiek* are better known to Europeans as *Lumbwa*, a misnomer of unknown origin, as none of their neighbouring tribes seems to be responsible for this name" (1).

Many scholars believe that the Kipsigis as a tribe was formed after the eighteenth century. Taaita Toweet points out that; "... the Keiyo and the Tugen are very close to the Kipsigis linguistically. The Tugen intonation is the closest of all to the kipsigis dialectical intonation. However he adds that this does not mean the Kipsigis branched off from the Tugen more recently but that there has been a closer contact between the two tribes than between the Kipsigis and the other Nilo- Hamitic tribes" (1).

Kipsigis are the largest of a cluster of closely related tribes in Kenya speaking various dialects of the same language now generally referred to as Kalenjin by its speakers. The Kalenjin Cluster is related linguistically to the Pakot (Suk) group to the north and the Tatog group (Barabaig etc) to the south in Tanzania (Daniels 6).

The Kipsigis oral tradition is composed of songs, narratives, riddles, wise sayings among other forms of oral literature. All these genres are rich in the symbols that are embraced and portrayed in the community. The oral poems like other forms of oral literature have in their composition imagery that is derived in the community's immediate environment. Despite the influence of modernity and Christianity, the Kipsigis traditional *tumdo* rite is still embraced and practiced by sections of the Kipsigis community. Some churches have also seen the need to inculcate these rich traditions in their young wards and as a result employed resource persons to teach these young people the important features of their community's culture during their initiation ceremonies. They only inform the initiates of the features of the Kipsigis *tumdo* ritual. In this way they root the young people in the Kipsigis culture and as a consequence allow them to develop a sense of belonging. The rich Kipsigis tradition therefore becomes entrenched in many of the Kipsigis people despite the influence of Christianity, modernization and rural to urban migration among other modern features of change.

## **2.2 Months and Seasons.**

There are twelve seasons in Kipsigis society which coincide with the twelve months of a year. These seasons have been studied by the community elders over the years. They bring out changes in the Kipsigis immediate environment as a result of their weather features. On the same point they also are named after the appearance of the environment.

For instance *Kipsunde* is a time of rains when the ground is said to be a slippery as the fat in the meat, usually referred to as *sundet*. These seasons are; *Mulgul* (January) *Ngotioto* (February), *Kiptamo* (March), *Iwaatkut* (April), *Momot* (May), *Baki* (June) *Ngeiyet* (July), *Roptui* (August), *Puret*(September), *Epeso* (October), *Kipsunde Netai* (November), *Kipsunde Nebo Aeng* (December). Months and seasons are environmental features which are very important to the *tumdo* ceremony of initiation. According to Jonathan Sowe, one of my community contacts this ceremony is restricted to *Kipsunde nebo Oeng* season. *Roptui* was however a month in which *tumdo* ceremony was prohibited. Upon inquiry I was told that it was a time where rain was accompanied by thunder and hailstorm and therefore a ‘bad month’ to perform any ceremony. The season of *roptui* is also a season where the community was down because of flu and other related diseases.

### **2.3 *Tumdo***

*Tumdo* is a Kipsigis initiation ritual. *Tumdo* like any other ritual has characteristics unique to itself. It is a set of social and religious processes with a particular order and sequence. It has the singing aspect which could be arguably said to be the performance aspect recognized by many scholars as included in the ritual process. Victor Turner in his text; *The Anthropology of Performance*, points out that a ritual is;

... a performance process, a dynamic system or action, with both diachronic and synchronic rhythms and / or scenarios... is also experience ,as what a person individually or as part of a collective feels...as a set of operations in human social and religious life (10).

Indeed the performance aspect in the Kipsigis *tumdo* ritual is quite significant. It points out the importance of songs and dances within the community. These songs and dances have been developed over a long period of time. As illustrated by Kiruja Kaka,

Early man developed ritual dance techniques for every event in life. He developed dances for birth, naming ceremonies, the growing up of a young man, for courtship and marriage, to cure the sick, to bury the dead, to make rain or to deter crop destroying animals and birds. He developed the 'debutante' dances, a boy's initiation into manhood, a girl's entry into womanhood, or welcoming a foreigner into clan brotherhood. Rituals were also danced for various other social events and aspirations within a community's life; be it in times of war peace, scarcity, or abundance (27).

*Tumdo* is considered as the most important rite in the life of the Kipsigis. This being a significant point of transition from one state of life to another is celebrated by everyone in the Kipsigis community. Indeed it is a communal affair and everyone especially the relatives and neighbours must take charge of the function, which is marked by participation in dances among other activities.

As opined by Van Gennep, the initiates are taken away from their homes and secluded for a period during which they are educated on societal rules and latter incooperated into the community. Van Gennep calls these rites "the rites o separation from the previous world, *preliminal rites*, those executed during the transitional stage, *luminal (or threshold) rites*, and the ceremonies of incorporation into the new world, *post luminal rites*"

Although circumcision is the most important, the surgical operation is only the initial item in a series of ceremonies which (used to) last from four and a half to eight months. Currently the length of initiation period is **four to five weeks** (my emphasis). During this period the children undergo training in the customs and behaviour proper to Kipsigis men and women (Orchardson 58).

As observed by Daniels and Roberts,

Male initiations are referred to as; 'the boys' ceremony (*tumdap ng'etik*) or simply the ceremony (*tumdo* or *tumin* –the ceremony). ...in many ways initiations are considered *sina qua non* of being Kipsigis and while lesser rites have been abandoned the initiation ceremonies have been abbreviated and changed only as much as other considerations have dictated (Daniels 117).

Currently all boys' initiations have taken place from early December to early January, during the school holidays. By early November the adults in each local area have a good idea which boys will undergo *tumdo*. The suggestion may come from the boy himself, who may be responding to pressure from his age mates who have decided to go, from his mother or from other members of the family.

Having determined who the candidates for the initiation will be, the parents must decide on the *tumdo* officials, the place of *tumdo* and the date of the circumcision. The main officials are five in number: The man who assumes the responsibility for the care and feeding of the initiates following circumcision (while they are in seclusion) who is called the father of the boys (*Kwandap Ng'etik*) is one of the five. The others are the elder who

will bless the whole ceremony and particular the initiates (*Poyot ab Komda*), the circumciser, and two trainers (*Motirenik*) and the circumcisor simply referred to as *poyot*.

They also built a seclusion hut commonly referred to as *menjo* in a bushy area away from homesteads. They use small branches and reeds which will be left to rot away after *tumdo* (See photo in Appendix 7).

As Daniels observes;

The *menjo* hut is built along the lines of precolonial houses, i.e., rather than using introduced species of trees for posts and long beams to form a conical roof, smaller supple trees and branches are used, and the frame of the house is in effect, a very large inverted basket with a carved, domed roof. Unlike ordinary houses a floor is not prepared, but natural grass is left inside the *menjo*. The construction of *menjo* starts with a circle of thin posts about four feet high, and twelve to fifteen feet in diameter. The posts are lashed together with three horizontal double rings of long green branches, each ring consisting of one branch around the outside of the posts and another around the inside (122).

Several songs mention the importance of the *tumdo* process. During fieldwork, I found out that it is so important that, elders try to keep it as secret as possible. This is to guard against children (who in this case have not gone through the process) playing and defiling this sacred process. In fact men are not supposed to reveal this to women even if the women are their wives, mothers or sisters. However everybody within the community is allowed to take part in some or all processes depending on their status in the society. Women and children take part at the beginning on the eve of circumcision and at



the last *tumdo* ceremony- ‘opening the way’, where girls, the sisters of the initiates take an active role as all members watch.

Men who have gone through the rite take part in all *tumdo* processes. The song ‘*oyotwech oret*’ is a song in which the initiates implore the officials, their sisters and all in attendance to allow them come out by performing this last rite of *tumdo*. They claim that the birds feeding on cows’ ticks are hurting them. The ‘opening of the way’ has therefore allowed them to join other members of the society. It allows them to join the adult circles. This is why they are anxious to come out as pointed out in the song *Oyotwech oret* below;

### **Oyotwech Oret**

*Oyotwech oret ooh*  
*Katarech ririk ooh*

*Oyotwech oret ooh*  
*katarech ririk ooh*

### **Open the road for us**

*Open the road for us ooh*  
*The birds feeding on cattle tick are hurting*  
*us ooh*

*Open the road for us ooh*  
*The birds feeding on cattle tick are*  
*finishing us ooh*

The wisdom in this song is in the words ‘open the road for us/the birds picking ticks on cattle are finishing us.’ Here is a statement in which both nature and man are assisting the initiate undergo the transformation brought about by *tumdo* ritual - to be transformed from youth to adulthood. The birds are symbolically ‘picking ticks’ which are symbols of youthful contaminations.

### **2.3.1 Kerotyin (The introductory rite)**

*Kerotyin* is a ceremony used to introduce the entire *tumdo* ritual. At this stage the initiates congregate in a hut where the *olmarijet* (a gate like structure of approximate four feet in

height) has been constructed. Within the hut is a stool with stinging nettles. The initiates led by the trainers (*motirenik*) crawl through the gate and sit on the stinging nettles. They are naked. The elders chant *Chepketilet* song and other songs that are appropriate to this part of the ceremony. They make four complete circles as four is an indication of male in Kipsigis culture. The stinging nettles are present to instill in the initiates courage to face the next step.

### **2.3.2 Keyatita (The Circumcision Ceremony)**

The circumcision ceremony occurs in the early morning but the crowds begin to gather at dusk on the evening before and spend most of the night singing and dancing, chaffing and joking and generally making merry. A crowd gathers at the home of the initiate's parents or guardians, where a fire is lit at the family altar (*Mabwaita*). Around this the female relatives, garlanded with *sinendet* (a plant considered sacred and present in all ceremonies of the Kalenjin with milk-like sap) and carrying eight feet wand of *kerundut* (a bush like tree considered sacred) plant, sing the praises of their husband's clans and improvise in praise of the initiate. Few men join this family group, except the father and brothers who also wear *Senendet* garland and the boy himself. The other men decorated with red and white clay paint, form one or more circles and sing *Chepketilet* song (the first song sung by elders). Some of the children join the group around the *Mabwaita*; others form circles and sing by themselves. Gradually by about ten in the evening all the visitors congregate at the central opening space near the house of the ceremony. Hundreds of men form an immense circle, link arms and sing *Chepketilet* in chorus while in the middle stand those who take it in turn to lead the song.

The *Senendet wreath* is worn by the initiate's mother, sisters, father's sister, brother's wife, mother's sister and by father and if father is not present, the father's brother. *Kerundusiekwands* are carried only by women relatives either on mother's or on father's side.

All sacred plants (*Kerosek*) used at the ceremonies are kept until the initiate comes forth as men and women. The *Senendaik* garlands which are kept in the houses of those who are feeding the children must not be burned but must be buried in a dung heap. Those who carried *Kerundusiek* wands keep them on the roof of their houses and latter burn them at *Mabwaita* (Orchardson 61).

After circumcision, the candidates of *tumdo* are given a set of rules which include;

the rule that they might not kill a living creature at the time of their seclusion and that they are to refer to a cow (*teta*) as a buffalo (*soet*), a sheep or goat (*artet*) as a duiker (*cheptirgichet*), to a fly (*kaliang'at*) as tsetse fly (*sogoriet*), and to hold staple food (*Kimiet* or porridge) using tree bark (*bertet*) (Daniels 150).

These rules among other rules point out the significance of the physical nature to the Kipsigis rituals. Within this environment are animals such as buffaloes resemble cows, duikers which resemble sheep and goats. The uses of natural world are also pointed out through the practice of holding food using a bark of a tree during the first stages of seclusion before a formal release to normal practises.

### **2.3.3 *Labetab Eun* (The Cleaning of hands)**

At this time the daily singing of the initiates begin. They sing the morning and evening song called in the case of boys' *kipoyesit* and of girls' *Chelimen*, only sung at sunrise and

at sunset. The girls' songs are beyond the scope of this study. Our interest lies in the boys' songs.

During the day another sets of songs called *Kaandet* is sung in which they express their thanks or respect to their fathers and mothers in initiation and other friends who may pass by. They also sing in praise of their *puriet* (army) and clan and also express their preference for highlands or lowlands. In these songs the lead is taken in turn, with the rest of the singers forming a chorus. Interspersed among verbal passages are periods of wordless song; the chorus accompaniment also wordless.

#### **2.3.4 Ketienjin (Singing for 'them')**

Any current songs are sung and the only ceremonial song sung on this occasion is that of the welfare of Tegerisiek. A *Tegeret* is someone whose next elder brother or sister died before he/she was born. The men also sing *Chepketilet* during *Kaburburet* (the knot tying) ceremony. This ceremony takes place in the seclusion place. Young men and elders converge and give the initiates lessons of life using riddles. The elder also bless them while chanting the blessing chant.

##### **Kaberuret**

Boiyot: Baibai Kole Baibai  
Tugul: Baibai  
Boiyot: Burgei Kole Burgei  
Tugul: Burgei  
Boiyot: Bore Tumdo Kole Bore  
Tugul: Bore  
Boiyot: Kim Boriet Kole Kim  
  
Tugul: Kim  
Boiyot : Kigas Kele Kigas  
  
Tugul: Kigas  
Boiyot: Abai Kele Abai

##### **The Blessing Chant**

Elder: Happy lets agree happy  
All: Happy  
Elder: Warm lets agree warm  
All: Warm  
Elder: The initiation ceremony will succeed  
All: It will succeed  
Elder: The Community is strong Lets agree is strong  
All: Strong  
Elder: Let it be heard lets agree let it be heard  
All: Be heard  
Elder: It is fertile lets agree it is fertile

Tugul: Abai  
Boiyot: King Kole King

All: It is fertile  
Elder: It is complete lets agree it is complete

(Chant 17)

### **2.3.5 *Kayaet* (The swinging Ceremony)**

Although after this ceremony the *Tarusiek* may go to their homes or on visits to far away relations, their faces must still not be looked upon by women. They still wear *Menekubet* dress, to which is added in the case of boys the *Marangochek* headdress, which is made of long bast fibres of the *masek* plant and hung about their faces like flaxen hair. The girls are now called *Chemerinik* and the boys *Kimorongojik*. Both are taken as unclean and anybody who touches them becomes ritually contaminated.

The *Kayaet* ceremony takes place at the river. After this ceremony the initiate can now attach 'arap' to his father's boyhood name and will be identified by that name. As observed by Henry Mwanzi, 'rivers seem to have a measure of sacredness... The sacredness seems also to be connected with women for example ceremony which is supposed to have led to the immortality of human spirits is said to have been carried out by women before the river sanctuary. The process through which boys go through water before they receive the title (*arap*) is reminiscent of the days of sacred pools matrilineality and spirits' (101).

### **2.4 *Tumdo* and its relationship with the environment.**

Before circumcision the candidates look for certain shrubs (*Korosek*) used to demonstrate happiness by women who ululate as they hold these *korosek*. The candidates are also oiled using the fat from cowmilk. However for the candidates whose parents are too poor to own milk - producing cattle they use *eworet/ng'enda* (natural salt) mentioned

extensively in the *tumdo* songs. Other people use castor oil from *imanek* (castor) seeds. The candidates also hold *sirtitik* (the initiation sticks) which are made from the branches of *saptet* (pordocarpus) tree while other clans use the *Kosisitiet* tree. The costumes worn during the *tumdo* process are referred to as *roiginokap tong'iik* (robes of animals). Upon enquiry from Mrs Pauline Sowe a retired school teacher, I was made aware that *roiginok* are costumes worn only during a very important ceremony by only very important persons. Nature provides clothes like for example *roiginok* which are rare costumes worn only on special occasions. They are made of skins and hides of cattle goats, and sheep and even monkeys and from animal skins such as *interit* (squirells) and *tisyet* (bushaby monkeys). *Sosyot* represents authority while *roiginok* are rare costumes worn only in special occasion. They are both symbols of objects or occasions of great value.

Indeed trees and animals are significant during the circumcision and even the entire *tumdo* process since their products are useful in the process. The natural world is mentioned in the songs and used as images. The singers employ metaphorical expressions in their song such as the tall trees when they want to talk about strength and endurance, the tiny animals when they want to talk about wit and other issues mentioned in this chapter. This chapter therefore discusses the images both as the signifier and the signified. The images under our critical attention are from the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

## **2.5 Attitudes towards Animals, Plants and Topography**

The Kipsigis community has over a long period of time developed positive attitudes towards their immediate environment. Different forms of Kipsigis oral literature embrace the environment in different ways for instance in riddles one example '*sir a sir tembwet* (the one who crisscrosses the valley)' challenges the Kipsigis riddling audience to

observe and learn their environment. Like kipsigis riddles *tumdo* songs engage its audience in the knowledge of environment and positive attitude development.

The plants known *assetiot* grow in the forested areas. The Kipsigis used it to decide when it was lucky or unlucky to hold ceremonies. *Setiot* takes eight to ten years to grow and flower, and the flowering takes three years. The plant flowers once then dies. *Tumdo* never took place in the year of flowering, because that period was associated with illness and death. The *sasuriet* (wild banana) is also important because its leaves are used to make beer. It is also sacred because of the Kipsigis proverb: ‘(*Makiyumen Sasur ye moen Keyeb*) Do not take shelter under the wild banana canopy and then cut it down when it stops raining.’ The saying reminds the Kipsigis never to take kindness for granted

As Bangura points out, “some animals are dangerous and are shown great respect. A kipsigis legend tells of an animal called *Chemosit*, either hyena or cheetah. When this animal is near they would call it *Kononet*. *Ongenyot* (elephants) are called by their respectful name *Kiptechit* when they are nearby because of their great size” (Bangura 49).

The initiates who undergo *tumdo* are expected to understand their environment. The song *sulacha* talks about a bird usually fond of flying along a footpath or road. This bird is called ‘*mashelelet*’. A wild fruit tree is also mentioned and identified. The tree is described as beautiful in the song. From this observatio it can be argued that the Kipsigis appreciate their nature and as a result of this, songs composed carried within them praises lumped on these trees or even at times favourable descriptions. The animals and birds were also described as seen in the song *sulacha* below;

### ***Sulacha***

*Sullacha ee Sulach woe kerta oor*

*Eoe ongebar sulach kerta mashelel*

*Sulaacha ee sulach lipkwop ket*

*Eowe ongebar sulach lipkkwop kelyondet*

*Sulaacha ee sulach eoe werchunchok*

*Translation*

*eoe ongebar sulach werchun kiropsoi*

*Sulacha ee sulach eoe warir tiony ongebar sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach warir interit ongebar sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach eoe miting ket ongebar sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach miting keliot ongebar sulach*

(Song 3)

Wild animals as well as plants are also mentioned in the song *Sabarinyon*. The positive images resulting from this indicate the awareness and acceptance of nature by the members of the community as observed in the song *sabarinyon*.

*Sabarinyon oh kesole ming'in tiony ak kesole ming'in tiony we sabarinyon*

*Ming'in kiplekwet we ming'in kiplekwet we sabarinyon*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole barar tiony ak kesole barar tiony we sabarinyon*

*Barar interit we barar interit we sabarinyon*

### ***Sulacha***

*Sulaacha ee sulach woe it flies on the way*

*eoe ongebar sulach what flies on the way is the mashelel bird*

*Sulaacha ee sulach a beautiful tree*

*Eowe ongebar sulach the beautiful tree is wild fruit tree*

*sulaacha ee sulache eoe our brothers*

*eoe ongebar sulach our brothers in the plains*

*Sulacha ee sulach eoe the calling animal let us own sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach the calling animal is a squirrel let us own sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach eoe the small leaves tree*

*Sulach ee sulach the small leaves tree is a wild fruit tree*

*As we go we praise the tiny animal as we go*

*the tiny animal is an hare as we go*

*we praise the noisy animal as we go*

*the noisy animal is the squirrel as we go*



*Sabarinyon oh kesole abaiket ak kesole  
abaiket we sabarinyon  
Abai sinendet we abai sinendet we  
sabarinyon*

*As we go we praise the fertile tree as we go  
The fertile tree is sinendet as we go*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole toror ket ak kesole  
tororket wee sabarinyon*

*We praise the tall tree wee as we go*

*Toror chepkoibet we toror chepkoibet we  
sabarinyon*

*the tall tree is Chepkoibet as we go*

(Song 4)

*Kipkoibet*, the tallest tree in Mau forest, is mentioned in the song *sabarinyon* above. The *sinendet* creeper is also mentioned. *Sinendet* is described as fertile and among the Kipsigis it is used in major ceremonies. Its sap is milky, which is a symbol of fertility among the Kipsigis. *Kipkoibet* tree has been given a characteristic that usually is accorded to Bamboo. Upon inquiry I was told by one of the singers that they praise the currently tallest tree. Apparently bamboo used to be present on the south western outskirts of Mau forest a long time ago but at the moment it has been depleted and it can only be found deep inside the forest. Near the edge of Mau forest are *Kipkoibet* trees.

The songs mentioned also talk about people in the community in relation to the physical world. This may mean that the Kipsigis singers recognized the environment as part and parcel of the community life. In the song *sulacha*, a woman who is fetching water is described. She has to kneel to do so. This could possibly mean that effort has to be exerted in order to acquire basic needs from the physical environment. The geographical station of 'our brothers' is also described. They are found in the plains. This means that some areas occupied by the Kipsigis are plains and lowlands like several parts of Chebalungu Sub County while other areas are highlands, like some parts of Bomet Central and Konoin Subcounties and the entire Kericho County.

***Sulacha***

*Sulacha aae sulach woe eoe kutung kwony  
eoe ongebar sullach*

*Sullacha ee sullach, kosilbei ee ow*

*Sulaacha ee sulach eoe werchunchok*

*eoe ongebar sulach werchun kiropsoi*

***Sulacha***

*Sulaacha woe eoe a woman kneels eoe let  
us kill sulach*

*Sulaacha ee sulach to fetch water ee ow*

*sulaacha ee sulache eoe our brothers*

*eoe ongebar sulach our brothers in the  
plains*

(Song 3)

The same applies to the song *sabarinyon*. It highlights the environment by describing tall trees, beautiful trees as well as all kinds of plants.

***Sabarinyon***

*Sabaarinyon oh kesole motiryot ak kesole  
motiryot oh sabarinyon*

*Motir chebobor we Motir chebobor we  
sabarinyon*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole miting ket ak kesole  
mitinget we sabarinyon*

*Miting kelyondet we miting kelyondet we  
sabarinyon*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole bamong'o ak kesole  
bamong'o we sabarinyon*

*Bamong'o ribech we bamong'o ribechwe  
sabarinyon*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole koruchon ak kesole  
koruchon we sabarinyon*

*Koruchon ribech we koruchon ribech we  
sabarinyon*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole barar tiony ak kesole  
barar tiony we sabarinyon*

***Sabarinyon***

*As we go oh We praise the trainer and  
again we praise the trainer oh as we go*

*The trainer succeeds as we go*

*we praise the small leaves tree and again  
we praise the small leaves tree*

*The bitter tree is a wild fruit tree*

*As we go we praise our father*

*Our father takes care of us as we go*

*we praise our mother as we go*

*Our mother takes care of us as we go*

*we praise the noisy animal as we go*

*Barar interit we barar interit we sabarinyon the noisy animal is the squirrel as we go*

Anybody who passes through the rite of *tumdo* is expected to know the value of certain trees and wildlife and protect them. The Kipsigis clans consider animals as their totems or clan members as indicated earlier. The community therefore protects animals through this as no animal is killed in the presence of its clan member unless the clan member disowns it because of its destructive characteristics. As observed by Peristiany, ‘...a man of *Cheplankeet* clan (Clan of the leopard who had killed the village goats and sheep) addresses his fellow clan member in the following terms; -

*‘You kill things of people goats and cattle*

*For this I curse you because you belong to our clan*

*I throw a leaf at you*

He throws a leaf in the direction of the leopard...that is he excommunicates the animal. The same ceremony is performed when a man is thrown out of a family after committing an unpardonable crime (Peristiany 173).

In the song *Chepketile* the lion as an image of power is highlighted through its description. The song describes the lion as roaring in the caves. The fact that the singer points out that they belong to the roaring lion demonstrates that they are equally powerful. In this song the singer also points out that they belong to the elephant. There could be a possibility that because the clan of the singer is the clan whose totem is either a lion or an elephant and this is why in the composition the lion is mentioned in the song.

### *Chepketilet*

### *Men's first song on the eve of tumdo*

<i>Kibo piik ab kotuger (ng'etundo) en eben</i>	<i>We belong to the roaring lion who lives in the caves</i>
<i>Kibo piikab kiramgel(beliot) koe moek</i>	<i>We belong to the elephant whose step can dam water for calves</i>
<i>Achame ane parpar ng'ot kosete</i>	<i>I like the twirler of the spear when raiding</i>
<i>Kibo echek olelngoi koroty kitkurkur</i>	<i>We belong to the white rock which awakens to something that creates dust</i>
<i>Kibo echek torortek makinyor</i>	<i>We belong to the tall bamboo that cannot be climbed</i>
<i>Achame ane saptenyon kiil met ak kogeer kong'asis</i>	<i>I like our pordocarpus tree whose head broke toward the east.</i>
<i>Achame ane set aiiwet ee oiya set aiiwet ak kwel tany</i>	<i>I like the one who raids with an axe and keeper of the cow</i>
<i>Achame ane che men kwony komamen chibo tuk</i>	<i>I like the woman who refuses but not to the owner of the cattle</i>
<i>Achame ane mwokto sol chichi kimwokto kwo kaplis</i>	<i>I like the shooter whose shot went far</i>

(Song 1)

## **2.6 Significance of Environmental images in Kipsigis tumdo Songs**

John Fredrick Nims points out that,

Our first contact with reality begins with what we call an **image** – a piece of news from the world outside or from our own bodies which is brought into the light of consciousness through one of the senses. It may come through the eye as colour, through the ear as sound, through the tongue as taste or through one of the other senses as kind of physical information. When we remember with any vividness, we remember in images. It is difficult to reason without using them; our dreams are wholly made up of them. An image is anything presented to consciousness as a bodily sensation (3-4).

The focus of this section is on images drawn from the environment such as specific trees and animals and what they signify. Four broad categories of images were identified in the songs and are discussed here. These are plant, animal, bird and topographical imagery. An image therefore is the vivid and descriptive use of language by artist to add depth to his or her work. Literary devices such as use of mental pictures are therefore imagery. In this study an elephant as a mental picture within the environment has been identified as an image of strength while the hare is an image of wit or intelligence.

### **2.6.1 Plant Imagery**

Among the Kipsigis plants are of great significance. Some plants are medicinal while others are used for practical utilities for example, to make containers. *Tegat* (the bamboo) is a type of a plant found within the Mau forest. It has utilitarian purposes in the community such as, making containers for milk storage as well as making containers used to store arrows used for cattle bleeding. This container referred to as *Kaploinik* is very significant among the Kipsigis though due to modernism the practice of bleeding cattle is fading away.

According to Johana arap Tesot of Longisa, Bomet East Sub County; ‘... the blood from cattle was used to feed mothers who had given birth.’ Blood from the cattle is taken as life giving and arguably viewed as a replacement of the lost blood when a mother was giving birth. To him; ‘trees are very important to Kipsigis community and maintenance of forest was approved by elders and therefore songs for *tumdo* encouraged this by highlighting the uses and characteristics of trees. In the interview he describes *Lelechwet* tree as well as the *tegat* plant. He claims that these two plants are useful and they are hinted on in the *tumdo* songs. Of *lelechwet* he observes that it has a tendency of regaining

its leaves when cut. This he claims is characteristic of our environment and that people should learn from nature and adopt the positive values such as tenacity to life, strength and endurance in character.

Kipsigis people therefore attach a great value to their environment and environmental products since these products have a great use in their social activities. In the song *Tiendaap kokwetap Kagipsirich* imagery from environment is abundant as seen below,

<b><i>Tiendaap kokwet ab Kagipsirich</i></b> <i>Kimenye imbar Kagipsirich chor. (ii-hi)</i>	<b><i>Ode to the villages of Kagipsirich</i></b> <i>We live at the field of Kagipsirich</i>
<i>Kimenye kochur moy (ihim) Moy ak soton (ihi)</i>	<i>We live where the calf and the calabash play</i>
<i>Kimenye eчек tulwonin kebenen (ihin) Kebenen tuga romoswek</i>	<i>We live ourselves on that hill of sandy cattle sides</i>
<i>Tuluonin (ee ihm) lale kot kong'et (ihi) Kitigin ne ruen kiplekwet Hide</i>	<i>That hill where its grass burns till a little remains where the rabbit can hide</i>
<i>Ne isto gee kwo urwo (ii ihm)</i>	<i>Which rolls to go shade</i>
<i>Asi kwaim segetet ak uson (leiyo laleiyo)</i>	<i>To eat segetet and roots 'uson'</i>
<i>Achame sugutek (ihim) en pirar kiam koita kot komang (ihi)</i>	<i>I like the salty water ate pirar they ate stone till it came through.</i>
<i>Kimenye tulwoni (ee ihm) arusen kirugik (ihi)</i>	<i>We live in this hill where the blue-grey bulls ihm</i>
<i>Arusen kirugi en limo (ihi)</i>	<i>Blue grey bulls at grazing</i>

#### *Song 12*

In this song several issues emerge. First there is an indication of the co-existence of pastoralism and crop farming. Products from Pastoral-milk and blood can be stored in products of farming (tilling) - calabashes. There is also an indication that there is enough food since calves are said to be happy and calabashes are also happy. The personification

especially of calabash could mean that certain plants are very important among the Kipsigis. Their presence indicates abundance of food and other basic life supporting resources.

Another issue that emerges is the issue of utility of environmental features towards man's comfort in the environment. This is hinted in the mention of the word 'shade' which is provided by trees. Trees therefore need to be taken care of since they protect man, sometimes from the harsh weather conditions. To echo Hellen Mwanzi's words, "Respected, preserved and conserved, our environment has all that we need for survival" (5).

#### **2.6.1.1 The Pordocarpus tree (*Saptet*) as an image of the Supreme Being**

Among the Kipsigis the Supreme Being is projected as all powerful. This image is projected through the use of trees. This is evident in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. In the song *Chepketilet* the pordocarpus tree projects the image of a powerful God. It is a God whose presence is indicated by the sun. The pordocarpus tree shows this by falling towards sunrise in acknowledgement of its dependence and the dependence of the whole community on *Asis*, the Kipsigis Supreme Being. The song *Chepketilet* highlights the presence of The Supreme Being through the mentioning of *saptet* tree. The description of this tree in this song is that it broke towards sunrise. The song *Chepketilet* describing the tree *Saptet* has been highlighted below,

#### ***Chepketilet(a)***

*Kilenjinee lagochu ee ee sikomwa*

*Sikomwa cheboiman ahaya ahaya*

*Tun obe moechu ee ee warechu*

*Warechu ahaya ahaya*

#### ***Men's first song on the eve of Circumcision***

*What do we tell these children ee ee so that they say the truth*

*So that they say the truth ahaya ahaya*

*You go calves see ee young ones*

*Young ones ahaya ahaya*

<i>Achame ane parpar ng'ot kosete</i>	<i>I like the twirler of the spear when raiding</i>
<i>Kibo echek olelngoi koroty kitkurkur</i>	<i>We belong to the white rock which awakens to something that creates dust</i>
<i>Kibo echek torortek makinyor</i>	<i>We belong to the tall bamboo that cannot be climbed</i>
<i>Achame ane saptenyon kiil met ak kogeer kong'asis</i>	<i>I like our podocarpus tree whose head broke toward the rising sun</i>
<i>Achame ane lipkwop ket Lipkwopket kelyondet</i>	<i>I like the beautiful tree the beautiful tree is the wild fruit tree</i>
<i>Achame ane set aiiwet ee oiya set aiiwet ak kwel tany</i>	<i>I like the one who raids with an axe and the cow's keeper</i>
<i>Kibo piik ab kotuger (ng'etundo) en eben</i>	<i>We belong to the lion who lives in the caves</i>
<i>Kibo piikab kiramgel(beliot) koe moek</i>	<i>We belong to the elephant whose step can dam water for calves</i>
<i>Achame ane che men Kwony komamen chibo tuk</i>	<i>I like the woman who refuses but not to the owner of the cattle</i>
<i>Achame ane mwokto sol chichi kimwokto kwo kaplis</i>	<i>I like the shooter whose shot went far</i>
<i>Kibo tegandet! Saptenyon Koil met Komisyi mongasis</i>	<i>We belong to the bamboo! Our podocarpus tree when it breaks the crown will disappear in the eye of the sun (the sunrise, east)</i>

(Song 1)

One line of the song *Chepketilet* states 'Kibo Tegandet Saptenyon Koil met komisyi mongasis' (We belong to the bamboo! Our podocarpus tree when it breaks the crown will disappear in the eye of the sun). *Abo pun tegan konyo piik/ abo sapteet kiil met*, mentions the bamboo (*tegan*) and podocarpus tree (*sapteet*). The bamboo is said to have been the passage of the people, while the podocarpus tree is said to have broken and its head fallen in the direction of sunrise. The direction of sunrise is said to be significant to the Kipsigis people. According to one of my respondents when a Kipsigis is migrating and the general direction is to the west, he goes past his destination so that he will turn and his final movement to his destination is towards the rising sun. Perhaps this is because *Asis* (the sun) is the name of God to the Kipsigis people and other Kalenjins. The fact that the two lines begin with a statement, I belong to (*abo*) suggest that the singer and the



Kipsigis community identifies with nature and particularly trees such as *Tegan* (bamboo) and *Sapteet* (Podocarpus tree). These trees are referred to as sacred and used for ceremonial services together with *Sinendet* twine.

#### **2.6.1.2 Kelyot tree as an image of fertility**

The issue of fertility is significant among the Kipsigis. When cursing someone one is told ‘*mein mat*’ (‘May the fire die on you’). Again someone brothers and cousins from the paternal side are referred to as *Mat* (fire). Fertility and its symbol, fire, are therefore quite significant among the Kipsigis. This is projected in the song *Uye uye*. Another feature of fertility is milk.

Here, *sinendet* creeper is mentioned and associated with fertility. Indeed the Kipsigis and the rest of the Kalenjins value this type of a plant that it is used in marriages. Perhaps the singer would like to educate the boys undergoing *tumdo* that they would soon need this plant in their next stage-marriage. Among the Kipsigis uncircumcised boys were seen as not ready to marry and in many cases they were not allowed to marry. The mention and use of *sinendet* creeper at this stage suggest the expectation of the community that the initiates will not only marry but also sire children. *Sinendet* vines are also used to signify, fertility during marriage ceremonies.

As mentioned earlier this tree contains milk like sap which is considered sacred among the Kipsigis. As Arap Tonui an elder from Nyongores Sub location comments;

Trees such as *Simotwet* ( an oak like tree whose sap is milky) and *Rerendet* which contains milky sap are sacred and even when an elephant in pursuit of a man see

the man climbing one of these trees it is believed that the elephant stops and turns away. (Tonui, interview)

In this song *Uye uye*, *Rerendet* tree and its nature are also mentioned. *Rerendet* is an indigenous tree which, as mentioned earlier contains milky sap with medicinal properties. Milk is a symbol of fertility and anything containing milky liquid is considered fertile. The song *uye uye* below projects the image of fertility. It is an exploration of fertility and its importance within the Kipsigis community.

***Uyeuye***

*Uye Uye kiso le marukwen tiondo( 2 times)*

*Uyee! (mass)*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo ooh!*

*Uye Uye Kiso le Ming'in tiony Kiplekwet(2 times solo)*

*Hoe! Ho! Ikobkob hoe tionda Soiwo oh ie!*

*Uye Uye Kiso le Likwob ket rerendet (2times solo)*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!*

*Uye Uye Kiso le kerta or mashelel (2times solo)*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!*

*Uye uye kiso le kolinket chepkomon(2times solo)*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!*

*Uye Uye Kiso le Likwob ket rerendet (2times solo)*

***Uyeuye***

*An animal does not sleep in the middle*

*Uyee*

*Ie! Hoe ho ie! An animal from plains*

*Uye Uye we praise the hare a small animal*

*Hoe ho ie The animal from plains*

*Uye Uye we praise the fertile tree is Rerendet*

*Hoe ho ie The animal from plains*

*Uye uye we praise Marsholet bird flying along the way*

*Hoe ho ie! The animal from the plains*

*Uye uye we praise the Mauritius thorn an irritating tree*

*Hoe ho ie! The animal from the plains*

*Uye Uye we praise the (beautiful) fertile tree is Rerendet (an indigenous tree whose sap is milky white)*

**2.6.1.3 Ketiiyot grass as an image of Favourable Weather conditions.**

The Kipsigis enjoy an area of favourable weather conditions. These conditions create a zone whose vegetation responds to these weather conditions. Their responses are studied and used to predict weather conditions by the experienced members of the community.

The song *Chepkibol* demonstrates the images of favourable weather conditions projected by trees. The song *Chepkibol* below shows this;

***Chepkibol***

*Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol  
Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol*

*En chabas ooe aee*

*woee aeee*

*Achame ane kimmel gut en musar*

*woee aeee*

*Achame ane warir ket ketiiyot*

*woee aeee*

*Achame ane tinenyon bo arap ragita*

*woee aeee*

*Achame ane kaplele kolioch Ng'ot kwaget  
tuk*

*woee aeee*

***Chepkibol***

*Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol  
Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol*

*In the nook of the shoulder ooe aee*

*Woee aeee*

*I like what makes one lick the lips in the  
fermented uji*

*Woee aeee*

*I like the whistling tree ketiiyot*

*Woee aeee*

*I like our forest the forest of Mr Ragita*

*Woee aeee*

*I like Kaplele where one needs a sharp  
spear for the cattle to graze*

*Woee aeee*

(Song 18)

Another plant which is found in *Chepkibol* song is *Ketiiyot* grass, which according to my informant Zacharia Arap Soi, from Mosingororo Village was used to identify the wind which indicated the oncoming rain. In the song it is also said to make a certain sound or whistle just like *interit* animal. It whistles when the wind which comes before a heavy rain and therefore the community can prepare to plant their crops. Elders therefore use the trees and through *tumdo* songs advocated for the conservation of such trees. During the interview, Arap Soi explains that *Ketiiyot* grass helps the community predict an oncoming rainy season. As a result the community can prepare their farms for planting. This is usually during the season of *Kiptam* where the wind blows against *Ketiiyot* making it whistle. To Soi, the natural word is useful to us in many ways; it provides medicines, food and even shelter. *Ketiiyot* is a plant which is praised in *Chepkibol* song. It

makes a whistling sound when blown by the wind that comes before the onset of a heavy rain.

*Ketiiyot* is a grasslike plant found in the plains of Bomet County. During fieldwork, I found out that this plant is useful as mentioned above in indicating the onset of heavy rains so that the community can prepare their farms for planting. It does this by making a specific whistling sound (*warir ketiiyot*) the wind bringing in rain blows it. The wind during the season of *Kiptamois* said to blow away the flowers of the willow plant (*tebengwet*) and therefore the willow plant together with *ketiiyot* shows that it is the right time to prepare planting fields. It is very significant at this point that the *ketiiyot* plant mentioned in the song *Chepkibol* is functioning to differentiate between the dry wind and the rain laden wind. It whistles when the later blows. In this way the elders know the time of planting is near.

#### **2.6.1.4 Bamboo plant as an image of Strength and Endurance**

In the song *Chepketilet*, we come across environmental features such as the bamboo tree and the pordocarpus tree. The significance of this is that these two trees are very important to the Kipsigis community. *Tegat* according to Sowe, a Kipsigis *Myot* elder had several uses. In interviewing Arap Sowe the importance of the bamboo tree among the Kipsigis and the symbolic nature of the tree are pointed out. To Arap Sowe *tumdosongs* talks about the importance of certain trees and plants while some talked of the importance of the initiation rite. They described the natural world; its animals and plants. He continues to point out that the natural world is very useful to man. He claims that nature is useful to all of us and should be protected. We no longer have bamboo trees around here but they were useful during our youth. He used to observe his parents and

other adults storing milk or fresh cow's blood in a container made of a bamboo stem. When they closed both sides and kept it under running water in the river it stayed fresh for several days. It worked like the refrigerator that has been introduced nowadays. He claims that as an initiate he performed songs with a group of fellow initiates that were grouped as *Kayandaet* that were specifically performed by the initiates during their seclusion. Other songs sung according to Sowe include; *sal* and others which were sung by women and children on the eve of many *tumin* ceremonies he had attended over the years.

Perhaps, because of the several uses of the Bamboo tree do Kipsigis *tumdo* songs composers mention it severally in *Chepketilet* and other songs. Another significant use of *tegat* is that it was used to prepare bows and also *Kaploin* (arrows used to bleed cows) containers.

***Chepketilet***

*Kibo echek torortek makinyor*

***Men's first song***

*We belong to the tall bamboo that cannot be climbed*

(Song 1)

This is found in the song *Chepketilet*. It mentions the characteristics of *Tegat* tree. This indicates that Kipsigis people are aware of their immediate environment and therefore through observation can mention and praise the characteristics of this much adored tree. Indeed we can deduce that the song *Chepketilet* brings out the character of the composer as a person who is observant and is aware of his/her environment. The song *sabarinyon* mentions the tall bamboo tree;

***Sabarinyon***

*Sabaarinyon oh kesole motiryot ak kesole*

***Sabarinyon***

*As we go oh We praise the trainer and*

<i>motiryot oh sabarinyon</i>	<i>again we praise the trainer oh as we go</i>
<i>Motir chebobor we Motir chebobor we sabarinyon</i>	<i>The trainer succeeds as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole warir tiony ak kesole warir tiony we sabarinyon</i>	<i>As we go we praise this animal and again we praise this calling animal</i>
<i>Warir interit we warir interit we sabarinyon</i>	<i>This calling animal is the squirell</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole miting ket ak kesole mitinget we sabarinyon</i>	<i>we praise the small leaves tree and again we praise the small leaves tree</i>
<i>Miting kelyondet we miting kelyondet we sabarinyon</i>	<i>The bitter tree is a wild fruit tree</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole bamong'o ak kesole bamong'o we sabarinyon</i>	<i>As we go we praise our father</i>
<i>Bamong'o ribech we bamong'o ribechwe sabarinyon</i>	<i>Our father takes care of us as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole koruchon ak kesole koruchon we sabarinyon</i>	<i>we praise our mother as we go</i>
<i>Koruchon ribech we koruchon ribech we sabarinyon</i>	<i>Our mother takes care of us as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole ming'in tiony ak kesole ming'in tiony we sabarinyon</i>	<i>As we go we praise the tiny animal as we go</i>
<i>Ming'in kiplekwet we ming'in kiplekwet we sabarinyon</i>	<i>the tiny animal is an hare as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole barar tiony ak kesole barar tiony we sabarinyon</i>	<i>we praise the noisy animal as we go</i>
<i>Barar interit we barar interit we sabarinyon</i>	<i>the noisy animal is the squirrel as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole abaiket ak kesole abaiket we sabarinyon</i>	<i>As we go we praise the fertile tree as we go</i>
<i>Abai sinenendet we abai sinendet we sabarinyon</i>	<i>The fertile tree is sinendet as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole toror ket ak kesole tororket wee sabarinyon</i>	<i>We praise the tall tree wee as we go</i>

*Toror chepkoibet we toror chepkoibet we the tall tree is Chepkoibet( one of the  
 sabarinyon tallest trees in Mau forest) as we go  
 Sabarinyon oh kesole toror ket ak kesole We praise the tall tree wee as we go  
 tororket wee sabarinyon*

(Song 4)

In this song *Kipkoibet*, one of the tallest trees found in the Mau forest is mentioned. The aspect of its awesome height is also praised. This suggests that the Kipsigis community accepts tall trees and admire their presence in their environment. As David Rono from Siongiroi, Chebalungu Sub County of Bomet County observes that the Kipsigis like living in a bushy area. The community's elders discourage the destruction of tall trees and even as the initiates build the hut for seclusion small branches and grass are used. Besides after *tumdo* the hut is left to rot away in order to preserve the environment surrounding the hut.

The song *Matororyet* praises *tegat* tree like most of the *tumdo* songs. It talks of features of the bamboo tree as being tall that it cannot be reached through climbing in the second stanza. Tall trees are also strong trees. The image brought out when the songs mentions and praises tall trees is that of strength and endurance. These are the characteristics of a respected person in the community. Indeed at a critical level the initiates and the entire community are being enlightened on the desirable personal traits – strength and endurance.

***Matororyet***

*Matororyet wee toryo ngenyan ee oiye  
 Matororyet toryo Keguren arkaka*

*Matororyet wee toror tegat ee oiye  
 Matororyet toror makinyor ee oiye*

***Matororyet***

*Matororyet wide is that salt rock  
 Matororyet wide it is called arkaka*

*Matororyet tall is a bamboo tree ee oiye  
 Matororyet tall it cannot be climbed ee  
 oiye*

*Matororyet wee ming'in tiony ee oiye*

*Matororyet ming'in Kiplekwet ee oiye*

*Matoroyet wee toror tegat ee oiye*

*Matororyet toror makinyor ee oiye*

*Matororyet wee that animal is small ee oiye*

*Matororyet the small animal is an hare ee oiye*

*Matororyet tall is a bamboo tree ee oiye*

*Matororyet tall it cannot be climbed ee oiye*

(Song 14)

### **2.6.1.5 Chepkomonthorn plant as an image of human conflict**

Human conflict is a feature of every society. The Kipsigis community has coexisted with human conflict, both internal and external for centuries. In *tumdo* songs this conflict as a theme therefore emerges. It is through imagery that the issue of human conflict is highlighted. The Mauritius thorn bush projects the idea vividly.

#### ***Uyeuye***

*Uye Uye kisolet marukwen tiondo( 2 times)*

*Uyee! (mass)*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo ooh!*

*Uye Uye Kisolet Ming'in tiony Kiplekwet(2 times solo)*

*Hoe! Ho! Ikobkob hoe tionda Soiwo oh ie!*

*Uye Uye Kisolet Likwob ket rerendet (2times solo)*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!*

*Uye Uye Kisolet kerta or mashelel (2times solo)*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!*

*Uye uye kisolet kolinket chepkomon(2times solo)*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!*

#### ***Uyeuye***

*An animal does not sleep in the middle*

*Uyee*

*Ie! Hoe ho ie! An animal from plains*

*Uye Uye we praise the hare a small animal*

*Hoe ho ie The animal from plains*

*Uye Uye we praise the fertile tree is Rerendet*

*Hoe ho ie The animal from plains*

*Uye uye we praise Marsholet bird flying along the way*

*hoe ho ie! The animal from the plains*

*Uye uye we praise the Mauritius thorn an irritating tree*

*Hoe ho ie! The animal from the plains*

(Song 5)

The song *Uye uye* above mentions the nature of a Mauritius thorn tree in its last stanza. It is said to be an irritating bush (*Kolin ket*). This plant is usually used to fence the borders but considered a source of quarrels since it moves and re-grows as it is trimmed and if one side of the border trims continually the whole border shifts thereby leading to



quarrels from the other side. Indeed *Chepkomon* as a plant is symbol of a quarrelsome or cheeky person and among the Kipsigis it is usually said that the instigator of quarrels has used a thorn to prick into the community's cohesive fabric.

#### **2.6.1.6 Kelyot tree as an image of beauty**

Beauty is an issue that is sought by many people in our contemporary societies. In *tumdo* songs it has been addresses extensively. In the song *Chepketilet*, *kelyot* tree and other plants have been brought out as symbols of natural beauty and sources of food in form of fruits. The issue brought out here is that of dependence of the Kipsigis person on trees for sustenance. The Kipsigis person finds in his or her immediate environment trees that will provide him or her with wild berries. One of this is *Kelyondet*. This tree is described as *miting* (with small leaves) in the song *Sabarinyon* below;

#### ***Sabarinyon***

*Sabaarinyon oh kesole motiryot ak  
kesole motiryot oh sabarinyon*

*Motir chebobor we Motir chebobor  
we sabarinyon*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole warir tiony ak  
kesole warir tiony we sabarinyon*

*Warir interit we warir interit we  
sabarinyon*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole miting ket ak  
kesole mitinget we sabarinyon*

*Miting kelyondet we miting  
kelyondet we sabarinyon*

*Sabarinyon oh kesole bamong'o ak  
kesole bamong'o we sabarinyon*

#### ***Sabarinyon***

*As we go oh We praise the trainer  
and again we praise the trainer oh  
as we go*

*The trainer succeeds as we go*

*As we go we praise this animal and  
again we praise this calling animal*

*This calling animal is the squirell*

*we praise the small leaves tree and  
again we praise the small leaves  
tree*

*The bitter tree is a wild fruit tree*

*As we go we praise our father*

<i>Bamong'o ribech we bamong'o ribechwe sabarinyon</i>	<i>Our father takes care of us as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole koruchon ak kesole koruchon we sabarinyon</i>	<i>we praise our mother as we go</i>
<i>Koruchon ribech we koruchon ribech we sabarinyon</i>	<i>Our mother takes care of us as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole ming'in tiony ak kesole ming'in tiony we sabarinyon</i>	<i>As we go we praise the tiny animal as we go</i>
<i>Ming'in kiplekwet we ming'in kiplekwet we sabarinyon</i>	<i>the tiny animal is an hare as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole barar tiony ak kesole barar tiony we sabarinyon</i>	<i>we praise the noisy animal as we go</i>
<i>Barar interit we barar interit we sabarinyon</i>	<i>the noisy animal is the squirrel as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole abaiket ak kesole abaiket we sabarinyon</i>	<i>As we go we praise the fertile tree as we go</i>
<i>Abai sinenendet we abai sinendet we sabarinyon</i>	<i>The fertile tree is sinendet as we go</i>
<i>Sabarinyon oh kesole toror ket ak kesole tororket we sabarinyon</i>	<i>We praise the tall tree wee as we go</i>
<i>Toror chepkoibet we toror chepkoibet we sabarinyon</i>	<i>the tall tree is Chepkoibet( one of the tallest trees in Mau forest) as we go</i>

In the song *Sabarinyon*, *Kelyot* (the wild fruit tree) has been mentioned and praised. Its characteristic is also mentioned that is it is bitter. The suggestion of bitterness may mean that this type of a tree is not preferred to be used in sacred things. Among the Kipsigis the nature of certain trees and plants were bitter and only used when cursing or other negative functions. It is however interesting to note that *Kelyot* has fruits which when still raw contain milk- like sap. This means that despite the fact that this tree is used in cursing it still has good signs – that of milky white sap. It is arguable that the singer could be

making a statement that everyone has both sides in him or herself. The relativity of a human person is being hinted here so that the Kipsigis community

### **2.6.1.7 The Palmtree branch as an image of Authority**

Every society has ways in which to enhance harmony. Leadership is one of these ways. This results in some sections of the population assuming leadership positions. Among the Kipsigis some elders and famous young men take leadership positions. A palm tree branch symbolises power and authority. The palm tree is used in so many ways. It is used as mentioned earlier by women as a walking stick and as a signifier of leadership. During my fieldwork I met a County Women representative from one of the Kipsigis Counties carrying a palm branch to signify her leadership status in the county. At one point in the course of my study I witnessed the palm tree branch being thrown outside the house of one of my community contacts during a heavy downpour which included hail storm. Upon inquiry I was told it would stop the hail storm. Indeed after a few minutes the hailstorm abated. I therefore concluded that the community takes the palm tree to be a symbol of authority. In *Kyole Sosityot*, a song which is sung by women and children when in a happy mood, during the eve of circumcision the symbolism of the palm tree is hinted in its chorus. It is also important to note that the rainy season is also significant to the community since at this season food is abundant. This includes edible white ants which come out during the rain.

#### ***Kyole sosityot***

*Kyole sosityot kyole makyoldo*  
*Chepkong'ai mi en ropta*  
*Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo*

*Kyole sosityot kyole makyoldo*

#### ***A palm tree is bought***

*A palm tree is bought , bought not sold*  
*Edible white ants during the rainy season*  
*Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo*

*A palm tree is bought , bought not sold*

*Chepkong'o mi en ropta*  
*Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo*

*Kyole sosit kyole makyoldo*  
*Chepkong'ai mi en ropta*  
*Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo*

*Edible white ants during the rainy season*  
*Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo*

*A palm tree is bought , bought not sold*  
*Edible white ants during the rainy season*  
*Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo*

(Song 21)

Another tree which is invaluable is the *Silibwet* tree. This is mentioned in the song *Chepketilet version b*. In this song the black stone is mentioned as well as the *Silibwet* tree. The tree like many other trees has its own uses. Its bark is used in fencing and construction to tie posts together.

**Chepketilet(b)**

Kibo tegandet! Saptenyon Koil met Komisyi  
mongasis

Toror tegek makinyoru

Tai teget koilong (tech teget kou longet)

Tai teget kobar pun.

Parpar oret kwo orit pun.

Kecham keter kel e mungen

Kecham urwo met en songol.

Kecham ko see ma ok piun.

Kecham kosom kel e ngurur.

Aiwet che mabek: kitobegu; kong'etroor.

Solu koita tue nyeb silibwa

**Chepketilet**

We belong to the bamboo! Our podocarpus tree when it breaks the crown will disappear in the eye of the sun (the sunrise, east)

The bamboos are so tall one cannot get to the top

Present the chest like a shield

Present the chest to kill the enemy

Twirl the spear to pierce the enemy

One likes the eaves on the legs with fur anklets

One likes the shade over the head with Ostrich feathers (The war headdress)

One likes to make fire with firesticks)

Get covered with mud following enemy spoor)

The axe which is not lost; it was being lost ;the old field gets up)

Similar to the the black stone near silibwet tree

(Song 9)

### 2.6.1.8 Lelechwet tree as an image of home

Home is a place that every human being seeks and finds relative comfort. We also know our homewell and as a result we can describe it. In *tumdo* songs the singer uses the images of Lelechwetbush to describe home. The song *Kimenye lelechonik* projects home as bushy area. It seems to be acknowledging the presence of features that provide sustenance. These are in the form of plants of past and modern era such as tea bushes and eucalyptus trees.

*Kimenye lelechonik* mentions the tendency of *lelechonik* to grow after it is cut. As suggested by Jonathan Arap Sowe, an elder from Kaptilolwo village in Bomet Central Subcounty, Bomet County. *Lelechwet* could be a symbolic name for the tea bushes which have been part of the Kipsigis environment since the colonial days. Apparently this song was also performed by young children long before their initiation period.

#### ***Kimenye Lelechonik***

*Kimenye lelechonik oo ee oo ee*  
*Che ngeyieb kong'oty akichek*  
*kimenye lelechonik*

#### ***We live in the bush***

*we live in a bush tree oo ee oo ee*  
*When cut it grows again*  
*We live in a bush tree*  
*(Song 13)*

One of my respondents describes *Lelechwet* tree with whitish leaves. Arap Marusoi, from Chebalungu Sub County, claims to have been attracted by the beauty of this tree and planted it in his compound near his family hut. He was further enchanted when beautiful weaver birds (*Chepisaakinik*) made nests in it and brought interesting tunes to his compound. However he was later forced to cut the tree and relocate it further from his homestead since it attracted great number caterpillar worms which were dangerous to his children. He later found out that the milky sap of *rerendet* plant served as antidote for the caterpillar worm stings. The caterpillar worm which had stung a child could also be

roasted and its ashes cut into the swollen area to treat catapillar stings. Nature according to Mr Marusoi provides medicine for the community.

### **2.6.1.9 Grass as an image of refuge and safety**

The Kipsigis people practice many cultural events as well as social events. These include trade, hunting and honey gathering and fighting competitions. War also used to be taken as sport. In all these undertakings fairness was practiced. If for example an antelope ran into ones house during a hunting expedition it was considered unfair to kill it. The owner of the house saw it as his duty to protect it since it had sought refuge in his house. Refuge is therefore an issue of great significance among the Kipsigis. Grass is brought out as a symbol of this refuge. In the *Ode of the village of Kagipsirich*, grass is mentioned as a refuge to the hare.

#### **Tiendap kokwetap kagipsirich**

Tuluonin (ee ihm) lale kot kong'et  
(ihi) Kitigin ne ruen kiplekwet

#### **Ode of the village of Kagipsirich**

That hill where it's grass burns till a little  
remains where the hare can hide

(Song 12)

This song suggests that the hare needs to be protected by the fact that a hill whose grass burns in forest fires but a little remains to form a hiding place for the hare.

In the song *Sinyanja Sire*, the initiates are urged to recognize the bush as a source of hiding space when they are raiding. In this song therefore the bush is glorified. It is said to have a utilitarian purpose of hiding the raiding warriors so that they can successfully raid their neighbours. Raiding can also be taken here to mean hunting. At the time of composition these were the economic activities that the warriors in the community took part in.

### **Sinyaja Sire**

*Sinyanja sire sire chunbo koiwa kibore  
Nyanja  
Sigeigun ingeunge sigeigun ingeunge  
Chebwones ak moita  
Ooh oe oiye*

### **Sinyanja Sire**

*Sinyanja it defeats it defeats those from the  
rocky place  
Let us hide so that we can  
come with a calf  
Ooh oe oiye  
(Song 7b)*

## **2.6.2 Topographical images**

Topographical images have been identified as images of environment that encompass features of topography such as water bodies, hills, valleys and fields. They are part of the natural world and are also mentioned extensively in the *tumdo* songs.

### **2.6.2.1 Grazing place as an image of responsibility**

The Kipsigis people are cattle keepers. A grazing ground is therefore significant to the whole community. This is projected in *tumdo* songs when the singer describes a grazing ground. It used to be a suitable ground for grazing but the herder had to sharpen his spear in order to protect the cows from marauding wild animals in the area and probably from possible raiders. The responsibility of the herder is brought out in this song. The grazing field is therefore an image of responsibility among the Kipsigis. Bomet which means, cattle Kraal in Kipsigis got its name partly from the duties of Kipsigis carried out around the hill of Kaplele. The song in saying, ‘*achame ane*’ (I like) points out the preferences of the singer probably to the wild nature and forested area of Kaplele. It seems to point out that our areas should be forested and its wild nature conserved for them to be suitable for cattle keeping. The song *Chepkibol* which mentions a hilly ground behind Bomet town suitable for grazing;

### ***Chepkibol***

*Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol  
Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol*

### ***Chepkibol***

*Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol  
Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol*

*En chabas ooe aee*  
*woee aeee*  
*Achame ane kimel gut en musar*

*woee aeee*  
*Achame ane warir ket ketiiyot*  
*woee aeee*  
*Achame ane tinenyon bo Ragita*  
*woee aeee*

*Achame ane kaplele kolioch Ng'ot kwaget*  
*tuk*  
*woee aeee*  
*Achame ane kaplele kolioch Ng'ot kwaget*  
*tuk*

*In the nook of the shoulder ooe aee*  
*Woee aeee*  
*I like what makes one lick the lips in the*  
*fermented uji*

*Woee aeee*  
*I like the whistling tree ketiiyot*  
*Woee aeee*  
*I like our forest the forest of Ragita*  
*Woee aeee*

*I like Kaplele where one needs a sharp*  
*spear for the cattle to graze*  
*Woee aeee*  
*I like Kaplele where one needs a sharp*  
*spear for the cattle to graze*

(Song 18)

### **2.6.2.2 Water as an image of Transition**

The movement from one stage to the next in the life of a human being is referred to as transition. *Tumdo* is a process where the initiates undergo transition from youth to adulthood. During the process several objects and materials are used. Chief among them is water. Water is used to signify the transition process. In *Kayandaet song, Version a* Water is mentioned in the following song;

#### ***Kayandaet (Version a)***

*Sal purienyon ahaa sal puriet ak oret mm*  
*yoe*  
*Tech poyondet ahaa tech poyot motiryot mm*  
*yoe*  
*Sal Nandiekyok ahaa sal nandiekyok tebe*  
*koywek mm yoe*  
*Tech Chorweng'un ahaa tech*  
*chorweng'ung kotechinwe mm yoe*  
*Sal Tinenyon ahaa sal tinop karagita we*  
*mm yoe*  
*Subay we leiye ahaa Subay werchu ap*  
*Kaplekok mm yoe*  
*Sal mi pey kel ahaa sal mi pey Kaploin we*  
*mm yoe*  
*Sal chepyoset ahaa sal kametab murenik*  
*mm yoe*

#### ***Kayandaet sung to Elders***

*Praise our community ahaa community*  
*and clan mm yoe*  
*Honour the oldman honour the oldman*  
*the trainer mm yoe*  
*Praise our Nandi ahaa praise our Nandi*  
*living in a rocky area*  
*Honour you friend ahaa honour your*  
*friend so that he can honour you*  
*Praise our forest(Mau) praise our mau it*  
*belongs to arap Ragita we mm yoe*  
*Greetings you men greetings you men*  
*from the new village mm yoe*  
*Praise what is inside the water praise the*  
*cows bleeding tools*  
*Praise the old woman praise the mother*  
*of men*



*Subay lagokyuk ahaa subay lagok chetom  
konay ng'al mm yoe*

*Sal tororteg ahaa sal toror makinyor we  
mm yoe*

*Sal pun tegan ahaa sal pun tegan kobwa  
kok mm yoe*

*Sal Kombero ahaa pinikwet kibo koy mm  
yoe*

*Sal timin tui ahaa sal timi ap Chesolot mm  
yoe*

*Sal puriet ahaa sal puriet mabwa puch mm  
yoe*

*Sal koy long'et ahaa sal koy long'et makitil  
mm yoe*

*Kisolu cheptuech ahaa kisolu cheptuech neo  
met mm yoe*

*Greetings you children greetings you  
children who have not known how to  
speak*

*Praise the tall bamboo praise the tall  
bamboo it cannot be climbed*

*Praise those who pass through the  
bamboo those who pass through the  
bamboo to come to the sitting area*

*Praise Kombero ahaa pinikwet it belongs  
to this stone mm yoe*

*Praise the dark bush ahaa praise the  
bush of Chesolot*

*Praise the community they did not come  
empty handed mm yoe*

*Praise the tall shield ahaa praise the tall  
shield it cannot be cut*

*We look like the tree cheptuech the tree  
cheptuech whose head is huge*

(Song 16)

The song *sal*, talks about what is in the water and in this case *kaploin*. After *labetab eun* (the dipping of hands) ceremony, the initiates are allowed to hold weapons and even sing. The items they are allowed to hold are placed inside an open water container and among this is *kaploin*. This water container is symbolic of a large a large bodies of water such as rivers, dams and lakes. These bodies of water are used during the *tumdo* process and presenting these tools under water to the initiate during the *tumdo* ceremony is an indication that water signifies transition from youthful stage to an adulthood full of responsibilities.

### **2.6.2.3 Hill as an image of home**

A hilly ground was preferable as a settlement area by many communities. The Kipsigis took the hill as a fort that protected them from their enemies. In *tumdo* songs the hilly areas as images of home come out clearly. The *Ode to the village of Kagipsirich* presents home as a hilly ground;

***Tiendaap kokwet ab Kagipsirich***  
*Kimenye imbar Kagipsirich chor. (ii-hi)*

***Ode to the villages of Kagipsirich***  
*We live at field of Kagipsirich*

*Kimenye kochur moy (ihim) Moy ak soton  
(ihi)*

*We live where the calf and the calabash  
play*

*Kimenye ehek tulwonin kebenen (ihin)  
Kebenen tuga romoswek*

*We live ourselves that hill of sandy of  
sandy cattle sides*

*Tuluonin (ee ihm) lale kot kong'et  
(ihi)Kitigin ne ruen kiplekwet  
Hide*

*That hill where it's grass burns till a little  
remains where the rabbit can hide*

*Ne isto gee kwo urwo (ii ihi)*

*Which rolls to go shade*

*Asi kwaim segetet ak uson (leiyo laleiyo)*

*To eat segetet and roots 'uson'*

*Achame sugutek (ihim) en pirar kiam  
koita kot komang(ihi)*

*I like the salty water ate pirar they ate  
stone till it came through.*

*Kimenye tulwoni (ee ihm) arusen kirugik  
(ihi)*

*We live in this hill where the blue-grey  
bulls ihi*

*Arusen kirugi en limo (ihi)*

*Blue grey bulls at grazing*

This song acknowledges the physical characteristics of part of the Kipsigis area that is grey and hilly and that this area is good for cattle keeping from the mention of cattle whose sides are grey. The singer points out that they live on the hill and that they have conformed to the hilly area by adopting the grey colour of the hill. This is an indication that a hill is suitable for a home among these people even to their domestic animals. It could also be acknowledgement of the topography of the area the Kipsigis community finds as their home. Below is part of the song *tiendap kokwetap kagipsirich* mentioning the hill and equating it with home. The song mentions a hill where the blue-grey bulls are grazing. The singers claim that they live in the hill mentioned.

According to J G Peristiany, these songs are performed during the *rotyinet* ceremony...and praise the country side...' (280).

#### 2.6.2.4 Water as an image of life

Water is a basic requirement that sustains life. Without it there cannot be life. The Kipsigis *tumdo* songs demonstrate the importance of water by describing the effects of its presence. The Song *tiendap kokwetap konoin* is a song which mentions water and describes a village with water. The village is Konoin. Konoin is now a Sub County of Bomet County, which probably was a village at the time of the composition of this song. The song *tiendap kokwetab konoin* talks about water and its importance to the farmers of Konoin. It also describes the village of Konoin as a village with a lot of water being distributed to other villages and also affecting the settling patterns of people in this village. The villagers surround the village in their settlement patterns as a result of water. This acknowledges the reality that Konoin is a water catchment area and that water is useful for crop production. In this way the song is a description of a home of the people of Konoin as a place full of life because of the presence of water. Below is the song *tiendap kokwetap Konoin*.

##### ***Tiendap kokwetab Konoin***

*Chaluogin sosyot chor (ii-hi) kogochin  
piik ap terenik chor(ihi)*

*Kobagash Chechu lelach (ii-hi)  
chuachlelach u polik*

*Abo pichu chok (ii-hi) pichu kirop  
konoin (ihi)*

*Konoin lagu pey (ii-hi) Konoin ap  
imbaren (ihi)*

*Abo pun tegan konyo piik (ii-hi)*

*Abo sapteet kiil met (ihi)  
Kiil met ak koger kong'asis (ii-hi)*

##### ***Ode to the village of Konoin***

*Troublesome wild palm they gave the  
people of pots*

*leaves this white milk these white as  
clouds*

*I belong to those people ones these  
people they join*

*Konoin come down water Konoin of the  
(tilling) fields*

*I belong pass bamboo they come people.*

*I belong to septet tree it broke (head*

*Broke its head facing the rising sun*

*Chor. Eleiyo , laleiyo, laleiyo*

*Abo pichu chok (ii-hi) pichu kirop  
konoin (ihi)*

*I belong to those people ones these  
people they join*

*Konoin lagu pey (ii-hi) Konoin ap  
imbaren (ihi)*

*Konoin come down water Konoin of the  
(tilling) fields*

(Song 11)

### **2.6.2.5 Rocky area as an image of home**

Part of the Kipsigis area borders a rocky area occupied by the Nandi. These are the Kipsigis from Belgut (Kericho) who border Nandi hills. The Kipsigis from Kipkelion and Londiani also occupy a rocky area. They have come to identify the area as home. This image of home as a rocky area is presented through the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. In the *Kayandaet* song the following lines project home as a rocky area;

***Kayandaet (a)***

*Sal Nandiekyok ahaa sal nandiekyok  
tebe koywek mm yoee*

***Kayandaet***

*Praise our Nandi ahaa praise our Nandi  
living in a rocky area*

(Song 16)

In this song the Nandi; one of the Kalenjins communities and the fact that they live in a rocky country is mentioned. Perhaps the singer before composing this song had an opportunity to find out that Nandi hills is a rocky country. It is assumed that the rocky place is also identified with home since the cousins of the Kipsigis live in the rocky area comfortably.

Imagery projects abstract features while using real features. It is arguable to note that the projection of home as a rocky area is an acknowledgement that home also contain many challenges such as human conflict, natural calamities such as hunger, famine and

disease. The singer would like to educate the young initiates and through imagery introduce to him these challenges faced by adults.

### 2.6.2.6 Forest as an image of home

The song *kayandaet a*, mentions 'tinet,' a place in Kuresoi, Keringet Sub County of Nakuru County. Tinet is part of Mau forest and the term 'tinet' comes from an indigenous tree 'Tinet,' whose medicinal properties are believed to be herbal medicine curing chest and flu among the Kipsigis. The value of nature is brought out through the image of home as a forest. The singer seems to be acting at a symbolic level when he refers to the forest by mentioning one type of tree which in normal circumstances, is medicinal. In a way he is equating the whole forest as being medicinal.

#### *Kayandaet (Version a)*

*Sal purienyon ahaa sal puriet ak oret mm yoe*

*Tech poyondet ahaa tech poyot motiryot mm yoe*

*Sal Nandiekyok ahaa sal nandiekyok tebe koywek mm yoe*

*Tech Chorwerng'un ahaa tech chorweng'ung kotechinwe mm yoe*

*Sal Tinenyon ahaa sal tinop karagita we mm yoe*

*Subay we leiye ahaa Subay werchu ap Kaplekok mm yoe*

*Sal mi pey kel ahaa sal mi pey Kaploin we mm yoe*

*Sal chepyoset ahaa sal kametab murenik mm yoe*

*Subay lagokyuk ahaa subay lagok chetom konay ng'al mm yoe*

*Sal tororteg ahaa sal toror makinyor we mm yoe*

*Sal pun tegan ahaa sal pun tegan kobwa kok mm yoe*

#### *Kayandaet sung to Elders*

*Praise our community ahaa community and clan mm yoe*

*Honour the oldman honour the oldman the trainer mm yoe*

*Praise our Nandi ahaa praise our Nandi living in a rocky area*

*Honour you friend ahaa honour your friend so that he can honour you*

*Praise our forest(Mau) praise our mau it belongs to arap Ragita wee mm yoe*

*Greetings you men greetings you men from the new village mm yoe*

*Praise what is inside the water praise the cows bleeding tools*

*Praise the old woman praise the mother of men*

*Greetings you children greetings you children who have not known how to speak*

*Praise the tall bamboo praise the tall bamboo it cannot be climbed*

*Praise those who pass through the bamboo those who pass through the bamboo to come to the sitting area*

<i>Sal Kombero ahaa pinikwet kibo koy mm yoe</i>	<i>Praise Kombero ahaa pinikwet it belongs to this stone mm yoe</i>
<i>Sal timin tui ahaa sal timi ap Chesolot mm yoe</i>	<i>Praise the dark bush ahaa praise the bush of Chesolot</i>
<i>Sal puriet ahaa sal puriet mabwa puch mm yoe</i>	<i>Praise the community they did not come empty handed mm yoe</i>
<i>Sal koy long'et ahaa sal koy long'et makitil mm yoe</i>	<i>Praise the tall shield ahaa praise the tall shield it cannot be cut</i>
<i>Kisolu cheptuech ahaa kisolu cheptuech neo met mm yoe</i>	<i>We look like the tree cheptuech the tree cheptuech whose head is huge</i>

### Song 16

#### **2.6.2.7 Route as an image of Lineage**

'*Sal purienyon ahaa sal puriet ak oret mm yoe*' is a stanza which the initiates singing to visiting elders during their seclusion sing while performing the song *kayandaet*. It praises the Kipsigis army and the Kipsigis clans. Clans are given the term *oret* whose literal translation is the road or the way. The route is a socio- geographical feature and it is significant that the Kipsigis uses it to identify its clan systems.

Lineage is an anthropological term which refers to the kinship ties among various groups of related people. Among the Kipsigis I found out during my field research that the symbol of lineage is fire and lineage is usually referred to as 'our route.'

#### **2.6.3 Animal imagery.**

Kipsigis *tumdo* costumes (*ingoroiik ab tumin*) are made from hides and skins of animals (both domestic and wild). These costumes are *Menegubet* made from calf skins. *Menegubet* is a dress worn during the circumcision days. Other animal skins include *kiboet* and *kiptarar* monkey head dress made from monkey skins. *Tumdo* costumes are also made from skins of antelopes (*boinik* singular- *boinet*). We also have head skin (hat) made from oyster shells which according to my respondents have been acquired through trade. This is confirmed by Abdul Karim Bangura, who observes that,

In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Kipsigis came into contact with the Swahili traders on the caravan routes that ran from the coast of the East Africa to Uganda in the interior. From then on, trade in metal ornaments, beads and foreign cloth developed with these coastal traders (46).

Animal imagery is best brought out in the song *Kipayesit*. This is a song which extensively talks about an animal in its chorus.

***Kipaeso ee***

*Kipaeso ee oo yo ee tiondap poeso*

*Kabugar ee ooe oo yo ee osaisai tugap  
kaplim*

*Kaplim ee ooe oo yo ee osaisai tugap  
kabugar*

***The animal of ‘Poeso’***

*The animal of poeso ee oo yo ee*

*Kabugar ee ooe oo yo take the cattle of  
the Luo*

*The luo ee ooe oo yo take the cattle of  
kabugar*

(Song 10)

The *Kipayesit* song mentions an unidentified animal. This shows the presence of wild animals in the lives of Kipsigis people. The animal ‘*ofpoeso*’ in the song signifies all totems of Kipsigis clans. At some stage in history the Kipsigis ancestors subdivided wild animals among themselves and their clans as totems so that each clan could protect their own totems thereby protecting the much useful wild animals, according to one of my respondents, Arap Marusoi from Kapkesosio area of Chebalungu Sub County, Bomet County. To him even the much despicable animal *Chemugugut* (hyena) belong to the clan of *Kapioria* and when one tries to kill it a man from this clan can be heard protecting it by saying ‘donot harm our animal’ especially when it has harmed no one.

### 2.6.3.1 Rhino as an image of Power

We begin our analysis of the song ‘*Ode to the Village of Kagipsirich*’ in looking at the term *Kagipsirich*. *Kagipsirich* comes from the word ‘*kipsirichet*’ which is a word used to refer to rhino among the Kipsigis and the entire Kalenjin. The village of Kagipsirich is therefore named after the rhino. As mentioned elsewhere in this research report some of the Kipsigis villages are named after features of physical environment and it is not a surprise to find that this song mentions the village named after the rhino. *Kimenye imbar Kagipsirichis* a line which acknowledges the place where the singers live in the field of the rhinos. The village of Kagipsirich identifies itself with a powerful animal in the hope that its people also acquire this power. Another powerful animal that is identified as an image of power is the lion in the song *Chepketilet*. The singers identify themselves with this animal. Among the original Kipsigis clans the lion is identified as a clan member or a totem. The Lion has been described as *kotuger* meaning with a powerful voice. The fact that the clan of *Kipasisek* identify themselves with this animal indicates their powerful position in the community.

#### **Chepketilet**

*Kibo piik ab kotuger (ng’etundo) en eben*

#### **Chepketilet**

*We belong to the lion who lives in the caves*

(Song 1)

### 2.6.3.2 Elephant as images of strength

The elephant is mentioned in the song *Chepketilet*. It is described in the song as an animal which is so strong that its foot can dam water enough for calves to quench their thirst. The elephant size is hinted upon by mentioning that as it walks, it creates depressions which would later on dam rain water for calves. Indeed such a huge and heavy animal can convincingly be said to be powerful.



### **Chepketilet**

*Kibo piikab kiramgel ee oe Kiramgel koe moek*

### **Chepketilet**

*We belong to the elephant ee oe whose step can dam water for calfs*  
(Song 1)

### **2.6.3.3 The hare as an image of wit and intelligence**

In the song *Sabarinyon* intelligence and wit as reflected through environmental images discussed. The hare is mentioned and praised irrespective of its tiny stature. From this it can be deduced that tiny animals or vulnerable beings should not be overlooked since they could otherwise be intelligent and therefore helpful. Indeed among the Kipsigis is a proverb, *Mesosyi lakwa ng'al*, meaning do not despise the child's advice. This affirms the belief that tiny beings have wit and intelligence.

### **Sabarinyon**

*Sabarinyon oh kesole ming'in tiony ak kesole ming'in tiony we sabarinyon*

### **Sabarinyon**

*As we go we praise the tiny animal as we go*  
(Song 4)

In this song the singer mentions *kiplekwet* (hare) and its characteristic *warir* (noise maker). The mention of the hare suggests that within the environment of the Kipsigis the presence of this animal is acknowledged and encouraged. This is from the sense that the aspect of its tiny stature suggests that the hare will not occupy a lot of space. *Uye Uye* is a song which is also used to comment on the natural world surrounding the Kipsigis. The song *Uye uye* mentions the hare and its tiny nature including its habitat-*soin* (Plains).

### **Uye Uye**

*Uye Uye Kisole Ming'in tiony Kiplekwet (2 times solo)*  
*Hoe! Ho! Ikobkob hoe tionda Soiwo oh ie!*

### **Uye Uye**

*Uye Uye we praise the hare a small animal*  
*Hoe ho ie The animal from plains*  
(Song 5)

#### **2.6.3.4 Interit (Squirrel) asan image of Satisfaction**

Animals according to the Kipsigis were also of great importance. Animals such as *interit* (squirrel) were of great use. This squirrel which is found in Mau forest is noisy in character. This animal used to cry only in the evening and according to Arap Soi of Mosingororo village, Bomet Central Sub County. *Interit* which is featured in many of *tumdo* songs only cried when it had eaten and was satisfied. This animal also is used to identify the time of the day. The song *Sabarinyon* mentions *interit* and points out its noisy nature therefore hinting the image of satisfaction. It is said that a person who is satisfied is noisy like *interit*.

#### ***Sabarinyon***

*Sabarinyon oh kesole warir tiony ak kesole  
warir tiony we sabarinyon  
Warir interit we warir interit we sabarinyon*

#### ***Sabarinyon***

*As we go we praise this animal and again  
we praise this calling animal  
This calling animal is the squirell  
(Song 4)*

#### **2.6.4 Images of Birds**

Among the Kipsigis birds are of great importance. It is an abomination to steal eggs of birds according to David arap Bett. This identifies bird as of significant position in the community's culture. In the songs analyzed bird are mentioned and images created surrounding different species of birds that are present in the community's environment. While interviewing David arap Bett, the images of birds were identified birds as quite important. The Kipsigis people have their behavior governed by these natural features.

##### **2.6.4.1 The Ostrich as an image of fierceness**

Ostrich feathers were used to make the war headdress. The stanza below from the song *Chepketilet* shows that the Kipsigis area has Ostriches in its environment. The Ostrich is a bird which is reputed to be protective of its young. This is significant since

the Kipsigis and the entire Kalenjin use their feathers to make a war headdress. It seems the Kipsigis desire the fast and fierce qualities of this bird in their major undertakings which in this case is war.

***Chepketilet***

*Kibo tegandet! Saptenyon Koil met Komisyi mongasis*

*Toror tegek makinyoru*

*Tai teget koilong (tech teget kou longet)*

*Tai teget kobar pun.*

*Parpar oret kwo orit pun.*

*Kecham keter kel e mungen*

*Kecham urwo met en songol.*

*Kecham ko see ma ok piun .*

*Kecham kosom kel e ngurur .*

*Aiwet che mabek: kito begu; kong'et roor.*

*Solu koita tue nyeb silibwa*

***Chepketilet***

*We belong to the bamboo! Our podocarpus tree when it breaks the crown will disappear in the eye of the sun (the sunrise, east)*

*The bamboos are so tall one cannot get to the top*

*present the chest like a shield*

*present the chest to kill the enemy*

*Twirl the spear to pierce the enemy*

*. One likes the eaves on the legs with fur anklets (Refers to the anklets worn with war dress, which are likened to the eaves of the house)*

*One likes the shade over the head with Ostrich feathers (The war headdress)*

*One likes to make fire with firesticks)*

*Get covered with mud following the enemy*

*The axe which is not lost; it was being lost ;the old field gets up)*

*Similar to the the black stone near silibwet tree*

(Song 9)

In the song *sal* we are presented with attire worn by the initiates. They are described as 'brown and beautiful.' These costumes are made from the skins of animals such as monkeys. In a way it seems that the singer would like to point out that beauty is achieved through the presence of these animals. The song *Kayandaet b* projects the description of beauty through the use of animal skins;

***Kayandaet(version b)***

*Saal busien kok roigin wee*

*Saal we leiye aaaa*

***Kayandaet***

*Praise the grey place costumes*

*Praise wee men aaaa*

(Song 19)

#### 2.6.4.2 Mashelelet bird as an image of freedom.

In the song *sulacha* we are confronted with the image of *mashelelet* (wild dove) signifying freedom. Birds are free to fly anywhere they wish. Their freedom is not limited. The singer therefore seems to make a statement that a person who is always at the cross road is like the *mashelelet* bird. This type of bird is always found flying along the road as described in the song *sulacha*.

#### ***Sulacha***

*Sulacha aae sulach woe eoe kutung kwony  
eoe ongebar sullach*

*Sullacha ee sullach, kosilbei ee ow*

*Sullacha ee Sulach woe kerta oor*

*Eoe ongebar sulach kerta mashelel*

*Sulaacha ee sulach lipkwop ket*

*Eowe ongebar sulach lipkwop kelyondet*

*Sulaacha ee sulach eoe werchunchok*

*eoe ongebar sulach werchun kiropsoi*

*Sulacha ee sulach eoe warir tiony ongebar  
sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach warir interit ongebar  
sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach eoe miting ket ongebar  
sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach miting keliot ongebar  
sulach*

#### ***Sulacha***

*Sulaacha woe eoe a woman kneels eoe let  
us kill sulach*

*Sulaacha ee sulach to fetch water ee ow*

*Sulaacha ee sulach woe it flies on the way*

*eoe ongebar sulach what flies on the way is  
the mashelel bird*

*Sulaacha ee sulach a beautiful tree*

*Eowe ongebar sulach the beautiful tree is  
wild fruit tree*

*sulaacha ee sulache eoe our brothers*

*eoe ongebar sulach our brothers in the  
plains*

*Sulacha ee sulach eoe the calling animal  
let us own sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach the calling animal is a  
squirrel let us own sulach*

*Sulacha ee sulach eoe the small leaves tree*

*Sulach ee sulach the small leaves tree is a  
wild fruit tree*

(Song 3)

*Kerta or mashelel* (the bird which flies along the footpath/ road is *mashelelet*) the image brought out here is that of birds in the centre of the community's life and that they are free. The birds represent freedom within the Kipsigis environment.

In the song '*Oyotwech oret*' the initiates implore the the audience to 'open the road' for them since the birds feeding on the cows' ticks are finishing them/forcing them out. In these lines it is as if these birds desire to release these young men out of captivity. This means that *ririk* birds also signify freedom. *Ririk* are birds which pick ticks from the livestock.

**Oyotwech oret**

*Oyotwech oret ooh*  
*Katarech ririk ooh*

*Oyotwech oret ooh*  
*Katarech ririk ooh*

**Open the road for us**

*Open the road for us*  
*The birds feeding on cattle tick are finishing us*

*Open the road for us*  
*The birds feeding on cattle tick are finishing us*

(Song 20)

**2.6.4.3 Crane Bird as an image wisdom**

Among the Kipsigis wisdom is very important in approaching many activities. Important issues are usually approached in moderation. During my fieldwork I came across a saying which advises one to approach any issue in a slow manner in order to succeed. *Kibendi mutyo amachei keel* (Be slow not to hurt your feet). The song below indicates the movement of water as well as the crane bird.

***Kayandaet(version b)***  
*Saal wee leeiye*  
*Aaaa sal werchunchok we*  
*Eei*  
*Saal mitinget*

***Kayandaet***  
*Praise wee men*  
*Aaaa praise our men wee*  
*Eei*  
*Praise the tiny leaves tree*

*Aaaa saal miting Keliondet wee*

*Saal toror teek*

*Aaaa saal toror tegandet weee*

*Saal marwai bei*

*Aaaa saal marua rua Kong'onny wee*

*Saal chebunei aaaa*

*Saal chebun koita tui wee*

*Saal etyop tegek aaaa*

*Saal etyop kiropwai wee*

*Saal we leiye aaaa*

*Saal weruepchep kaplelach*

*Saal busien kok roigin wee*

*Saal we leiye aaaa*

*Sal sitien kok en kuyang wee*

*Saal we leiye aaaa*

*Saal yup ang'et yupanga ne siele wee*

*Saal we leiye aaaa*

*Saal kutuny kwony kutuny kosilbei wee*

*Saal we leiye aaaa*

*Saal sim anwet sim anua ak moing*

*Saal we leiye aaaa*

*Saal melel tiony melel bunotion*

*Saal mibei kel aaaa*

*Saal mibei kaploin*

*Saal tolel tany aaaa*

*Saal tolel tany kogebeen wee*

*Saal tech chi kwonyei aaaa*

*Saal teech chi kwany konam buus wee*

*Saal waldabei aaaa*

*Saal waldap chepnyorbei wee*

*Saal tinenyony aaaa*

*Saal tinetap Ragitany wee*

*Saal keron tiony aaaa*

*Saal keron koroit wee*

*Aaaa saal the tiny leaves tree is the wild fruit tree*

*Praise the tall bamboo tree*

*Praise the tall bamboo tree wee*

*Praise the slow waters*

*Aaaa praise the slow waters the crane bird is faster*

*Praise which passes aaa*

*Praise which passes the black stone*

*Praise the bamboo tree aaaa*

*Praise it provides a walking stick*

*Praise wee men*

*Praise the men of Kaplelach group*

*Praise the grey place costumes*

*Praise wee men aaaa*

*Praise the brown place of bow*

*Praise wee men aaaa*

*Praise the one who takes the cloth by force the cloth of siele wee*

*Praise wee men aaaa*

*Praise the kneeling woman to fetch water*

*Praise we men aaaa*

*Praise the happy rope praise the rope and beehive*

*Praise we men aaaa*

*Praise the thirsty animal passing by(elephant)*

*Praise its steps dams water*

*Praise the bleeding tools in the water*

*Praise the yellow cow*

*Praise it is yellow like the cave*

*Praise honour a cooking woman*

*Praise honour a cooking woman who holds food*

*Praise the turning water point*

*Praise turning water point of Chepnyorbei*

*Praise our forest*

*Praise our forest of Ragitany*

*Praise the white and black animal*

*White and black animal is bushbaby monkey*

(Song 19)

The crane bird is said to be slower and keen as it flies. A crane bird among the Kipsigis is a totem that is used to indicate a clan of leaders. In this sense leaders have to adopt the

outlook and behavior of this bird in solving the many issues that accompany their leadership. The crane bird in the song is said to move over a black stone. The singer of this song must have been observant since black stone areas are also habitats of the crane birds. Black stones are said to be in silibwet area in Bomet County. Silibwet is a name of place named after the tree *Silibwet*. The singer might have wanted to suggest that this tree also grows in an area with blackstone. Indeed during fieldwork I found many *Silibwet* trees growing in black stone areas.

## **2.7 Summary**

In this chapter, I have given the background of the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs by highlighting and describing the ritual of *tumdo* with an aim of contextualising the songs. *Tumdo* songs are performed within the ritual of *tumdo*. The processes go hand in hand with the performances of *tumdo* songs. I have also talked about environmental issues such as months and seasons which are context of the ritual of *tumdo*. In other words *tumdo* is carried out within a specific month or months in a year. Among the Kipsigis as highlighted the month of *Kipsunde netai* and *Kipsunde nebo oeng'* are months that are used to carry out process of the ritual of *tumdo*. In the month of *roptui*, *tumdo* and similar ceremonies are not to take place.

The processes of *tumdo* ritual expounded in this section are; the introductory rite – *kerotyin*, the circumcision ceremony – *keyatita*, the cleaning of hands ceremony – *labetap eun*, to sing for 'them' ceremony – *ketienji* and the swinging ceremony – *kayaet*, all totalling up the *tumdo* process. In each section of the *tumdo* process are specific songs and some times chants which are performed by specific groups in the audience. For example the *Chepketilet* is a song performed by men at the beginning of the *tumdo*

process and also at the beginning of subsequent ceremonies within the *tumdo* process. The women perform *elego lalego* song.

I have also analysed images of environment and outlined their significance in selected Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. I have divided the images into four categories; plant, topographical, birds and animal imagery. Within Plant imagery is Saptet tree as an image of a supreme being among the Kipsigis. In *chepketilet* song the tree *Saptet* is said to fall towards sunrise (*Mong Asis*) indicating the whereabouts of *Asis* - the Supreme Being in Kipsigis religion. Other images explored in plant imagery are; *Kelyot* tree as an image of fertility, *Ketiiyot* grass as an image of favourable weather conditions, bamboo plant as an image of strength and endurance, *Chepkomon* thorn plant as an image of human conflict, *Kelyot* tree as an image of beauty, palm tree branch as an image of authority and *Lelechwet* bush as an image of home.

Topographical images are images that are related to the geographical features. The pictures painted by the songs through imagery are forested area as both an image of a grazing field as well as home, rocky area as well as a hilly ground as an image of home, water as an image of transition and finally as grass as an image of refuge and safety.

Images of Animals were also identified in *tumdo* songs and highlighted in this chapter. Animals as images of power, as well as strength were observed. These are in animals such as *kiramgel* (elephant), *kotuger* (lion) as well as antelope (*boinet*). Images of satisfaction, wit and beauty were also represented by animals. Beauty, freedom and wisdom are images which were projected by birds in the selected *tumdo* songs.



## **Chapter Three: The Philosophy of Kipsigis People in Relation to their Environment**

### **3.0 Introduction**

In Chapter two, we discussed and illustrated images of environment in various Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. In this chapter, we are looking at the way the people structure their thoughts and attitudes towards their environment. These thoughts and attitudes are reflected in the images of environment used in *tumdo* songs. The songs under study are; *Elego Laleiyo*, *Sulacha*, *Sabarinyon*, *Uye Uye*, *Onkiam Kimyet*, *Indaria Sulei*, *Sinyanja Sulei* and *Matororyet*. We also place our focus on the images present in *Chepketilet*; *Purku Kurgung* as well as *Chepkibol* songs. This chapter seeks to investigate how images identified in chapter two reveal the community's philosophy towards their environment.

Basically philosophy is the rational study of the basic principles and concepts of a particular phenomenon. In this study I have used the *tumdo* songs to investigate and identify the basic concepts, beliefs, and attitudes of the Kipsigis people in relation to their environment. This study makes an inquiry into the environmental folk wisdom of the Kipsigis as presented through the *tumdo* songs. According to Jenny Teichmann and Catherine C Evans, philosophy is a study of problems which are ultimate, abstract and very general. These are problems, such as those connected with reality, existence, knowledge, values, reason mind and language. Philosophy is distinguished from other ways of addressing such problems by its critical, generally systematic approach and its reliance on rational argument. The word 'philosophy' comes from the Ancient Greek term *philosophia*, which literally means 'love of wisdom.' The introduction of the terms 'philosopher' and 'philosophy' has been ascribed to Greek thinker Pythagoras (Teichmann and Evans 4/10/2014).

Noel Carrol points out that,

There are different schools of philosophy such as existensialism, phenomenology, Marxism, deconstruction and... analytic philosophy. Analytic philosophy analyses concepts. That is why it is sometimes called conceptual analysis...Analytic philosophy analyses the concepts that are fundamental to our practices. The purpose of analytic philosophy of art is to explore the concepts that make creating and thinking about art possible. Some of these concepts include; the very concept of art itself, as well as the concepts of representation, expression, artistic form and aesthetics. A Philosopher of art might concentrate on specific art form – asking what is literature (dance, music, film, drama and so forth), or she might explore the concepts of certain artistic genres, such as fiction, comedy, tragedy, poetry and the like. All these and more are concepts the analytic philosophy of art takes as its subject matter. (2-5).

### **3.1 Issues Raised through Environmental Images in Kipsigis *tumdosongs***

In identifying the images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdosongs*, I have paid attention to the Kipsigis values and philosophical concepts related to environment. The ecocritical theory has assisted me pick environmental images and analyse them. These images of environment have been studied to find out their philosophical content and meaning. Indeed ecocriticism as a school of study is based on the philosophy of environment within the field of literature. As mentioned earlier, the function of analytic philosophy of art is to study explore the issues that make creating and thinking about art possible such as representation, language, artistic form and aesthetics. In line with this is my

methodology of content analysis. The content here is focused on issues of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

The focus of this section is to identify issues that emerge from the analysis of images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. A set of issues have been identified which include; courage and truth, morality, community's economy, religion among others. I now embark on discussing them and tying them to the attitudes of the community to bring out the philosophy of the Kipsigis people in relation to their environment.

### **3.1.1 Issues raised through animal imagery**

The descriptive account of any artform is very encompassing. It regards any relation among elements of an artwork as an instance of its artistic form. ...An artwork is designed to perform some purpose (or a set of purposes, coordinated or otherwise) and/ or make some point. The descriptive account says that the artistic form of an artwork is the sum total of all relations between the elements of an artwork. The functional account says that the artistic form only comprises the elements and relations that are intended to serve as the means to an end of artistic work. Functionalist theory of artistic form allows for myriad nonconverging functional, implementations of the point and / or purposes of artwork (Carroll 142-148).

As Carroll suggests above functionalist theory leads us into finding the purposes of literature. This study in trying to identify images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs has also led me to try and find out the purposes of the identified environmental images. The images for instance, the image of a hare, has a purpose of pointing out an abstract

philosophical concept of wit and intellect. The study of Kipsigis works of art and in specific the study of *tumdo* songs is in itself a descriptive account. In this study I have focused my inquiry on the relationships between the identified environmental images and the philosophical concepts.

The purpose of the *Elego Lalego tumdo* song is therefore to present the philosophical concept of courage and truth. Other *tumdo* songs such as *Uye Uye, Onkiam Kimyet, Chepketilet* and *Sabarinyon* present philosophical concepts of morality, religion, peace and economy. Indeed the theory of functionalisms assisted me in identifying the many functions of the various *Tumdo* songs.

### **3.1.1.1 Courage and Truth**

Socrates, the earliest philosopher, assumes that,

...unified analyses are possible for qualities whose nature he investigates... He recognizes that both the lion and a soldier can be brave. Nonetheless, when investigating the nature of bravery, when answering the question, what is bravery? , Socrates hopes for an account which will capture what all and only instances of bravery have in common (Shields 38).

My inquiry into the concepts of courage and truth was guided by ecocritical way of inquiry like Socrates is. I have looked at different aspects of truth and used ethnomethodological ways to find out what the Kipsigis community consider courageous. In other words I have placed my ears on the ground as advocated by Okoth Okombo to find out the Kipsigis values related with the concept of courage. Courage is a truthful account of a Kipsigis man. In the song *Elego lalego* the initiates are told to do

what is expected of them. In other instances they are told to carry out what is truthful. Among the Kipsigis a person who achieves a tremendous feat is said to have embraced the truth. Initiates who pass through *tumdo* are expected to demonstrate courage. To be courageous in the song *Elego lalego* is to undergo the trials of the *tumdo* process without hesitating. The initiates are also expected not to display any feelings as a result of the pain they undergo. The initiates are expected to embrace courage and truth. The act of courage is an account that is embraced by all in the community. It has characteristics that are similar in all instances displayed. Below is the song *Elego Lalego* demonstrating the concept of courage.

*Elego lalego mm mm*  
*Otun omwa cheboiman ee*  
*Otun omwa cheboiman lagochu*  
*Elego laleiyo*  
*Tunbendi murenik iyan oh Recho*  
*Murenik ratgeror, iyan oh Recho*

*Tun obe moeykyok , iyan oh Recho*  
*Sikesim arawet , iyan oh Recho*

*Arawet ak wikit , iyan oh Recho*

*Elego lalego mm mm*  
*You do what is expected of you ee*  
*You do what is expected of you children*  
*Elego laleiyo*  
*The men will go lets agree Rachel*  
*Men who are praiseworthy lets agree*  
*Rachel*  
*You must go our calves lets agree Rachel*  
*So that we can ululate for a month lets*  
*agree Rachel*

*A month and a week lets agree Rachel*  
 (Song 2)

In the *Chepketilet* song, courage is also equated to truth. The initiates are encouraged to be courageous and do what is expected of them. They are to be true to their community and this is to be courageous. Below is a section of the song *Chepketilet* demonstrating this philosophy of courage and truth.

*Kilenjinee lagochu ee ee sikomwa*

*Sikomwa cheboiman ahaya ahaya*

*Tun obe moechu ee ee warechu*

*Warechu ahaya ahaya*

*What do we tell these children ee ee so  
that they can say the truth*

*So that they say the truth ahaya ahaya*

*You must go calves ee ee young ones*

*Young ones ahaya ahaya*

(Song 1)

### **3.1.1.2 Morality**

Morality is a key feature of the Kipsigis community. The youth are praised when they keep good morals. As suggested by Chesaina in the song *kitakekonin Chepkorir*, a girl is respected if she upholds her virginity up to marriage. The idea of good morals was also supported by the cultural practices such as the killing of babies born out of wedlock. This was a bizarre practice equal only to what Chinua Achebe describes in *Things Fall Apart* – ‘the throwing of twins into the evil forest,’ among the Igbo of Nigeria. This happened in the past but the practiced has ceased.

The initiates who successfully undergo *tumdo* are expected not to let an animal sleep in the middle – to keep good morals. Among the Kipsigis a stranger is usually referred to as an animal. In this case one should not be intimate with a stranger as one might not know what the stranger might have with him or her which might hurt the individual concerned. In a way this song is suggesting in euphemistic language that all must keep good morals. This is done while pointing out the characteristics of the environment which arguably might suggest that as one goes through everyday life one must be observant to the environment he/she finds himself/herself in. One must therefore be concerned with self by keeping good morals while at the same time with his community particularly in matters related to environment. This is the most possible reason why in the song *Uye*

*uyeit* is prohibited to have an animal sleeping in the middle and at the same time, the same song mentions the characteristics of other animals , birds and trees ;

### ***Uye Uye***

*Uye Uye kisolet marukwen tiondo( 2 times)  
Uyee! (mass)  
Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo ooh!  
Uye Uye Kisolet Ming'in tiony Kiplekwet(2 times solo)  
Hoe! Ho! Ikobkob hoe tionda Soiwo oh ie!  
Uye Uye Kisolet Likwob ket rerendet (2times solo)  
Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!*

*Uye Uye Kisolet kerta or mashelet (2times solo)  
Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!*

### ***Uye Uye***

*An animal does not sleep in the middle  
Uyee  
Ie! Hoe ho ie! An animal from plains  
Uye Uye we praise the hare a small animal  
Hoe ho ie The animal from plains  
Uye Uye we praise the fertile tree is Rerendet  
Hoe ho ie The animal from plains*

*Uye uye we praise Marsholet bird flying along the way  
Hoe ho ie! The animal from the plains*

(Song 5)

## **3.1.2 Issues raised through plant imagery**

### **3.1.2.1 Religion and Faith**

Bangura observes that;

For the Kipsigis, every aspect of life is a response to environment. These responses are expressed in beliefs and rituals that make up their religion. The Kipsigis originally believed in a Supreme Being. They called him *Asis*. Which means the 'sun' but he was not thought to be the sun. Rather like the sun, he was the great creator, sustainer of life, and giver of light, rain, and fertility. *Asis* had another name *Ngolo*, which means 'up above'. Sometimes *Asis* and *Ngolo* are combined and called *Cheptalel* or 'pure white girl,' probably a female god in an older tradition than the male sky god. (23-24)

The initiates are expected to recognize the presence of the Supreme Being after undergoing *tumdo* ceremonies. In the song *Chepketilet* the mention of *Asis* is also observed. It is evident that the mention of pordocarpus tree leads to the mention of the Supreme Being. In most songs this is the case. The East is very significant among the Kipsigis as mentioned earlier. The sun too is significant. The sun is taken as a symbol of the Supreme Being and the East, His dwelling place. When something falls towards the east it signifies a good omen and in the song *Chepketilet* the pordocarpus tree falling towards the east is therefore recognition of the presence of the Supreme Being.

The concept of faith in the community's well being is also projected in the blessing chant. This chant is led by an old man who calls upon all in attendance to agree together to a set of blessings. It appears that without their agreement the blessings cannot be manifested upon the initiates. This is an indication of communal faith. When one is blessed and everybody is in agreement then the person enjoys the benefits accrued as a result of the blessings. Similarly when one is cursed and everyone curses the person the curse takes its effect. Among the Kipsigis as we found out during fieldwork some clans were tasked with leading cursing sessions. These clans were however not allowed to lead a blessing session. The blessing chant below shows a number of the community's wishes;

***Kaberuret***

*Boiyot: Bore Tumdo Kole Bore*

*Tugul: Bore*

*Boiyot: Kim Boriet Kole Kim*

*Tugul: Kim*

*Boiyot : Kigas Kele Kigas*

*Tugul: Kigas*

*Boiyot: Abai Kele Abai*

*Tugul: Abai*

***Blessing Chant***

*Elder: The initiation ceremony will succeed*

*All: It will succeed*

*Elder: The Community is strong Lets agree is strong*

*All: Strong*

*Elder: Let it be heard lets agree let it be heard*

*All: Be heard*

*Elder: It is fertile lets agree it is fertile*

*All: It is fertile*



*Boiyot: King Kole King*

*Tugul: King*

*Elder: It is complete lets agree it is complete*

*All: It is complete*

(Chant 17)

### **3.1.2.2 Peace and economy**

Another philosophical concept brought out through the images in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs is the philosophy of peace and economy. The initiates, after undergoing *tumdo* are expected to be responsible in their community's economy. The adults have responsibilities and the singer instills these responsibilities in the young initiates using Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. This is brought out in the song *Onkiam Kimyet*;

#### ***Onkiam Kimyet***

*Oo ie oe oe(solo)*

*Hoee(all)*

*Oo ie oe oh ie wo hoe hoo*

*Hoee*

*Onkiam kimyet, sigeset maasai*

*Keborun teta,*

*Nebwones ak moita oo oe oh ie*

#### ***Let us eat Ugali***

*Oo ie oe oe(solo)*

*Hoee(all)*

*Oo ie oe oh ie wo hoe hoo*

*Hoee*

*Lets eat ugali so that we can raid the maasai*

*and acquire a cow*

*(A cow) which comes with its calf*

(Song 6)

Cows and calves are important elements in Kipsigis economy. The recurrence of the cow and the calf is significant in the Kipsigis community. It indicates gender relations as well as procreation. The female gender is mentioned indirectly through the mention of a cow and its calf. It seems to be the more preferred gender since it is less violent than the male gender. The philosophical concept of peace is brought out. The female gender is attributed to take a major role in curbing violence. The female gender is also tasked in ensuring good neighbourliness within and outside the community. Indeed the song suggest through the image of a cow and its calf that for the community to achieve and sustain peace the female gender is significant. In the current Kenyan communities good

neighbourliness and peaceful coexistence have resulted from intermarriages of different communities. Women move from their communities to different communities bringing about kinship ties that enhance peace since the inlaws are always respected in all African communities.

The song calls on the young men to grow up so that they can interact with other communities and in this case the Maasai to acquire cattle. Peaceful encounters are encouraged. Upon inquiry I found out that the raids were traditionally taken as a game and initially it did not lead to enmity but communities who practiced this game were governed by a set of rules. As mentioned earlier during the raids bulls and some heifers were left to continue multiplying. The heifers left points out the recognition of procreation and female gender as the leading gender in ensuring continuity. Peaceful environment allows for successful procreation and therefore better economical developments.

During these raids Maasai earn respect from the Kipsigis since they observed the rules of ceasefire. In this case if one of the fighting warriors picked a bunch of grass or got hold of the Kipsigis altar (*Mabwaita*) ceasefire was observed immediately. Environmental features such as grass and all the plants used in the Kipsigis altar (*Mabwaita*) such as the vines of *Sinendet* therefore played a major role in the community's activities.

In the song *Indaria sulei* below the issue of the community's economy is also revisited.

***Indaria sulei***

*Oo iye woe woe*  
*Oo iye woe woe*  
*Oo iye woe woe woe iyewoiyo*  
*Wee indaria sulei*  
*Sulei chun bo koiwo*

***Indaria sulei***

*Oo iye woe woe*  
*Oo iye woe woe*  
*Oo iye woe woe woe iyewoiyo*  
*Wee indaria sulei*  
*Sulei those from the rocky area*

*Kiborun Nyanja, kiborun Nyanja  
Si keibun ingeunet si keibun ingeunet  
ne bwone ak moita  
oo oee woie*

*We raid from the lake we raid from the lake  
So that we bring ingeunet  
Which comes with a calf  
oo oee woie*

(Song 7a)

In the song, *Sinyanja sire* the same also applies. It is also mentioned here that those from a rocky area will be defeated. Probably the singers are making us aware of the topography of their neighbours' land.

***Sinyanja sire***

*Sinyanja sire sire chunbo koiwa kibore  
Nyanja  
Sigeigun ingeunge sigeigun ingeunge  
Chebwones ak moita  
Ooh oe oiye*

***Sinyanja sire***

*Sinyanja it defeats it defeats those from the  
rocky place  
Let us hide so that we can  
come with a calf  
Ooh oe oiye*

(Song 7b)

The initiates are expected to interact with other communities to improve their community's economy as mentioned above. Another community that features in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs is the Luo people with whom the Kipsigis share a common border and history. The Luo warriors were also reputed in Kipsigis history as very fierce fighters during the day but weak ones at night. They are said to have assisted the Abagusii community to defeat the entire army of Kipsigis warriors during the battle of Mogori (Migori) in 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Kipsigis warriors who had raided the Abagusii the previous night refused to go away as cowards at night. They waited for day light so that they could show the Abagusii their might. However the Abagusii as the story goes had sought assistance from the Luo who came during the day. They then overcame the Kipsigis warriors and to this day the losses of that battle are still in the minds of the Kipsigis.

In *kipayesit* song the two communities are urged to interact so that their economy is made better. This is observed in the song below where *kabugar* is assumed as the Kipsigis;

***Kipayesit***

***kipayesit***

*Kipaeso ee oo yo ee tiondap poeso*

*The animal of poeso ee oo yo ee*

*Kabugar ee ooe oo yo ee osaisai tugap kaplim*

*Kabugar ee ooe oo yo take the cattle of the Luo*

*Kaplim ee ooe oo yo ee osaisai tugap kabugar*

*The luo ee ooe oo yo take the cattle of kabugar*

(Song 10)

**3.1.2.3 Talent and Wisdom**

Certain trees and plants are significant to the community. The wild palm tree is mentioned extensively in the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. It is one of the most symbolic trees to the kipsigis people. In the ‘*Ode to the village of Konoin,*’ demonstration of the value attached to the wild palm tree by the Kipsigis is carried out.

***Tiendap kokwetab Konoin***

***Ode to the village of Konoin***

*Chaluogin sosyot (ii-hi) kogochin piik ap terenik (ihi)*

*Troublesome wild palm they gave the people of pots*

*Kobagash Chechu lelach (ii-hi) chuachlelach u polik*

*leaves this white milk these white as clouds*

*Abo pichu chok (ii-hi) pichu kirop konoin (ihi)*

*I belong to those people ones these people they join*

*Konoin lagu pey (ii-hi) Konoin ap imbaren (ihi)*

*Konoin come down water Konoin of the (tilling) fields*

*Abo pun tegan konyo piik (ii-hi)*

*I belong pass bamboo they come many) people.*

*Abo sapteet kiil met (ihi)*  
*Kiil met ak koger kong'asis (ii-hi)*

*I belong to septet tree it broke (head)*  
*Broke its head facing the rising sun*

*Eleiyo , laleiyo, laleiyo*

*Eleiyo , laleiyo, laleiyo*

*(Song 11)*

The wild palm is to be given to the people who participate in pottery industry. As identified in Chapter two the palm branch is a symbol of authority. This means that the Kipsigis community recognizes talent and award authority to its talented members and even to non members. Perhaps the non members in question here are the Luo people whose pottery industry is useful to the Kipsigis in the sense that cooking pots and utensils are traded from them. However, as noted by Peristiany the Kipsigis too learnt art of pot making for economical reasons. These people are also talented. He states that;

Pot making is not confined to the Luo as some Kipsigis women have also learnt the technique. The pots are... sold for money, and the proceeds belong to the woman, who invest them in goats...The pot makers and the black smiths belong to the (*toiyo*) rain clan(148-149) .

Indeed talent is honoured and praises sung for the talented. The talented are also considered wise in their area of talent. They are therefore authoritative in those areas. A talented warrior is consulted during a raid; a medicineman/ woman consulted during an illness and so on. Leadership therefore emerges as recognition of talents.

### 3.1.3 Issues raised through topographical imagery

#### 3.1.3.1 Conservation

The concept of conservation is brought out through various images in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. Indeed among the Kipsigis the urgency of conservation is real. All the songs collected praised animals and trees and therefore urged their conservation. It is hinted upon indirectly and there is a sense that it is inbuilt in the community's way of life. The Kipsigis people particularly the elderly keep their compounds bushy and even in some areas discouraged clearing. Most of the elders we interviewed lamented about the manner in which the young people kept on, clearing their compounds of useful native trees. The initiates are urged not to despise any part of their environment however bleak it may appear as evident in the song *Chepketilet*.

Kipsigis people also view their animal totems as members of the same clans with equal rights to life. This indicates that the Kipsigis value their wild animals. The clan's totem is always protected by the clan members, unless it has committed a big crime such as injuring people or killing livestock. Some of the clans with totems are *Kapkown* whose totem is the crane bird, *Kapioria* whose totem is the hyena, *Kaparangwek* whose totem is the frog among others.

It is significant that environmental features such as leaves are used to disown one in the society. The leopard and hyenas whose clan members disown them throw leaves at them to indicate this banishment. The Kipsigis therefore attach great significance to the green life in their areas of occupation. This comes out also in the way they praise the trees and plants in the Kipsigis *tumdo* poems.

The Kipsigis youth are expected to come out of a *tumdo* process having been instilled with the need to conserve their forest which is useful to the people as reflected in the image of trees as source of food in the song *Chepketilet*;

***Sal***

*Saal sim anwet sim anua ak moing*

***Praise***

*Praise the happy rope praise the rope and beehive*

(Song 19)

The rope is said to be happy when it hangs the bee hive. This rope refers to the ropes used to hang beehives in the forest. The Kipsigis community values honey and they get this honey from the Mau forest and even from the plains of Chebalungu areas. They hang beehive in trees. They do not have to worry about thieves since this commodity is so valuable that it carries with it a curse upon honey thieves. Some of the insane people I came across during field research are said to be sons or daughters of honey thieves. The insanity as I was told which result from stealing honey is identified through the actions of an insane person; of swiping non-existent bees.

Initiates are expected to understand the value of the initiation rite. This comes out in many of the songs particularly in *chepketilet* and *elego laleiyo* as demonstrated in the below. *Chepketilet* song presents an expectation that the initiates, who at this point are referred to as children, will listen to their elders and go through the *tumdo* rite with courage and endurance. *Chepketilet* song mentions this call for endurance.

***Chepketilet***

*Kilenjinee lagochu ee ee sikomwa*

*Sikomwa cheboiman ahaya ahaya*

***Men's first song on the eve of Circumcision***

*What do we tell these children ee ee so that they do what is expected of them*

*So that they do what is expected of*

*Tun obe moechu ee ee warechu  
Warechu ahaya ahaya  
Achame ane parpar ng'ot kosete*

*Kibo ehek oleIngoi koroty kitkurkur*

*Kibo ehek torortek makinyor*

*Achame ane saptenyon kiil met ak kogeer  
kong'asis*

*Achame ane lipkwop ket Lipkwopket  
kelyondet*

*Achame ane set aiiwet ee oiya set aiiwet ak  
kwel tany*

*Kibo piik ab kotuger (ng'etundo) en eben*

*Kibo piikab kiramgel(beliot) koe moek*

*Achame ane che men Kwony komamen  
chibo tuk*

*Achame ane mwokto sol chichi kimwokto  
kwo kaplis*

(Song 1)

*themahaya ahaya  
You must go calves ee young ones  
Young ones ahaya ahaya  
I like the twirler of the spear when  
raiding*

*We belong to the white rock which  
awakens to something that creates dust  
We belong to the tall bamboo that cannot  
be climbed*

*I like our pordocarpus tree whose head  
broke toward east*

*I like the beautiful tree the beautiful tree  
is the wild fruit tree*

*I like the one who raids with an axe and  
carer of a cow*

*We belong to the roaring lion who lives  
in the caves*

*We belong to the elephant whose step  
can dam water for calves*

*I like the woman who refuses but not to  
the owner of the cattle*

*I like the shooter whose shot went far*

Similarly *elego lalego* sung by women also calls out to the initiate to perform to the expectations of their society, what is expected of them. Bravery is a virtue expected of every Kipsigis man. This appears to be a statement the singer of *Elego Lalego* makes.

### **Elego lalego**

*Elego lalego mm mm  
Otun omwa cheboiman ee  
Otun omwa cheboiman lagochu  
Elego laleiyo*

### **Elego lalego**

*Elego laleio mm mm  
You say the truthful ee  
You say the truthful you children  
Elego laleiyo*

(Song 2)

Initiates are expected on completing the process of initiation, to conserve their environment. In 'Ode of the village of Kagipsirich'; features of natural environment such as caves, hills, stones are mentioned and juxtaposed with their livestock. Caves are



juxtaposed with cows while hills are juxtaposed with bulls. It seems that the singer would like to make a statement that cows are usually more fragile than bulls. The cows are found in the protected areas like caves while bulls are found in the open and sturdy areas of a hilly ground. Perhaps it is arguably the same with people. Women and children are found in the protected areas of home while men are found further away. In my fieldwork I found out that men had huts built near the animal grazing fields a long time ago and stayed there. They visited their homes occasionally. The men who stayed away were the young warriors. The older family men stayed at home. The song, *Tiendaap Kokwetap Kagipsirich* below, points on the features of environment such as caves, grassy hillside and rocky areas.

***Tiendaap kokwet ab Kagipsirich***

*Kimenye kochur moy (ihim) Moy ak soton  
(ihi)*

*Kimenye echek tulwonin kebenen (ihin)  
Kebenen tuga romoswek*

*Tuluonin (ee ihim) lale kot kong'et  
(ihi) Kitigin ne ruen kiplekwet  
Hide  
Achome koin (ee ihim) koitab kiboney  
(ihi)*

*Ne isto gee kwo urwo (ii ihi)*

*Asi kwaim segetet ak uson (leiyo laleiyo)  
Achame sugutek (ihim) en pirar kiam  
koita kot komang(ihi)*

*Kimenye tulwoni (ee ihim) arusen kirugik  
(ihi)*

*Arusen kirugi en limo (ihi)*

***Ode to the villages of Kagipsirich***

*We live where the calf and the calabash  
play ihi*

*We live ourselves that hill of caves of  
caves of cattle ii hi*

*That hill where it's grass burns till a little  
remains where the rabbit can hide*

*I love that stone stone of kiboney*

*Which rolls to go shade*

*To eat segetet and roots 'uson'  
I like the salty water ate pirar they ate  
stone till it came through.*

*We live in this hill where the blue-grey  
bulls ihi*

*Blue grey bulls at grazing*

(Song 12)

After undergoing *tumdo*, the initiates, are expected to demonstrate knowledge of their environment. In the song ‘*kimenye lelechonik*’ and other *tumdo* songs the *lelechonik* bushes are mentioned. Their characteristics are mentioned and emphasized – they grow again after being cut. This is an indication of environment’s resilience. The singers could arguably be making a statement that resilience and persistence are values that are admired in the Kipsigis community.

***kimenye lelechonik***

*Kimenye lelechonik oo ee oo ee*  
*Che ngeyieb kong’otyoko akichek*  
*kimenye lelechonik*

***We live in a bush tree***

*we live in a bush tree oo ee oo ee*  
*When cut it grows again*  
*We live in a bush tree*

(Song 13)

As brought out in the images in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs, initiates after undergoing *tumdo* are expected to demonstrate knowledge of their environment and maintain it. In the song *matororyet* the rich diversity of the Kipsigis environment is described.

***Matororyet***

*Matororyet wee toryo ngenyan ee oiye*  
*Matororyet toryo Keguren arkaka*

*Matororyet wee toror tegat ee oiye*  
*Matororyet toror makinyor ee oiye*

*Matororyet wee ming’in tiony ee oiye*

*Matororyet ming’in Kiplekwet ee oiye*

***Matororyet***

*Matororyet wide is that salt rock*  
*Matororyet wide it is called arkaka*

*Matororyet tall is a bamboo tree ee oiye*  
*Matororyet tall it cannot be climbed ee oiye*

*Matororyet wee that animal is small ee oiye*

*Matororyet the small animal is hare ee oiye*

(Song 14)

Initiates are supposed to grow up knowing there are future responsibilities awaiting them in their community acceptable codes of conduct to senior members of the community. They should know that they will also become future trainers, elders and leaders as

demonstrated in the song *sal*. Initiates are also expected on emerging as Kipsigis young men to appreciate and understand their immediate environment. In the song *Sal* the bitter wild fruit tree is mentioned and praised.

***Sal***

*Sal motiryot chebobor*

*Iye*

*Sal motiryot chebobor*

*Sal miting ket kelyondet*

*Iye*

*Sal miting ket kelyondet*

***sal***

*Praise the trainer may he succeed*

*Iye*

*Praise the trainer may he succeed*

*Praise the bitter tree the wild fruit tree*

*Iye*

*Praise the bitter tree the wild fruit tree*

*Iye ob koboet tiondap tiondap soiwo oh iye  
oe oe*

*iye let it grow big the animal the animal  
from the plains oo iye oe oe*

(Song 15)

During my fieldwork, I came across areas where the community practices conservation.

These are Kipsegon warm springs – where the community conserves an area of approximately twenty two acres of land around the spring in Chebalungu Sub County of Bomet County. The community has created tree nursery around the area. Upon inquiry I was informed that this conservation effort has gone around for as long as the fourth generation. The community does not allow human. Another area is the south rift Mau forest strip that begins in Kericho all the way through Bomet County to Narok South Sub County. The community in these areas frowns upon anyone attempting to destroy the forest including suspected poachers and illegal tree harvesters. Within this area is Nyayo Tea Zones strip stretching all the way from Kericho to Narok South. This has also prevented encroachment into this part of the Mau forest.

### 3.1.3.2 The Concept of Community and its Responsibility

The philosophical concept of community is placed under inquiry in the song *Kayandaet b*. Many aspects that constitute a community are mentioned. The relationship between the elderly and youth is one of these aspects. The Kipsigis initiates are also expected to respect their parents. On the same note those who are initiated will now be full members of the community. In the song *kayandaet (b)* below the sentiments of the singer towards the behavior of members of the community is highlighted. The society demands respect of elderly and the trainer of the initiates. Respect for the elderly is a must among the Kipsigis. This is demonstrated in many *tumdo* songs. Below is the song *Kayandaet b* which highlights this prerequisite. Other aspects that make up a community are neighbours, who in this case are the Nandi community and friends within and without. The tendency of a community to regenerate into more villages is also mentioned and applauded. This is done in the mention of ‘men of the new village.’ The community is also tasked in taking care of its environment as it belongs to them. This is evident in the mention of Mau Forest and claiming that it belongs to one of the community members called Arap Ragita.

#### ***Kayandaet (b)***

*Sal purienyon ahaa sal puriet ak oret mm  
yoe*

*Tech poyondet ahaa tech poyot motiryot mm  
yoe*

*Sal Nandiekyok ahaa sal nandiekyok tebe  
koywek mm yoe*

*Tech Chorweng'un ahaa tech  
chorweng'ung kotechinwe mm yoe*

*Sal Tinenyon ahaa sal tinop karagita we  
mm yoe*

*Subay we leiye ahaa Subay werchu ap*

#### ***Kayandaet (b)***

*Praise our community ahaa community  
and clan mm yoe*

*Honour the oldman honour the oldman  
the trainer mm yoe*

*Praise our Nandi ahaa praise our Nandi  
living in a rocky area*

*Honour you friend ahaa honour your  
friend so that he can honour you*

*Praise our forest(Mau) praise our  
mau it belongs to arap Ragita wee  
mm yoe*

*Greetings you men greetings you men*

*Kaplekok mm yoee*  
*Sal mi pey kel ahaa sal mi pey Kaploin we*  
*mm yoee*  
*Sal chepyoset ahaa sal kametab murenik*  
*mm yoee*  
*Subay lagokyuk ahaa subay lagok chetom*  
*konay ng'al mm yoee*

*Sal tororteg ahaa sal toror makinyor we*  
*mm yoee*  
*Sal pun tegan ahaa sal pun tegan kobwa*  
*kok mm yoee*

*Sal Kombero ahaa pinikwet kibo koy mm*  
*yoee*  
*Sal timin tui ahaa sal timi ap Chesolot mm*  
*yoee*  
*Sal puriet ahaa sal puriet mabwa puch mm*  
*yoee*  
*Sal koy long'et ahaa sal koy long'et makitil*  
*mm yoee*  
*Kisolu cheptuech ahaa kisolu cheptuech neo*  
*met mm yoee*

*from the new village mm yoee*  
*Praise what is inside the water praise the*  
*cows bleeding tools*  
*Praise the old woman praise the mother*  
*of men*  
*Greetings you children greetings you*  
*children who have not known how to*  
*speak*  
*Praise the tall bamboo praise the tall*  
*bamboo it cannot be climbed*  
*Praise those who pass through the*  
*bamboo those who pass through the*  
*bamboo to come to the sitting area*  
*Praise Kombero ahaa pinikwet it belongs*  
*to this stone mm yoee*  
*Praise the dark bush ahaa praise the*  
*bush of Chesolot*  
*Praise the community they did not come*  
*empty handed mm yoee*  
*Praise the tall shield ahaa praise the tall*  
*shield it cannot be cut*  
*We look like the tree cheptuech the tree*  
*cheptuech whose head is huge*

(Song 16)

'Kirieb Potum Poinet en Kiletien' is a line in the song *Sinyanjire*, which translated means my trainer (*Potum/Motiryot*) was goared by an antelope in a bright place. The mention of the antelope and the fact that in the song it hits the trainer could suggest the wildlife – human conflict that arises when man destroys his environment. The indication of a bright place indicates a deforested area as the forest is usually referred to as a dark area (*timi tui*) in the *tumdo* songs. The antelope as observed by the people in the community- perhaps at the time when the song was composed as to have hit one of the community members. The descriptions here are of an antelope that ends up injuring *Potum*- the trainer of the initiates.

***Purku kurgung***  
*Toryo ng'enyanyan keguren arkaka*

***Purku kurkung***  
*That wide salt rock is called arkaka*

*Sanyanjirei saitira mintoro  
Chepkosobindet kegeten tuga kemo*

*Sanyanjirei saitira mintororo  
The Abagusii woman is relieved of cattle at  
night*

*Kirieb potum boinet en kiletien*

*My trainer was hit by an antelope in a  
bright place*

*Kesen lakwet kebe tumin koiwo*

*Put the child on the back we go for  
a celebration in a rocky place*

*Mira tumin kambot chelang'at  
Toror tegat toror mokinyor*

*Celebration is today in chelang'at's home  
Tall is the bamboo tree it cannot be  
climbed*

(Song 7b)

### **3.1.3.3The utilitarian value of rocks**

The utilitarian value of rocks as a philosophical concept has been analysed in the song *purku Kurkung*. The salt rocks are symbolic of the goodness of environment. The description of saltrocks usually found in some areas of the Kipsigis community is an acknowledgement of the usefulness of nature to man. The salt rock and salty water normally called *sugutek* provides minerals for cattle. The inclusion of this salt rock in Kipsigis songs suggests that the Kipsigis value their environment and this is reflected in their *tumdo* songs. The song also mentions the wideness of a salt rock. In this song the singer says that he loves the salty water at '*pirar*' which ate the stone till it came through. In this song, the salty water is mentioned and appreciated and as suggested earlier salty water is useful since it provides minerals to cattle and goats. This salty water is found in the natural environment.

The utilitarian nature of rock was brought out clearly by the Arap Siele. He acknowledges the inclusion of rocks in the *tumdo* songs while mentioning their functions in the Kipsigis society. To Siele, elders sing *Chepketilet* at the early stages of the ceremony but after *labetap eun* initiates sing *Kayandaet* songs. These songs describe the

surrounding environment and also the Kipsigis community, other communities such as the Nandi, Luo, Abagusii and Maasai. Of the Nandi they say they are the Kipsigis ‘brothers’ living in a rocky area. Arap Siele further reiterates that the Kipsigis community has to know where they stay in order to survive. They have to know where they can find *sugutek* (salt for cattle) found in rocks. Indeed environment has utilitarian value to the Kipsigis community.

### **3.1.3.4 Water as life Giving**

Within the Kipsigis society water is held as a key resource. This is evident in the many songs mentioning water. The songs imagery highlights water and its usefulness to the community. Initiates are expected to emerge from *tumdo* after knowing the benefits of water in their environment particularly in relation to farming; in the song, *Ode to the village of Konoin* water is mentioned and its effects on the farms highlighted.

#### ***Tiendaap kokwetap Konoin***

*Konoin lagu pey  
imbaren (ihi)*

*(ii-hi) Konoin ap*

#### ***Ode to the village of Konoin***

*Konoin come down water Konoin of the  
(tilling) fields*

(Song 11)

This line also juxtaposes water and farms. This could possibly mean that for every thought of farming water has to be considered. Indeed some plants are very significant to the extent that they predict the onset of rains and consequently determine the planting season. *Ketiiyot* is one such plant which is similar to star grass. It whistles during the month of *Kiptamo* (the windy March) to announce the onset of April rains, thus announcing the planting season. The lines in the song *chepkibol*, brings out this clearly;

#### ***Chepkibol***

#### ***Chepkibol***

*woee aeee*  
*Achame ane warir ket ketiiyot*  
*woee aeee*

*Woee aeee*  
*I like the whistling tree ketiiyot*  
*Woee aeee*

The preference of the singer of the whistling plant - *ketiiyot* means that a lot attachment is given to the action of this plant and consequently to what it announces-water. The song *sulacha* below talks about the water;

***Sulacha***

*Sulacha aae sulach woe eoe kutung kwony*  
*eoe ongebar sullach*

*Sullacha ee sullach, kosilbei ee ow*

***Sulacha***

*Sulaacha woe eoe a woman kneels eoe let*  
*us kill sulach*

*Sulaacha ee sulach to fetch water ee ow*

(Song 3)

Currently water remains a key resource among the Kipsigis and their neighbours. This is evident in the development plans taking place in the area. Among them is Mau Mara initiatives reported on the dailies. Kimutai Gilbert in his article Sh 1.2bn Mara Project to promote water safety comments that

The Mau Mara Serengeti sustainable water initiative...is set to boost water safety and security in the region and ensure self reliance for people living around the basin. Speaking during the launch of the Programme at Mulot along Narok – Bomet border, Michael McClain a professor of Ecohydrology at UNESCO-IHE institute for water Education said the project aims at strengthening organizational and technical capacities of local water resource management authorities and water resource user associations’ (The Standard 9)



### 3.1.3.5 Nature as a common Resource

In the song *chepkibol* nature is brought out as a common resource. It is mentioned that the forest belongs to all as it was owned by a legendary individual known as Arap Ragita. It is therefore assumed that this awareness will lead all to protect the forest. Unfortunately as observed by some of the older members of my community contacts, this has not been the case since the traditional *tumdo* practices have been thrown away with the churches calling it 'dirty and dark' evil practices. The initiates who are circumcised in church seclusions therefore miss this invaluable education. The mention of the benefits of nature as weather forecast and the forest as belonging to all is in the song *Chepkibol* below;

#### *Chepkibol*

*Achame ane warir ket ketiiyot*

*woee aeee*

*Achame ane tinenyon bo Arap Ragita*

(Song 18)

#### *Chepkibol*

*I like the whistling tree ketiiyot*

*Woee aeee*

*I like our forest the forest of Mr Ragita*

### 3.1.3. 6 Human relationship

The community's philosophy on human relationship is explored in the Kipsigis *Tumdo* songs. People are supposed to relate with each other in peaceful terms and a person who contradicts this is frowned upon. He or she is also equated to the Mauritius thorn found in the Kipsigis environment. The initiates are also made aware of the character of people in these songs. The Mauritius shrub which is useful but whose thorns are sharp and painful has been used to symbolize the people who love to irritate others. The song *uye uye* below, which bring out images that indicate how the Kipsigis community view human relations;

#### *Uye uye*

*Uye uye kisolet kolinket chepkomon (2times solo)*

#### *Uye uye*

*Uye uye we praise the Mauritius thorn an irritating tree*

*Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie! Hoe ho ie! The animal from the plains*  
(Song 5)

The good inter-relationships among the people are also advocated for in the song *kayandaet b*. This song mentions the Nandi community and identifies with them while talking about the need to respect ones friend. Among the Kipsigis initiates who undergo the rite of *tumdo* together honour and respect each other. They take themselves as great friends and brothers. The rite of passage bonds them together. The song *kayandaet b* below, points out the need to respect ones friend. In a way this aspect of honour is pointed out and discussed in the song. It is quite significant an aspect to the whole community. Honour leads to development as pointed in the song. When you honour your friend, he honours you and helps you develop.

***kayandaet (b)***

*Sal Nandiekyok ahaa sal nandiekyok tebe  
koywek mm yoee  
Tech Chorwerng'un ahaa tech  
chorweng'ung kotechinwe mm yoee  
Sal Tinenyon ahaa sal tinop karagita we  
mm yoee  
Subay we leiye ahaa Subay werchu ap  
Kaplelkok mm yoee  
Sal mi pey kel ahaa sal mi pey Kaploin we  
mm yoee  
Sal chepyoset ahaa sal kametab murenik  
mm yoee*

***kayandaet (b)***

*Praise our Nandi ahaa praise our Nandi  
living in a rocky area  
Honour you friend ahaa honour your  
friend so that he can honour you  
Praise our forest(Mau) praise our mau it  
belongs to arap Ragita wee mm yoee  
Greetings you men greetings you men  
from the new village mm yoee  
Praise what is inside the water praise the  
cows bleeding tools  
Praise the old woman praise the mother  
of men*

(Song 16)

**3.1.3.7 The concept of Freedom**

Freedom as a philosophical concept is hinted upon in various images found within the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. In the song *Sulacha, Mashelelet* (Wild dove) is brought out and its

tendency to fly along the footpaths described. It signifies freedom since it is always found along the way. The way is also symbolic in the song. It seems that when someone is free ways of solving life problems are revealed. Freedom therefore seems to be one step to finding solutions to the many problems that face humanity. The Kipsigis sages pronounce this indirectly through the image of *Mashelelet* bird flying along the way as described in the *tumdo* songs. Indeed viewed from another angle the bird is indicating to the community the necessity of freedom to mankind.

### 3.1.3.8 Self motivation

The concept of self motivation is brought out in the Kipsigis *Tumdo* songs. Self motivation is important in any major undertaking. This is a source of courage among the initiates and even in all members of the community. The society therefore encourages its members through song to develop positive thoughts and attitudes. Actions, particularly significant ones such as *tumdo* can not be performed by forcing individuals but the drive from within the initiates will lead to the success of these actions. The song by the initiates who sing to all the audience in attendance on the eve of circumcision is an example of self motivating songs of *tumdo*. In the song *Eleiyo laleiyo* initiates are praising themselves in advance in order to give themselves courage and motivation for the painful operation ahead.

*Eleyo la leiyo*  
*Oo eleyo laleiyo wei*  
*Eleyo la leiyo*  
*Oo kibendi murenik oo*  
*Oo kibendi murenik rat keror*  
*Eleiyo la leiyo*  
*Oo tun osim neranik*  
*Eleiyo la leiyo*  
*Oo tun osim chepyosok*

*Eleyo la leiyo*  
*Oo eleyo laleiyo wei*  
*Eleyo la leiyo*  
*Oo the men will go oo*  
*Oo the men who are praiseworthy*  
*Eleyo la leiyo*  
*Oh you will ululate boys and girls*  
*Eleiyo la leiyo*  
*Oo you will ululate you old women*

*Eleiyo la leiyo*  
*Oo tun osim boisyek*

*Eleiyo la leiyo*  
*Tun osim nebo iman*  
*Eleiyo la leiyo*

*Eleyo la leiyo*  
*Oo you will make happy sounds you old*  
*men*

*Eleyo la leiyo*  
*You will ululate in truth*  
*Eleyo la leiyo*

(Song 22)

### 3.2 Summary

Percy Bysshe Shelley in his essay 'In Defence of Poetry' concludes that;

Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds the beauty to that which is most deformed...' (Shawcross 155)

Throughout this chapter, I have discussed the philosophy of the Kipsigis community in relation to their environment. The Kipsigis community values its physical environment. This has been shown by illustrating the animals which are adopted as clan members or totems by the community and also highlighted in the *tumdo* songs. The singers like poets illustrated by Shelley make their environment lovely and beautiful. This in turn enables the community to be convinced that environment has to be protected.

This chapter also set out to explicate the attitudes that emerge from the analysis of images of nature in the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. Philosophical issues raised through environmental images in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs have also been explored. Courage and truth, morality, community's economy, religion and faith, conservation, the utilitarian value of rocks, good inter-relationship among the people, nature as a common resource, self motivation as well as significance of the *tumdo* process have been discussed and illustrated in this chapter.

## Conclusion

To sum up this study we begin with the words of African Equiano who in 1789 said;

We are a nation of dancers, musicians and poets. Thus every great event... is celebrated in public dances which are accompanied with songs and music suited to the occasion.' The Ashanti, for example, thought it 'absurd' to worship in any way other than with chanting or singing (Peek and Yankah 15).

African Equiano as a former African and later an American slave underscore the significance of songs in African cultural practices. In my study of Kipsigis *tumdo* songs I also came into a conclusive agreement with Equiano, that the Kipsigis community (as a representative of the African community) is composed of a group of *tumdo* song composers. Within the Kipsigis community is also a group whose function is to be entertained by the songs in question. They therefore appreciate the songs created and attach meaning to the images of environment in these songs.

The study therefore set out to analyse selected *tumdo* songs in order to address the following objectives: identify and analyse images of the environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs, identify key environmental issues raised by the Kipsigis *tumdo* singers through the use of these images and finally discuss philosophy of the Kipsigis people as presented through the images of environment in *tumdo* songs. This was done by identifying, analysing and interpreting images of environment in the selected *tumdo* songs from the Kipsigis community.

This study used content analysis, and ethnomethodology. Ethno methodological approach was used to interview *tumdo* participants as well as *tumdo* graduates on their view of the images contained in the *tumdo* songs and their general outlook on the images of environment in *tumdo* songs. I collected data through participation and observation. I attended *tumdo* ceremonies where I participated in the live performance of ten *tumdo* songs. I also prepared group interviews and discussions to elicit information on images of environment in the songs. I then used a method of tabulation to analyse important aspects of *tumdo* songs relevant to my study. A Structured interview guide was used to interview the chosen community contacts. I filled in my findings as the respondents answered the questions asked. The next step involved carrying out transcription and close analysis of *tumdo* songs. I then proceeded to translate the songs to English language. I also went through the *tumdo* songs to identify images of environment and while reading field notes.

The study was guided by three theoretical approaches. The functionalism theory; as a way of explaining the utilitarian value of the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs under study, ethnopoetics; which assisted me to transcribe and translate the *tumdo* songs as well as ecocriticism; which led to the identification of images of environment in the selected songs. Indeed these theoretical approaches were so helpful in identifying and analyzing images of environment in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs.

This study analysed the images of environment in Kipsigis, *tumdo* songs such as plant imagery for instance bamboo tree as an image of strength, animal imagery such as the hare as an image of wit and intelligence and topographical images such as a rocky area as an image of home. The study also identified key environmental issues raised in the

Kipsigis *tumdo* songs through the use of these images. These are for example; religion and faith, nature as a common resource among others.

Finally I discussed the philosophy of the Kipsigis people in regard to environment, as presented through the images of environment in their *tumdo* songs. The way people structure their thought was analysed. The philosophical issues that emerged as a result of this inquiry are the concepts of courage and truth, morality, the concept of community, talent among others. In the process I have achieved my set objectives. First it was found out that Kipsigis *tumdo* songs portray the immediate environment effectively. Environment is therefore a significant aspect of the Kipsigis *tumdo* songs. It forms the basis of artistic creation whereby certain features of environment are used in the oral poems, narratives riddles and other short forms of oral literature. Indeed a well constructed *tumdo* song cannot fail to contain images of environment. The initiates are educated on the importance of certain trees and animals and therefore they are forced to adopt certain values such as strength in character as portrayed through the image of a bamboo tree as tall and strong and wisdom through the use of a crane bird as an image of wisdom in the songs under study.

The findings of this study also confirmed that indeed Kipsigis *tumdo* songs communicate issues through the use of plant images in the songs. It found out that certain images of nature such as tall trees in Kipsigis *tumdo* songs communicated issues such as strength and endurance while other images such as tiny animals communicated issues such as wit and intelligence. Safety and refuge were also hinted by certain objects of nature for example grass as an image of safety and refuge in the song *tiendap kokwetap*

*kagipsirich* where the hare is said to take refuge in grass remaining on the hill after a forest fire mentioned in the song.

The study also observed that the Kipsigis community embraces its environment through the oral literature, and in particular songs. Indeed we found out that environmental images are the core elements in the creation of *tumdo* songs. Every song that is classified as a *tumdo* song has images drawn from the environment. Trees as well as animals and birds are used in the songs, to communicate philosophical issues of the Kipsigis community. It seems the singers are making a statement that these features of environment are significant and hence there is a call to conserve them.

The main focus of this study was images of environment in Kipsigis male *tumdo* songs. Findings indicate that Kipsigis initiation is still a rich area for further research. One area that could be investigated further is how female initiation songs could be used to educate the modern girl child on issues related to environment. Another area that could be investigated further is the application of wise sayings in Kipsigis *tumdo* process. In Kipsigis *tumdo* songs we can be able to find images drawn from the immediate physical environment. Indeed environment is not only central to the Kipsigis culture but also significant to its poets and song composers among other oral literature artists.

Research on girls' initiation songs; whether they contain images of environment and project the philosophy of the kipsigis people is recommended. The girl initiation faces extinction as a result of Female Genital Mutilation being outlawed. The physical aspect is no longer practiced but as a result of my study I have come to realize that the socio-cultural aspect was rich so research should be carried out to salvage the good aspects



from it. This could then be applied to the alternative rites of passage that are currently practiced by church institutions within the community. Like wise is its applicability in alternative rites of passage to women who will incorporate educative measures that will have within it the rich oral traditions of the Kipsigis and thereby allow the young women to grow up being aware of their responsibilities towards their environment just like the young men.

Researches can also be carried out on the use of songs in conservation campaigns as well as teaching in schools and colleges and in presentations of their messages in music and drama as well as film competitions. This will ensure its continuity as well as allowing the oral literature field to continue educating the modern day societies.

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### **Appendix 1: Fieldwork Analysis Guide**

The questions below were used to guide us in the analysis of the poems. The questions employed Okumba Miruka's 1999 guide to the analysis of oral poetry.

1. (a). What category does the poem fall under (A performed to everyone B restricted audience)?
  
2. (a) What images of environment does it contain?  
  
(b)What does each image represent?
  
3. What issues does the poem present?
  
4. What is the purpose of the poem?
  
5. What does the poem reveal about the philosophy of the Kipsigis in relation to their environment?
  
6. How are poems comparable to each other? (What are their similarities and differences?)



## Appendix 2(a): Research Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

### Section A

1. Have you participated actively in an Initiation Ceremony?
2. Which songs were sung?
3. Who sung the Songs?
4. Which role did you play in the singing?
5. Were the songs sung by - ?
  - (a) The Initiates
  - (b) The elders
  - (c) All
  - (d) The Trainer.
6. What did the songs specifically say?
7. What meaning did you perceive on the words which referred to nature?

**Section B (Songs by Initiates during their seclusion)**

1. Which songs were sung when you were secluded during initiation?
2. Did you sing alone or with a group?
3. Who taught you the songs?
4. What did the songs say about nature?
5. Which song appealed to you most? Please perform it.
6. What did you learn about Environment from the songs?

### **Appendix 3: People Interviewed**

1. Hillary: Interview on his views on the images of Lelechwet tree in Kimenye Lelechwet. Longisa. Bomet East sub County, Bomet County. July 1<sup>st</sup> 2014
2. Rono, David: Interview on his view of Issues related to nature in Kipsigis Tumdo songs. Siongiroi. Chebalungu Subcounty. 29<sup>th</sup> June 2014
3. Soi Zacharia: Interview on his views on Depiction of Environment in Kipsigis Tumdo Songs. Mosingororo village, Bomet Central Subcounty, Bomet County. June 15<sup>th</sup>, July, 2014.
4. Sowe Jonathan: Interview on his views on Depiction of Environment in Kipsigis Tumdo Songs. Kaptilolwo village, Bomet Central Subcounty, Bomet County. June 20<sup>th</sup> and July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014.
5. Sowe Pauline: Interview on her views on Depiction of Environment in Kipsigis Elego lalego Song sung by women on the eve of Tumdo ceremony. Kaptilolwo village, Bomet Central Subcounty, Bomet County. July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014
6. Tesot, Easter: Interview on her Views of Depiction of Environment in Kipsigis Tumdo songs. Longisa. Bomet East Subcounty, Bomet County. July 1<sup>st</sup> 2014.
7. Tesot Johana: Interview on his views of Depiction of Environment in Kipsigis Tumdo songs. Longisa. Bomet East Subcounty. Bomet County. July 1<sup>st</sup> 2014
8. Marusoi, William. Interview on his views of Depiction of Environment In Kipsigis Tumdo Songs. June 16<sup>th</sup> 2014.
9. Rotich Elijah Interview on his views on Kipsigis *Tumdo* songs. Mutarokwo Sub Location, Sotik Sub County, Bomet County. 30<sup>th</sup> July 2014

10. David Bett Interview on his views on chepketilet and Elego lalego songs. 30<sup>th</sup>  
December 2013

11. Samwel Siele. Interview on his views on Rerendet tree potrayed in many of *tumdo*  
songs. 23<sup>rd</sup> may 2014

## Appendix 4: Collected songs

### The song in Kipsigis

#### 1. Chepkitilet

Kilenjinee lagochu ee ee sikomwa

Sikomwa cheboiman ahaya ahaya

Tun obe moechu ee ee warechu

Warechu ahaya ahaya

Achame ane parpar ng'ot kosete

Kibo echek olelngoi koroty kitkurkur

Kibo echek torortek makinyor

Achame ane saptenyon kiil met ak kogeer  
kong'asis

Achame ane lipkwop ket Lipkwopket  
kelyondet

Achame ane set aiiwet ee oiya set aiiwet ak  
kwel tany

Kibo piik ab kotuger (ng'etundo) en eben

Kibo piikab kiramgel(beliot) koe moek

Achame ane che men Kwony komamen  
chibo tuk

Achame ane mwokto sol chichi kimwokto  
kwo kaplis

### English Translations

#### Men's first song on the eve of Circumcision

What do we tell these children ee ee so  
that they say the truth

So that they say the truth ahaya ahaya

You go calf see ee young ones

Young ones ahaya ahaya

I like the twirler of the spear when raiding

We belong to the white rock which  
awakens to something that creates dust

We belong to the tall bamboo that cannot  
be climbed

I like our pordocarpus tree whose head  
Troke toward the rising sun

I like the beautiful tree the beautiful tree is  
the wild fruit tree

I like the one who raids with an axe and  
carer of a cow

We belong to the lion who lives in the  
caves

We belong to the elephant whose step can  
dam water for calfs

I like the woman who refuses but not to the  
owner of the cattle

I like the shooter whose shot went far

## 2. Elego laleiyo

Elego lalego mm mm

Otun omwa cheboiman ee

Otun omwa cheboiman lagochu

Elego laleiyo

Kibendi murenik iyan oh Recho

Murenik ratgeror, iyan oh Recho

Tun obe moeykyok , iyan oh Recho

Sikesim arawet , iyan oh Recho

Arawet ak wikit , iyan oh Recho

## 3. Sulacha

Sulacha aae sulach woe eoe kutung kwony  
eoe ongebar sullach

Sullacha ee sullach, kosilbei ee ow

Sullacha ee Sulach woe kerta oor

Eoe ongebar sulach kerta mashelel

Sulaacha ee sulach lipkwop ket

Eowe ongebar sulach lipkwop kelyondet

Sulaacha ee sulach eoe werchunchok

eoe ongebar sulach werchun kiroproi

Sulacha ee sulach eoe warir tiony ongebar  
sulach

Sulacha ee sulach warir interit ongebar

## Women's song on the eve of men's Circumcision

Elego laleio mm mm

You say the truthful ee

You say the truthful you children

Elego laleiyo

The men will go lets agree Rachel

Men who are praiseworthy lets agree  
Rachel

You go our calves lets agree Rachel

So that we can ululate for a month lets  
agree Rachel

A month and a week lets agree Rachel

## Sulacha

Sulaacha woe eoe a woman kneels eoe let  
us kill sulach

Sulaacha ee sulach to fetch water ee ow

Sulaacha ee sulach woe it flies on the way  
eoe ongebar sulach what flies on the way is  
the mashelel bird

Sulaacha ee sulach a beautiful tree

Eowe ongebar sulach the beautiful tree is  
wild fruit tree

sulaacha ee sulache eoe our brothers

eoe ongebar sulach our brothers in the  
plains

Sulacha ee sulach eoe the calling animal let  
us own sulach

Sulacha ee sulach the calling animal is a

sulach	squirrel let us own sulach
Sulacha ee sulach eoe miting ket ongebar sulach	Sulacha ee sulach eoe the small leaves tree
Sulacha ee sulach miting keliot ongebar sulach	Sulach ee sulach the small leaves tree is a wild fruit tree
<b>4.Sabarinyon</b>	<b>Sabarinyon</b>
Sabaarinyon oh kesole motiryot ak kesole motiryot oh sabarinyon	As we go oh We praise the trainer and again we praise the trainer oh as we go
Motir chebobor we Motir chebobor we sabarinyon	The trainer succeeds as we go
Sabarinyon oh kesole warir tiony ak kesole warir tiony we sabarinyon	As we go we praise this animal and again we praise this calling animal
Warir interit we warir interit we sabarinyon	This calling animal is the squirell
Sabarinyon oh kesole miting ket ak kesole mitinget we sabarinyon	we praise the small leaves tree and again we praise the small leaves tree
Miting kelyondet we miting kelyondet we sabarinyon	The bitter tree is a wild fruit tree
Sabarinyon oh kesole bamong'o ak kesole bamong'o we sabarinyon	As we go we praise our father
Bamong'o ribech we bamong'o ribechwe sabarinyon	Our father takes care of us as we go
Sabarinyon oh kesole koruchon ak kesole koruchon we sabarinyon	we praise our mother as we go
Koruchon ribech we koruchon ribech we sabarinyon	Our mother takes care of us as we go
Sabarinyon oh kesole ming'in tiony ak kesole ming'in tiony we sabarinyon	As we go we praise the tiny animal as we go
Ming'in kiplekwet we ming'in kiplekwet we sabarinyon	the tiny animal is an hare as we go
Sabarinyon oh kesole barar tiony ak kesole barar tiony we sabarinyon	we praise the noisy animal as we go

Barar interit we barar interit we sabarinyon	the noisy animal is the squirrel as we go
Sabarinyon oh kesole abai ket ak kesole abai ket we sabarinyon	As we go we praise the fertile tree as we go
Abai sinenendet we abai sinendet we sabarinyon	The fertile tree is sinendet as we go
Sabarinyon oh kesole toror ket ak kesole tororket wee sabarinyon	We praise the tall tree wee as we go
Toror chepkoibet we toror chepkoibet we sabarinyon	the tall tree is Chepkoibet( one of the tallest trees in Mau forest) as we go
<b>5.Uyeuye</b>	<b>Uyeuye</b>
Uye Uye kisle marukwen tiondo( 2 times)	An animal does not sleep in the middle
Uyee! (mass)	Uyee
Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo ooh!	Ie! Hoe ho ie! An animal from plains
Uye Uye KisleMing'in tiony Kiplekwet(2 times solo)	Uye Uye we praise the hare a small animal
Hoe! Ho! Ikobkob hoe tionda Soiwo oh ie!	Hoe ho ie The animal from plains
Uye Uye Kisle Likwob ket rerenDET (2times solo)	Uye Uye we praise the fertile tree is RerenDET
Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!	Hoe ho ie The animal from plains
Uye Uye Kisle kerta or mashelel (2times solo)	Uye uye we praise Marshet bird flying along the way
Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!	hoe ho ie! The animal from the plains
Uye uye kisle kolinket chepkomon(2times solo)	Uye uye we praise the Mauritius thorn an irritating tree
Hoe ho! Ikobkob hoe tiondab soiwo oh! Ie!	Hoe ho ie! The animal from the plains
<b>6.OnkiamKimyet</b>	<b>Lets eat Ugali</b>
Oo ie oe oe(solo)	Oo ie oe oe(solo)
Hoee(all)	Hoee(all)
Oo ie oe oh ie wo hoe hoo	Oo ie oe oh ie wo hoe hoo



Hoe

Onkiam kimyet, sigeset maasai

Keborun teta,

Nebwones ak moita oo oe oh ie

Performer: Benard Korir aged 35 years from  
Mosiro village Bomet county

### **7 a. Indaria sulei**

Oo iye woe woe

Oo iye woe woe

Oo iye woe woe woe iyewoiyo

Wee indaria sulei

Sulei chun bo koiwo

Kiborun Nyanja, kiborun Nyanja

Si keibun ingeunet si keibun ingeunet

ne bwone ak moita

oo oee woiye

### **7b Sinyanja sire**

Sinyanja sire sire chunbo koiwa kibore  
Nyanja

Sigeigun ingeunge sigeigun ingeunge

Chebwones ak moita

Ooh oe oiye

### **8. Purku kurgung**

Toryo ng'enyanyan keguren arkaka

Sanyanjirei saitira mintoro

Chepkosobindet kegeten tuga kemo

Kirieb potum boinet en kiletien

Hoe

Lets eat ugali so that we can raid the  
maasai

and acquire a cow

(A cow) which comes with its calf

### **Indaria sulei**

Oo iye woe woe

Oo iye woe woe

Oo iye woe woe woe iyewoiyo

Wee indaria sulei

Sulei those from the rocks

We acquire Nyanja we acquire Nyanja

So that we bring ingeunet

Which comes with a calf

oo oee woiye

### **Sinyanja sire**

Sinyaja it defeats it defeats those from the  
rocky place

Let us hide so that we can

come with a calf

Ooh oe oiye

### **Purku kurgung**

That wide salt rock is called arkaka

Sanyanjirei saitira mintororo

The Abagusii woman is relieved of cattle at  
night

My trainer was hit by an antelope in a  
bright place

Kesen lakwet kebe tumin koiwo

Mira tumin kambot chelang'at

Toror tegat toror mokinyor

### **9.Chepketilet**

Kibo tegandet! Saptenyon Koil met Komisyi  
mongasis

Toror tegek makinyoru

Tai teget koilong (tech teget kou longet)

Tai teget kobar pun.

Parpar oret kwo orit pun.

Kecham keter kel e mungen

Kecham urwo met en songol.

Kecham ko see ma ok piun .

Kecham kosom kel e ngurur .

Aiwet che mabek :kito begu ;kong'et roor .

Solu koita tue nyeb silibwa

### **10. Kipayesit**

Kipaeso ee oo yo ee tiondap poeso

Put the child on the back we go for  
a celebration in a rocky place

Celebration is today in chelang'at's home

Tall is the bamboo tree it cannot be  
climbed

### **Chepketilet**

We belong to the bamboo! Our podocarpus  
tree when it breaks the crown will  
disappear in the eye of the sun (the sunrise,  
east)

The bamboos are so tall one cannot get to  
the top

present the chest like a shield

present the chest to kill the enemy

Twirl the spear to pierce the enemy

. One likes the eaves on the legs with fur  
anklets (Refers to the anklets worn with  
war dress, which are likened to the eaves of  
the house)

One likes the shade over the head with  
Ostrich feathers (The war headdress)

One likes to make fire with firesticks)

Get covered with mud following enemy  
spoor)

The axe which is not lost;it was being lost  
;the old field gets up)

Similar to the the black stone near silibwet  
tree

### **Kipayesit**

The animal of poeso ee oo yo ee

Kabugar ee ooe oo yo ee osaisai tugap  
kaplim

Kaplim ee ooe oo yo ee osaisai tugap  
kabugar

### 11. Tiendap kokwetab Konoin

Chaluogin sosyot chor (ii-hi) kogochin  
piik ap terenik chor(ihi)

Kobagash Chechu lelach (ii-hi)  
chuachlelach u polik

Abo pichu chok (ii-hi) pichu kirop  
konoin (ihi)

Konoin lagu pey (ii-hi) Konoin ap  
imbaren (ihi)

Abo pun tegan konyo piik (ii-hi)

abo saptet kiil met (ihi)

Kiil met ak koger kong'asis (ii-hi)

Chor. Eleiyo , laleiyo, laleiyo

### 12. Tiendaap kokwet ab Kagipsirich

Kimenye imbar Kagipsirich chor. (ii-hi)

Kimenye kochur moy (ihim) Moy ak soton  
(ihi)

Kimenye eчек tulwonin kebenen (ihin)  
Kebenen tuga romoswek

Tuluonin (ee ihim) lale kot kong'et  
(ihi) Kitigin ne ruen kiplekwet

Hide

Ne isto gee kwo urwo (ii ihi)

Asi kwaim segetet ak uson (leiyo laleiyo)

Kabugar ee ooe oo yo take the cattle of the  
Luo

The luu ee ooe oo yo take the cattle of  
kabugar

### Ode to the village of Konoin

Troublesome wild palm they gave the  
people of pots

leaves this white milk these white as  
clouds

I belong to those people ones these people  
they join

Konoin come down water Konoin of the  
(tilling) fields

I belong pass bamboo they come many)  
people.

I belong to septet tree it broke (head

Broke its head facing the rising sun

### Ode to the villages of Kagipsirich

We live at field of Kagipsirich

We live where the calf and the calabash  
play

We live ourselves that hill of sandy of  
sandy cattle sides

That hill where it's grass burns till a little  
remains where the rabbit can hide

Which rolls to go shade

To eat segetet and roots 'uson'

Achame sugutek (ihim) en pirar kiam koita  
kot komang(ihi)

Kimenye tulwoni (ee ihim) arusen kirugik  
(ihi)

Arusen kirugi en limo (ihi)

### **13.Kimenye Lelechonik**

Kimenye lelechonik oo ee oo ee

Che ngeyieb kong'otyoko akichek

kimenye lelechonik

(Collected from Sebe village, Bomet central  
Sub county. Performers; Initiates of  
December 2013)

### **14.Matororyet**

Matororyet wee toroyo ngenyan ee oiye

Matororyet toroyo Keguren arkaka

Matororyet wee toror tegat ee oiye

Matororyet toror makinyor ee oiye

Matororyet wee ming'in tiony ee oiye

Matororyet ming'in Kiplekwet ee oiye

### **15. Sal.**

Sal motiryot chebobor

Iye

Sal motiryot chebobor

Iye tondab tondab soiwo oh iye oe oe

Sal miting ket kelyondet

Iye

I like the salty water ate pirar they ate  
stone till it came through.

We live in this hill where the blue-grey  
bulls ihi

Blue grey bulls at grazing

### **We live in the bush**

we live in a bush tree oo ee oo ee

When cut it grows again

We live in a bush tree

### **Matororyet**

Matororyet wide is that salt rock

Matororyet wide it is called arkaka

Matororyet tall is a bamboo tree ee oiye

Matororyet tall it cannot be climbed ee  
oiye

Matororyet wee that animal is small ee  
oiye

Matororyet the small animal is an hare ee  
oiye

### **Sal**

Praise the trainer may he succeed

Iye

Praise the trainer may he succeed

iye the animal the animal from the plains

Praise the bitter tree the wild fruit tree

Iye

Sal miting ket kelyondet	Praise the bitter tree the wild fruit tree
Iye ob koboet tiondap tiondap soiwo oh iye oe oe	iye let it grow big the animal the animal from the plains oo iye oe oe
<b>16. Kayandaet (Version a)</b>	<b>Kayandaet sung to Elders</b>
Sal purienyon ahaa sal puriet ak oret mm yoee	Praise our community ahaa community and clan mm yoee
Tech poyondet ahaa tech poyot motiryot mm yoee	Honour the oldman honour the oldman the trainer mm yoee
Sal Nandiekyok ahaa sal nandiekyok tebe koywek mm yoee	Praise our Nandi ahaa praise our Nandi living in a rocky area
Tech Chorwerng'un ahaa tech chorweng'ung kotechinwe mm yoee	Honour you friend ahaa honour your friend so that he can honour you
Sal Tinenyon ahaa sal tinop karagita we mm yoee	Praise our forest(Mau) praise our mau it belongs to arap Ragita wee mm yoee
Subay we leiye ahaa Subay werchu ap Kaplelkok mm yoee	Greetings you men greetings you men from the new village mm yoee
Sal mi pey kel ahaa sal mi pey Kaploin we mm yoee	Praise what is inside the water praise the cows bleeding tools
Sal chepyoset ahaa sal kametab murenik mm yoee	Praise the old woman praise the mother of men
Subay lagokyuk ahaa subay lagok chetom konay ng'al mm yoee	Greetings you children greetings you children who have not known how to speak
Sal tororteg ahaa sal toror makinyor we mm yoee	Praise the tall bamboo praise the tall bamboo it cannot be climbed
Sal pun tegan ahaa sal pun tegan kobwa kok mm yoee	Praise those who pass through the bamboo those who pass through the bamboo to come to the sitting area
Sal Kombero ahaa pinikwet kibo koy mm yoee	Praise Kombero ahaa pinikwet it belongs to this stone mm yoee
Sal timin tui ahaa sal timi ap Chesolot mm	Praise the dark bush ahaa praise the bush

yoe

Sal puriet ahaa sal puriet mabwa puch mm  
yoe

Sal koy long'et ahaa sal koy long'et makitil  
mm yoe

Kisolu cheptuech ahaa kisolu cheptuech neo  
met mm yoe

### **17.Kaberuret**

Boiyot:Baibai Kole Baibai

Tugul:Baibai

Boiyot: Burgei Kole Burgei

Tugul:Burgei

Boiyot:Bore Tumdo Kole Bore

Tugul: Bore

Boiyot: Kim Boriet Kole Kim

Tugul: Kim

Boiyot : Kigas Kele Kigas

Tugul: Kigas

Boiyot: Abai Kele Abai

Tugul: Abai

Boiyot: King Kole King

Tugul: King

### **18. Chepkibol**

Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol

Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol

En chabas ooe aee

woee aeee

of Chesolot

Praise the community they did not come  
empty handed mm yoe

Praise the tall shield ahaa praise the tall  
shield it cannot be cut

We look like the tree cheptuech the tree  
cheptuech whose head is huge

### **The Blessing Chant**

Elder: Happy lets agree happy

All: Happy

Elder: Warm lets agree warm

All: Warm

Elder:The initiation ceremony will succeed

All: It will succeed

Elder: The Community is strong Lets agree  
is strong

All: Strong

Elder:Let it be heard lets agree let it be  
heard

All: Be heard

Elder: It is fertile lets agree it is fertile

All: It is fertile

Elder: It is complete lets agree it is  
complete

All: It is complete

### **Chepkibol**

Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol

Ooiyo we chepkibol ooe aiya chepkibol

In the nook of the shoulder ooe aee

Woee aeee

Achame ane kimmel gut en musar

woee aeee

Achame ane warir ket ketiiyot

woee aeee

Achame ane tinenyon bo arap ragita

woee aeee

Achame ane kaplele kolioch Ng'ot kwaget  
tuk

woee aeee

### **19. Kayandaet(version b)**

Saal wee leeiye

Aaaa sal werchunchok we

Eei

Saal mitinget

Aaaa saal miting Keliondet wee

Saal toror teek

Aaaa saal toror tegandet weee

Saal marwai bei

Aaaa saal marua rua Kong'onny wee

Saal chebunei aaaa

Saal chebun koita tui wee

Saal etyop tegek aaaa

Saal etyop kiropwai wee

Saal we leiye aaaa

Saal weruepchep kaplelach

Saal busien kok roigin wee

Saal we leiye aaaa

Sal sitien kok en kuyang wee

I like what makes one lick the lips in the  
fermented uji

Woee aeee

I like the whistling tree ketiiyot

Woee aeee

I like our forest the forest of mr Ragita

Woee aeee

I like Kaplele where one needs a sharp  
spear for the cattle to graze

Woee aeee

### **Kayandaet**

Praise wee men

Aaaa praise our men wee

Eei

Praise the tiny leaves tree

Aaaa saal the tiny leaves tree is the wild  
fruit tree

Praise the tall bamboo tree

Praise the tall bamboo tree wee

Praise the slow waters

Aaaa praise the slow waters the crane bird  
is faster

Praise which passes aaa

Praise which passes the black stone

Praise the bamboo tree aaaa

Praise it provides a walking stick

Praise wee men

Praise the men of Kaplelach group

Praise the grey place costumes

Praise wee men aaaa

Praise the brown place of bow

Saal we leiye aaaa  
 Saal yup ang'et yupanga ne siele wee

Saal we leiye aaaa  
 Saal kutuny kwony kutuny kosilbei wee  
 Saal we leiye aaaa  
 Saal sim anwet sim anua ak moing

Saal we leiye aaaa  
 Saal meel tiony meel bunotion

Saal mibei kel aaaa  
 Saal mibei kaploin  
 Saal tolel tany aaaa  
 Saal tolel tany kogebe wee  
 Saal tech chi kwonyei aaaa  
 Saal teech chi kwany konam buus wee

Saal waldabei aaaa  
 Saal waldap chepnyorbei wee  
 Saal tinenyony aaaa  
 Saal tinetap Ragitany wee  
 Saal keron tiony aaaa  
 Saal keron koroit wee

**20. Tiendap tarusyek en yatet ab oret**

Oyotwech oret ooh  
 Katarech ririk ooh

Oyotwech oret ooh  
 katarech ririk ooh

Praise wee men aaaa  
 Praise the one who takes the cloth by force  
 the cloth of siele wee

Praise wee men aaaa  
 Praise the kneeling woman to fetch water

Praise we men aaaa  
 Praise the happy rope praise the rope and  
 beehive

Praise we men aaaa  
 Praise the thirsty animal passing  
 by(elephant)

Praise its steps dams water

Praise the bleeding tools in the water

Praise the yellow cow

Praise it is yellow like the cave

Praise honour a cooking woman

Praise honour a cooking woman who holds  
 food

Praise the turning water point

Praise turning water point of Chepnyorbei

Praise our forest

Praise our forest of Ragitany

Praise the white and black animal

White and black animal is bushbaby  
 monkey

**Song for the Initiation graduands**

Open the road for us  
 The birds feeding on cattle tick are  
 finishing us

Open the road for us  
 The birds feeding on cattle tick are



Performed by jonathan Arap sowe

### **21 Kyole sosyot**

Kyole sosiot kyole makyoldo

Chepkong' ai mi en ropta

Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo

Kyole sosiot kyole makyoldo

Chepkong' o mi en ropta

Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo

### **22. Tiendab bandap tumdo**

Oo eleyo laleiyo wei

Eleyo la leiyo

Oo kibendi murenik oo

Oo kibendi murenik rat keror

Eleiyo la leiyo

Oo tun osim neranik

Eleiyo la leiyo

Oo tun osim chepyosok

Eleiyo la leiyo

Oo tun osim boisyek

Eleiyo la leiyo

Tun osim nebo iman

Eleiyo la leiyo

Oo kibendi kwo ketep

Eleiyo la leiyo

Oo kwo keteb kot kele bo kapng'o?

finishing us

### **A palm tree is bought**

A palm tree is bought , bought not sold

Edible white ants during rainy season

Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo

A palm tree is bought , bought not sold

Edible white ants during the rainy season

Oiye leiyo leo laleiyo laleiyo

### **Song for candidates during circumcision**

Oo eleyo laleiyo wei

Eleyo la leiyo

Oo the men will go oo

Oo the men who are praiseworthy

Eleyo la leiyo

Oh you will ululate boys and girls

Eleyo la leiyo

Oo you will ululate you old women

Eleyo la leiyo

Oo you will make happy sounds you old men

Eleyo la leiyo

You will ululate in truth

Eleyo la leiyo

Oo we shall go until many will ask

Eleyo la leiyo

They will ask whom we belong to?

**Appendix 5: Analytical Table**

<b>Song title</b>	<b>Category and content</b>	<b>Reason for class</b>	<b>Who performs and to who</b>	<b>Persona and addressee</b>	<b>Emotions brought up</b>	<b>Images presented</b>	<b>What images represent</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Issues brought out</b>	<b>Social function</b>	<b>Philosophy and attitudes projected</b>
1. Chepketile t (a)	Men old and young sung on the eve of circumcision ...	The words 'what do we tell these children'	Men to the Tumdo candidates	Men to the candidates praising their area and community	Pride	the tall bamboo, the pordocarpus tree	strength	Dialogic al	The place of trees in the community Nature should be conserved	To the tumdo candidates should value their environment	Those who pass through the rite of Tumdo are expected to Know the value of certain trees and wildlife and protect them
2. Elego laleiyo	Women	The words 'lets agree Rechel'	Men to the Tumdo candidates	Men to the Tumdo candidates praising their men and urging the candidates to be courageous and go through the rite with valour	Pride	moon	Truth	Dialogic al	The need to be firm and courageous	Instil courage	Those who pass through tumdo are expected to demonstrate courage.
3. Sulacha	Initiates after labetabeun	One of Kayanda et songs	Initiates to those in those in	Initiates to all in attendanc	Pride and ownership ...	Mashelele t bird	The natural world	Dialogic al	The completeness of a	Educating the initiates on the	Those who undergo Tumdo are

	ceremony	sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	attendance of Labetap eun ceremony ....	e					community with tree life as well as wildlife	importance of nature	expected to understand their environment ...
4.Sabarinyon	Initiates after labetap eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendance of Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to all in attendance.	Pride and ownership	Squirrel, Wild, fruit tree,( <i>Kelyot</i> ) Chepkoib et tree	Environment	Dialogical	The usefulness of animal and tree life	Educating the initiates on the characteristics of certain animals and trees	Those who undergo Tumdo are expected to understand their environment
5.Uye Uye	Initiates after labetap eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendance of Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to all in attendance	Pride and ownership	Animal	morality	Dialogical	The issue of having good morals	Educating the initiates to be morally upright	Those who undergo Tumdo are expected not to let an animal sleep in the middle-keep good morals
6.Onkiam Kimyet	Initiates after labetap eun ceremony... ..	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendance of Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to all in attendance.	Pride and ownership	Cow, Calf.	Growth	Dialogical	The issue of improving the economy of the community	Educating the initiates on their roles in improving the economy of their community	The initiates after undergoing Tumdo are expected to be responsible in their community's economy
7a Indaria Sile	Initiates after labetap	One of Kayanda	Initiates to those in	Initiates to all in	Pride and ownership	A rocky area, Bush	Challenge	Dialogical	The issue	Educating the initiates	initiates after

	eun ceremony	et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	attendanc e.			s to go through in the process of improving the communit ys economy		of improving the economy of the community	on their roles in improving the economy of their community	undergoing Tumdo are expected to be responsible in their community' s economy
7bSinyanja sire	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremon y	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Initiates to all in attendanc e of the tumdo ceremon y.	Pride and ownership	A rocky area, Bush	Challenge s to go through in the process of improving the communit ys economy	Dialogic al	The issue of improving the economy of the community	Educating the initiates on their roles in improving the economy of their community	initiates after undergoing Tumdo are expected to be responsible in their community' s economy
8.Purku Kurkung	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremon y	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Initiates to everybod y present in the Tumdo	Pride and ownership	Wide salt rock Antelope Rocky area	Usefulness of the rocky environme nt Human wildllife interaction	Dialogic al	The usefulness of the environme nt to the community	Educating the initiates on the use	The need for the initiates not to descpice any part of their environment however bleak it may appear

9.Chepketilet (b)	Men old and young sung on the eve of circumcision	The words 'what do we tell these children'	Men to the candidates of Tumdo ceremony	Men to the candidates of Tumdo ceremony	Pride of their environment	Ostrich feathers Black rock Silibwet tree	God Natural world	Dialogical	The representing of God in the natural world	Educating the initiates on the sacred points like sunrise	The initiates are expected to recognize the presence of the supreme being after undergoing Tumdo ceremonies
10.Kipayesit	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Pride and ownership	Unidentified animal	The natural world	Dialogical	Economical practices such as raids	Educating the initiates to interact with other communities to improve their economy	The initiates are expected to come out of atumdo process having been instilled with the need to interact with other communities to improve their economy
11.Saletap Konoin	Men when on the eve of circumcision		Men to initiates		Pride and ownership	Water Farms	The presence water useful in farms in the sorroundi	Dialogical	The usefulness of water in the community	Socialising the audience on the usefulness of water	The initiates are expected to emerge from tumdo after knowing

							ng environm ent				the benefits of water in their environme nt particularly in relation to farming.
12.Saletap Kagipsirich	Men when on the eve of circumcisio n...		Men to those inattendac e of tumdo ceremonie s		Pride and ownershi p	Palm tree	environm ent	Dialogi cal		Educating the initiates on the value of Tumdo(initia tion)	The initiates are expected to understand the value of the initiation rite
13. Kimenye lelechonic	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Initiates to all in attendanc e.	Pride and ownershi p	Bush tree called lelechwet	Environm ent	Dialogi cal	The need to take pride in their environme nt	Educating the initiates to take pride in a bushy or forested area	The initiates are expected on completing the process of Tumdo to conserve their environme nt
14.Matororyet	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Initiates to those in attendanc e during' The cleaning of hands ceremon y'	Pride and ownershi p	Wide Saltrock Tall Bamboo	Evironme nt	Dialogi cal	The need to understan d the usefulness of their environme nt	Educating the initiates on the features of their environment	The initiates after undergoing Tumdo are expected to demonstrat e kwoledge of their environme

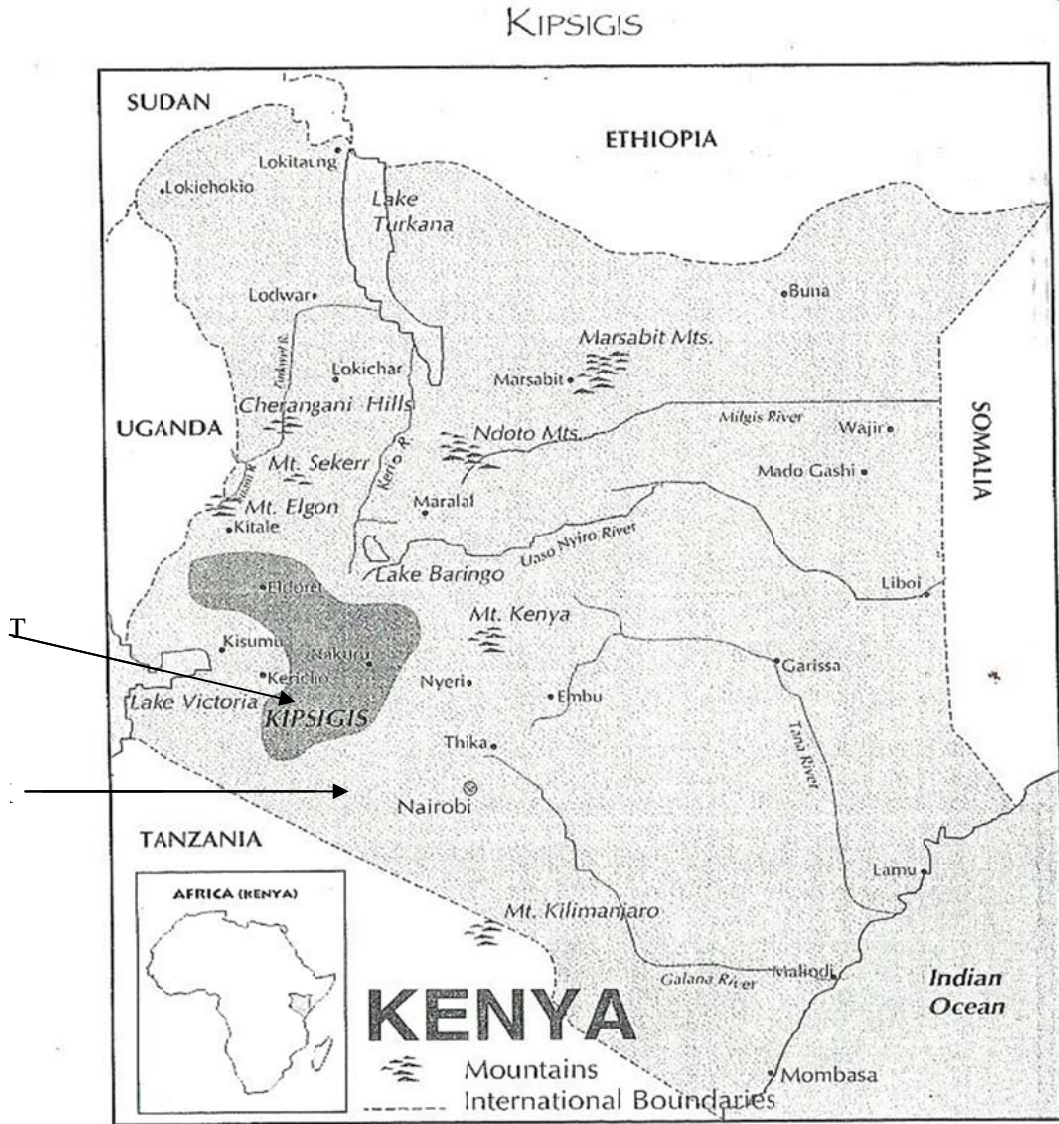
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15.Sal	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Initiates to olmen who pay them a visit during their seclusion	Pride and ownership	Oldman Friend Mother Water	Environment and family	Dialogical	need to understand the usefulness of their environment	Educating the initiates on the features of their environment and on human interactions	The initiates after undergoing Tumdo are expected to demonstrate knowledge of their environment and maintain acceptable codes of conduct to senior members of their community
16.Kayandaet (Version a)	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Initiates to all.	Pride and ownership	Rocky area, water, dark bush, bamboo, cheptuec h tree	Environment	Dialogical	need to understand the usefulness of their environment	Educating the initiates on the features of their environment	The initiates after undergoing Tumdo are expected to demonstrate knowledge of their environment
17.Kaberuret	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony		Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab	Initiates to those in those in attendace of	Pride and ownership	fire	community	Dialogical	The need for togetherness in community	Educating all on the need to pray together for prosperity	The initiates are supposed to grow up knowing there are

			eun ceremony	Labetab eun							future responsibilities awaiting them in their community
18.Chepkibol	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun	Pride and ownershi p	Whistlin g grass - Ketiiyot, forest, grazing field	Environm ent	Dialogi cal	Forests are useful to man and belong to some of them in the communit y	Educates on uses of certain plants and importance of Mau forest	The initiates are expected on emerging as Kipsigis yongmen to appreciate and understand their immediate environme nt
19. Kayandayet(Ve rsion b)	Initiates after labetab eun ceremony	One of Kayanda et songs sung after the Labetap eun ceremony	Initiates to those in those in attendace of Labetab eun ceremony	The initiates to those who visit them during seclusion	Pride and ownershi p	The crane bird The bamboo bridge A mother, The wild fruit tree(Keli ot)	Environm ent Family	Dialogi cal	Environm ent is useful to man All are called upon to accord respect to their mothers	Educates the initiates on the usefulness of their environment and their behavior towards their parents	The initiates are expected to demonstrat e Knowledge of their environme nt and respect their parents
20. Tiendap Yatetap Oret	Initiates during yatetab oret	Use of the phrase	Initiates to their sisters and	The initiates to those	urgency	Ririk birds	The cleanlines s of the	Dialogi cal	Nature purifies man	Informs the audience on the new	The initiates are expected to



	ceremony	'oyotwec h oret'(Open the way for us)	others during yatetap oret ceremony	participating in the ceremony of 'opening the way'			initiates after being initiated			stuuatus gained	demonstrate their acceptance to new nature
21.Kyole Sosyot	Sung by Women and Children on the eve of circumcision when everyone is happy	Use of Sosyot(Palm tree)	Women and children to the general audience	Personas are the singers women and children to everyone	Pride	A palm tree	The value of Sosyot (palm tree) is great like the value of the ceremony at hand.	Dialogical	The value of certain trees like sosyot (palm)	Educating everyone on the value of a wild palm tree	Nature has its function to man we should value it.
22. Tiendap bandap Tumdo	Sung by initiates	The use of the phrase 'We are going'	The initiates to those in attendance of tumdo ceremony on the eve of circumcision	The initiates to everybody	Courage and pride	Men women, youth, the road	Greatness and status	Dialogical	Tumdo ushers one to a new status	Create respect for Initiation(Tumdo)	Those who are initiated will now belong

Appendix 6: Map of the study area



Source: (Bangura 10)

**Appendix 7: Menjo Hut Used to House Initiates During Seclusion**

