

**THE ELEMENTS OF DRAMA IN *KOITO* A TRADITIONAL WEDDING
CEREMONY AMONG THE TUGEN PEOPLE OF BARINGO KENYA**

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**A Research submitted to the Department of Literature, in partial fulfillment of the
award of Degree of Master of Arts in Literature
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DECLARATION

This research is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree or any other academic credit in any other university.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God for He has given me the wisdom and strength to carry out this study up to this far.

Gratitude goes to my great parents, Mr. Stanley Kipkulei and Mrs. Grace Kobilu Kangogo for your great support and constantly praying for me. Thank you for instilling discipline and hard work in me, may God bless you abundantly.

To my siblings: Rose, Emily, Nancy, Susy, Sally, Marion, Hosea and Amos thank you for your constant support, I love you.

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ABSTRACT

African indigenous festivals in Africa have been described by Finnegan (1970) as ‘quasi-dramatic’ and they lack the dramatic structure of the West. This view is against that of the literary African scholars who claim that traditional festivals in Africa are fully dramatic and literary and should not be judged strictly by Western canons. Without documentation of these important festivals, the vital aspects of these performances have been rendered vestigial resulting in its disappearance. African traditional performance modes earlier practiced by Africans, were affected by West colonialism and by today’s globalization. These traditional dramatic forms though still hold a high position in the lives of Africans as it is used as a mode of instruction and community governance. This study establishes and analyzes the dramatic and literary elements in the *Koito* festival of Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya. The study applies the theory of performance, to describe and analyze the festival. The study has also made use of qualitative research approach for data collection and analysis in communities of Tugen in Baringo County Kenya. I employed the use of interview, observation and actively participating in the *Koito* performance. Findings of this study affirm the existence of drama in *Koito* performance which is indigenous to African people. The study also assures its readers of the greater shift of *Koito* performance in the contemporary Tugen community. This is as a result of modernization and globalization.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Drama – the elegant imitation of action which is of importance to a group of people by a way of physical representation with elements such as music, character, dance, speech, ritual, and mime.

Dramatic elements – aesthetic aspects of *Koito* performance that are dramatic in nature which include: song and music, plot, character, setting, imagery, audience response, costumes, make-up and suspense.

***Koito* Festival** – a wedding ceremony of the Kalenjin people of Baringo County in Kenya that takes place before marriage as it is expected in the community.

Traditional festival - a repetitive classic practice of a people that is mostly communal. It is a form of art established on the African soil over time characterized by unique features whose techniques are different from the contemporary forms.

Ritual performance- These are repetitive activities particular to a certain community which bring people together. *Koito* is a ritual performance as it brings the Tugen people together in celebration through; dance, song and music.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Traditional drama is performance which includes ritual performance, masquerade performances, traditional music and dance, folklore sessions especially at moonlight nights, festivals and wrestling contests. (Mitchell 2006). All these are aspects of dramatic culture. However, Europeans and highly Europeanized Africans do not accept them as drama because they believe Africa had no traditional drama prior to the arrival of Europeans in Africa. *Koito* is an example of a traditional performance. Therefore, this study aimed at exploring the drama and literariness in *Koito* despite the fact that some individuals such as Ruth Finnegan (1970), M. J. C Echeruo (1981), Ossie Enekwe (1981), Oyin Ogunba (1978), Wole Soyinka (1976), argued that it is neither dramatic nor literature.

Koito is a Kalenjin traditional wedding performed to transition an individual from being single to married (husband or wife). It is a highly regarded ceremony that is practiced by all Kalenjin speakers as it is believed to be an avenue through which the family lineage is perpetuated. As a result, it is expected that after the union, the husband and wife will procreate and thus keep the family name alive. It is a form of ritual drama as it is culture based and it occurs among Kalenjin people as they share beliefs, values, interest and a common history. My study narrowed down to discussing the dramatic aspect in *Koito* among the Tugen a sub tribe of the Kalenjin people of Baringo County in Kenya.

Koito is a form of ritual drama. Van Gennep, in his *Rites of Passage* (1909) defined ritual drama as “rites which accompany every change of place, state, social pattern and age”. *Koito* qualifies as a ritual drama because it changes the status of an individual from a state of being single to a state of being husband or wife. Van Gennep (1909) influenced Victor Turner (1953) to define a ritual as “prescribed formal behaviour for occasion not given over to technical routine (but) having reference to beliefs, and mystical beings and powers.”

Working amongst Ndembu people of Zambia, Turner even went further to say that the importance of ritual is to restore, reinforce or direct identity. It strengthens the place of the individual in the group or society. Frist Staal (1979) asserts that, performers wholly involve themselves in proper carrying out of their intricate tasks. This is because, rituals are done repeatedly and therefore, human beings are in a position to exert some control over their environment and tap some energy in return. This does not only ensure that people have tight

grip of their society, but it also presents the self-assurance they have in themselves. Since every member of the community is actively involved in performance, ritual creates a sense of unity. This is relevant in my study as in the performance of this marriage ceremony, it not only defines the people but also bring people together in celebration.

Tugen is a Kalenjin sub tribe alongside the Nandi, Kipsigis, Keiyo, Pokot, Marakwet, Sabaot, Ogiek, and Sengwer. They occupy Baringo County and some parts of Nakuru. They speak the Tugen language. The Tugen population is estimated at 350,000 people. Tugen are further subdivided into six subgroups which include; Arror, Samor, Lembus, Endorois, Kakimor and Keben/Pokor. Traditionally they worshipped a god called Asis (sun) but today most of them have embraced Christianity.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Indigenous oral performance in Africa face the challenge of being looked down upon due to the growing contemporary performances. Right from the period of colonialism, the Tugen people have become increasingly attached to the education and values of European culture and thus alienating themselves from traditional values in traditional African performances and customs. Due to this, there is a decline in the emphasis put on oral performances which used to be regarded as channels for moral value acquisition, instruction, stability and cultural development of the people in Africa.

Furthermore, in the contemporary world, there is a lot of focus on theatrical performance where a play is performed on modern stage in front of an audience. This has really overshadowed the traditional performance which gave rise to the modern performance. Scholars like Ruth Finnegan claim that there is nothing dramatic in the traditional performance; this has led to a contemporary African overlooking these performances and rendering them of no importance. And because of this, my study aimed at discovering the dramatic and literary elements of *Koito* one of the indigenous African performances which is performed among the Tugen people of Baringo County in Kenya.

This study therefore has explored the dramatic elements of *Koito* (a Tugen traditional wedding). I carried out the study among the Tugen people of Baringo County Kenya. The aim is to document it, by so doing; it will lead to the appreciation and preservation of the Tugen culture. This study will contribute to the body of literature and knowledge in general.

1.3 Research objectives

The research aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- i) To demonstrate the dramatic and literary elements of *Koito* traditional wedding ceremony among the Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya and how important they are in responding to the social issues in the community. This will contribute to the upholding of the Tugen moral fibre as acceptable behaviours are communicated.
- ii) To evaluate the contemporary *Koito* performances among the Tugen people and to distinguish them from the traditional *Koito* performance, this will lead to discovering the significance of the changes that have occurred as a result of modernization.

1.4 Research questions

The research was guided by the following research questions:

- i) What are the dramatic and literary elements of *Koito* traditional wedding ceremony among the Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya and how do they address social issues in the community?

This is important as it unearths how resourceful Tugen culture is, and this can act as an important resource in understanding more about drama at the cultural level.

- ii) What are the differences between traditional and contemporary *Koito* performances?

Apart from teaching us that oral literature is dynamic, this study made it clear that regardless of the changing times, some aspects of oral literature will always be retained and thus this emphasizes the importance of this *Koito* performance among its people.

1.5 Justification of the study

The research was important because *Koito* is a ceremony which defines the Tugen people; this means that it will be performed even by the next generations. This study therefore will contribute to the preservation of Tugen cultural material. In the traditional setting, the material was passed from one generation to the next through the word of mouth, but because of modernization, people can still read the documented version, this study being one of them. It will also contribute to intercultural interaction as people from other cultures can read and appreciate the Tugen culture as it is now written in a language that can be understood internationally. Moreover, this study contributes to the moral fibre of the Tugen culture; this is because acceptable behaviours in the society are communicated through *Koito* traditional

performances like songs and oral narratives. With modernization, schools have taken the place of these traditional performances which used to communicate good morals. Therefore, this study will come in strongly to back up what is being taught in our modern educational institutions.

Academically, this study contributes to the transmission of indigenous knowledge and wisdom which is being eroded as a result of technological devices and platforms like the T.V and social media respectively. Though the traditional performances are performed in today's festivals, they are simply for entertainment neither are they for teaching. It also contributes to creativity in modern schooling as learners showcase their talents through performance of these traditional materials like traditional songs and dances. In the modern society many learners are encouraged to take science courses as they are deemed of quality, rendering arts insignificant. This study therefore contributes to the appreciation of arts as a field which can be ventured into as it has also plays important roles in the society. They not only educate but also criticize ill behaviours in the society at large.

1.6 Scope and limitation

This study focused on the dramatic elements of *Koito* a traditional wedding ceremony of Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya. It concentrated solely on the Tugen people of Baringo opposed to the entire Kalenjin community. Furthermore, I was interested in getting information from the Tugen people occupying the Northern part of Baringo County who are popularly known as the *Orror* people.

It also focused on analyzing the specific literary and artistic elements of this *Koito* performance and looking at how the performance of *Koito* has evolved with time and how the change has affected the dramatic elements of this performance.

1.7 Literature Review

This section reviewed literature about the topic; the study reviewed the writings about *Koito* performance and the debates on the presence of indigenous drama in Africa. I conducted the study in order to clarify further the dramatic aspects in *Koito* which is Tugen traditional wedding. Africa is a continent endowed with aspects of traditional practices with so much pride attached to the display of these indigenous oral performances. In traditional Africa, the

great artistic institution is the festival, though looked down upon during colonization and even now in the contemporary world.

According to Sanjelo Rolee, on his article dated August 17, 2012 on *Kalenjin History and Culture*, separate ceremonies were observed in connection with traditional Kalenjin wedding popularly known as *Koito*. Each ceremony could not be complete without *maiweek* (Local beer). This is also evident among the Tugen people in that after reaching consensus, the groom's parents with other selected family members would make a formal visit to the bride's home carrying many beer gourds of traditional brew (*kipketin* and *busaa*) as a way of paying homage to the bride's family, clan members and the neighbours for allowing them to have their daughter for a wife to their son.

The first step was the engagement. This was preliminary visits made by the young man's father to the father of the girl selected to be his wife. The first visit is known as *Kebendii kooita* (one goes to present cattle) this is the first main visit of the suitor's father to the father of the girl. On this first visit the father was dressed in a robe of blue monkey fur. Upon arriving at the girl's home he would stand at *mabwaita* (the family altar) and send a message to the girl's father. He did this by placing a *noogirweet* (ceremonial stick) at the *mabwaita*. This was the sign that he wanted to begin talks regarding marriage. No cattle *tugaap kooita* (cattle of dowry) were brought that first visit, but an initial agreement was made. The girl's father arranges another meeting day. Usually one ox or one ox plus six sheep or goats, were taken at this time. Questions were asked about clanship, kinships and other matters which might be barriers to the marriage. At this point the matter of involvement in witchcraft was very important. They get to find out if witchcraft had been practised by any member of the extended family at any time and also if there were any strange deaths. If this proven to be true, it usually caused the couple to divorce. Contrary to this, among the Tugen people the Groom initiates the first visit clothed with jingle bells (*kipkurkurion*) tied around his thigh and armed with a bow without arrows and a club. The jingle bells act as a spectacle to the girl's family and neighbours that a bridegroom is visiting a certain homestead in search for a wife.

On the second main visit of the suitor's father to the girl's home according to Sanjelo Rolee, the suitor's father offers girl's father "*teet-aap ko*" (the cow of inside the house). This was really not a cow but fourteen sheep and goats. By this time, the girl's father would have done some investigation about the son-in-law's character. If he does not find the young man

acceptable as a son-in-law, he tells the young man's father "*seet olda age*" "move to another house" or "Try another place".

Sanjelo Rolee continues that upon reaching consensus, the groom accompanied by his best friend who is also his age mate would visit the bride's father. The family members of the bride would anoint the visitors with butter. This was called *kaaillet-ab-saanik* (anointing of the in-laws.) The butter symbolized blessings. The two would then return home. The bride was not seen on this visit. In the next visit, the groom, donned in a calf-skin cloak as he is accompanied by his *motiryoot* (best man) visits the bride's home. The bride meets them outside and sits on an ox hide near the *mabwaita*. There the visitors agree to pay a sheep or a goat. They then entered the house at the back door; *kurgaap saan*. The *kurgaap san* (back door) was used by the prospective husband at this time of "taking" the daughter of the home to be his bride. Inside, they sat on skins; food was prepared and served them by a sister or friend of the bride. Before they ate, their hands were washed with water sprinkled from a gourd. Discussion on dowry begins and ends when agreement is reached. When final agreement was reached, it was like saying, "get ready for the wedding." At the time of girl's marriage there could be a request of compensation from the woman who had fed her during the seclusion period of her initiation rites.

The final stage is *Rateet*, during this day the groom along with a herds boy and a *cheplaakweet* (nurse girl for a young child) left in the early morning for the home of the bride. On arrival, the three of them would stand at the *mabwaita*. The bride was called to meet the groom. She would refuse to come until her father promised her a sheep or a goat. Once she comes out of the house, she would stand beside the groom. The bride's father and brother would bring horns filled with butter. Four pieces of *seretyoot* (green kikuyu grass) are dipped in the butter; this was significant in that the green colour symbolized life. Then the father would take some of the butter and anoint the groom's forehead. The betrothal was confirmed by the man and girl tying *segutyet* (grass used to tie the bride to the groom) on each other's wrists. *Segutyet* was special grass used for tying in the wedding ceremony. *Seretyot* (special grass) among the Tugen people acted as a symbol of union between the two where no one was to come against the union. On the next day a small girl of between ages eight to ten is send to pick the bride. When groom and *motiryoot* (best man), on hearing the bride's bell, went out and waited at the *mabwaita* where a fire had been lit. She wore a

special bell and a cord around her waist and it could be heard before she actually appeared. She was expected to arrive at the groom when the moon was overhead.

When the bride appeared she and the groom would come together to the *mabwaita*. An elder sat on the east side of house where an archway had been made with four beer tubes. The *motiryoot* and his wife, side by side were followed by the bride and the groom, side by side, as they marched around the *mabwaita* twice. Then they enter the house to be sprayed with beer for blessing. The elder takes four strand of grass and place them across the palms of the bride and groom. The couple was then instructed to knead the grass with their hands touching. The groom took one-half of the grass and tied a loose bracelet on the right wrist of the bride. The bride then tied the other half of the grass on the right wrist of the groom. After the tying together, the bride and groom drank *mursiik* (sour milk) from the same cup. They also used a wooden knife, and with the same hands of both of them on it, they cut the *kimyeet* (ugali) from the same *kiisyyet* (small basket for food). A wedding was the beginning of something new, a day celebrating life, a time of joy. Finally, *koroseek* (sacred plant) which had been used is burned at the *mabwaita*. This marks the end of the ceremony.

According to I.Q Orchardson on *Notes on the Marriage customs of the Kipsigis*, the first step to Koito begins while the girls are in the initiation when the father of the prospective bridegroom pays a ceremonial visit to the father of the girl he desires for his son. It is the son who tells his father whom he wishes to marry. He talks with the father and mother of the girl and offers one cow. This cow is not a real offer; neither does the man expect an answer. They merely discuss suitability according to clan or generation. After a few days he makes a second visit when the girl's father discloses by his behaviour whether he is willing to consider the proposal. If he is, the man returns a third time, usually with his wife, and they speak of property, of the character of the son, and his capacity to maintain a wife and children, after handing over the "presentation" cattle, which are offered at this meeting without being seen. On a fourth and last occasion the man goes again with his wife, or his wife may even go alone. The number of "presentation" cattle is finally decided, and the man or his wife (or both if they are together) is anointed by the father of the proposed bride.

In the next visit, the accepted suitor would don a special fine cloak, usually of monkey skin. Carrying a special walking stick in his hand, the suitor would be accompanied by his friend "best man," to pay a visit to his yet to be father-in-law's home. Sitting on the east side of the

house the young man and his companion confirm to his future father-in-law all that has been proposed on his behalf and, upon offering a sheep, he is anointed.

After this, the marriage ceremony takes place. It is called *Rateet*, which means "the tying." It occurs just after dark in the house of the bridegroom's mother (or his own house if he has one), where relations of both parties sit talking and laughing very quietly round a small pot of beer decorated with *Korosek* (sacred plants) from which the guests drink through long tubes some eight or ten feet, long. The principal old man of the *Kokwet* (social unit) sits on the east of the fire, and a large ox-skin is placed on the opposite side for the bride and bridegroom to sit on. Presently the bride is heard arriving, for she usually wears at her waist the virgin's bell. She is guided by her father and mother and perhaps also brothers and sisters. The ceremony can then last for some two or three hours. Plaits of a certain grass *segutyet* are made and anointed with butter and the bride and bridegroom, sitting side by side, each ties on the wrist of the other a bracelet of *segutyet* while the elder chants blessings, asking happiness, prosperity and many children for the pair. The four principals, carrying in their hands bouquets of the leaves of the *Karasek* of their clan, form a procession going round the beer pot under an arch of beer tubes, and then outside and round the *mabwaita* each four times. That marks the whole process. From there celebration continues till morning in form of music and dances.

Chesaina (1991) on *Oral Literature of the Kalenjin* states that the song is one of the most versatile genres of the Kalenjin oral tradition. Songs are significant in ritual performances such as birth, naming, initiation and wedding ceremonies. *Koito* is an example of ritual performance performed among the Tugen people to mark the transition from singlehood to the state of being husband and wife. Therefore, among the Tugen people, *Koito* will not be complete without the singing of wedding songs. For example;

Kisetei korosyot sinendet oliny mi boyon ne kakurso

Kicham cheptanyo amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kicham cheptanyo amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kikonech moitangwany ne sere berurto nenyo kapsande

Kararan lee

Kicham kiboret amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kicham towenyo amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kicham chebaibai amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kicham chepkwenyot amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Translation

We have a man from our side who has asked to be accompanied

We love our daughter because she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

They have given us their blessed calf, what a joy for the groom's side!

So lovely my people

We love our daughter for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

We love Chebaibai (joy) for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

We love Chepkwenyot (the one in the middle) for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

We love towenyo (last born) for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

We love kiboret (first born) for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

The song above is sung by men and women from the groom's side as they are ushered into the girl's father compound. They announce their arrival and their intention of visiting the girl's home. In addition, the song appreciates the bride and her parents for welcoming them.

Drama could be traced to the earliest people on earth. In the pre-historic and the Stone Age period, one sees a situation in which early men could sit around camp fires and imitate animals they hunted. This imitation was dramatic and it was thought to increase the game that

they hunted and to ensure good hunting. Macgowan and Melnitz (1955:2) attribute this to imitative “magic”. As imitation developed, man also discovered music and dance which became part of the process of imitating animals. A little later, masks were also invented and this became an essential part of animal imitation and that is the reason the groom puts on an animal hide as an act of imitation, trying to trace back to the earlier days.

Over the years, drama has become more elaborate as man moved beyond imitative magic. Man discovered how to use dance and music as well as masks in rituals that he hoped would bring rain and increase his crops. He invented initiation ceremonies that required dialogue. His ancestors became gods and he worshiped them with dance and song. Worship bred myth and myth had to be acted out if the human race was to live and survive. As it was important for man to live and survive, he then developed a sense of ritual which moved away from mere imitation of animals to the acquisition and protection of crops. Man would pray for more rain to breed more crops in order to survive. Ritual ceremonies that pertain to birth, initiation, marriage and death were invented. These ceremonies required dialogue to enable man to commune with ancestors and gods. This process of imitation, music, dance, mask, dialogue and ancestor worship became part of the ritual drama of existence. P.51. In the performance of the Koito, after the duo are tied with the use of seretyot (special *grass*) the performer of the ritual would pour libation on the ground to appease the ancestors before the two are given a share of the drink. This is important as it is a way of asking the ancestors to bless the union with many children and with peaceful coexistence.

Akivaga & Odaga (1981) highlighted the three major elements of oral literature as; oral composition which is orally composed without reliance on writing; oral performance which is the act of presenting an item such as song, telling a story or reciting a poem; oral transmission which means that a given piece of oral literature may only be considered as oral if it is spread through the word of the mouth. It took an Englishman living in the United States, Anthony Graham-White (1974), to recognize in the 1960s that in Africa there was the unwritten drama – oral drama, which he baptized as traditional drama. In his *The Drama of Black Africa* (1978) Graham recognized three types of drama: traditional drama, popular drama and literary drama. All these had existed in West Africa before the imposition of Western drama in Africa. Koito which is a Tugen traditional wedding is dramatic because it is classified under traditional drama.

It is important to note that David Kerr, like Graham-White, wrote the African Popular Theatre (1995). Kerr defined African drama as a presentation of actions to an audience in which there is an aspect of suspense and ritual performance as an action is carried out to appease and obtain assistance from the supernatural forces.

Traditional drama was performed before colonialism and is still being performed throughout Africa. It is not written down. It is in the local language and basically based upon the social organization of the village. It was and is the drama that is a celebration of song and dance.

Ngugi (1981) in his *Decolonizing the Mind* states that:

Drama in the pre-colonial Kenya was not then an isolated event; it was part and parcel of the rhythm of daily and seasoned life of the community. It was an activity among other activities; it was entertainment...; it was moral instruction; and it was also a strict matter of life and death and communal survival (1981:37).

Koito was there before colonialism and it is still in place up to today because it is part and parcel of the Tugen people. It is one of those activities which define the community. That is why a Orror person a sub dialect of the Tugen will say '*A Orrorin Agoi Amse*' to mean 'I am Orror to the bone marrow' therefore they are not ready to renounce the important aspects of their culture for instance *Koito*.

Aristotle (384-322 BC) a Greek critical thinker whose writings still have an impact on us today, engineered the talk on the essentials of drama more than 2,000 years ago. He came up with six elements of good drama. The first one is plot which refers to the action or the sequence of events in a play. Theme is another feature which refers to the message of the play. It is the main idea or lesson to be learned from the play. In some cases, the theme of a play is obvious; other times it is quite subtle. Another aspect is Characters; these are the people (sometimes animals or ideas) portrayed by the actors in the play. It is the characters who move the action, or plot, of the play forward. Dialogue according to Aristotle is another important element which refers to the words written by the playwright and spoken by the characters in the play. This helps move the action of the play along. Music/Rhythm is also very important in drama; music as described by Aristotle refers to the variation of the actors' voices as they talk. Finally, is the spectacle which refers to the elements that the audience can visualize as they watch the play. In the performance of *Koito* all these aspects by Aristotle come into play, for instance *Koito* involves a process since the day when a groom spots a girl

he has loved up to the point where they settle as husband and wife. This is plot of *Koito*. On the other hand, there are specific costumes worn by the groom; *kipkurkurion* (jingle bells) for instance are worn around the thigh. The sound of the jingle bells will alert the girl's family and neighbours that a bridegroom is around and he wants to have their daughter for a wife.

Concerning indigenous drama and performance, some scholars have come out strongly to deny the existence of indigenous drama. These scholars include Echeruo (1981) who asserts that a story has been forced out of a ritual. Uka Kalu (1973) further claims that traditional drama is not yet drama; rather it is the vestigial element which drama may draw its ideas from. He goes ahead to assert that what some people call traditional drama should be merely referred to elements of drama. My research is here to counter their assertion because *Koito* which is an indigenous drama has proved itself dramatic because it has; plot, characters, setting, costumes, make-up, dialogue, conflict, music/song, dance, audience, performer and spectacle. For instance, Characters in *Koito* performance include *Bikap ore* (clansmen and clanswomen), *Kapmamae* (maternal uncles), *Kapkukoe* (grandparents), *Bikap asis* (neighbours and friends from the clan), active performers and the spectators that are members of the Tugen community. This inclusivity in choice of characters is hinged on the fact that the performance is communal and the space is fluid.

Ruth Finnegan (1970) who seems to have been influenced by Aristotle and in turn influenced Uka and Echuro stated that "though some writers have very positively affirmed the existence of native African drama, it would perhaps be truer to say that in Africa, in contrast to Western Europe and Asia, drama is not typically a widespread or developed form" (500). Though Finnegan seems to yield a bit to presence of indigenous drama in Africa, she refers them as partially dramatic occurrences which are evident specifically in parts of West Africa. Finnegan (1970) goes on to say that it is important to establish what really counts as drama by considering those elements with a sense of enactment and of representation through actors who imitate people and events.

Havemayer (1919) in his book *The Drama of the Savage People* says African people's initiation ceremonies "were dramatic because the languages were so limited that to convey their ideas, they had to resort to acting." (1919:25).

British Drama League (1932) states that:

No drama as such was so far known to exist among the raw natives... ritual drama as a deliberate approach to the unseen had not been found. *Native African Drama Journal* (1932:29).

In *African Oral Literature for Schools*, Jane Nandwa and Austin Bukenya define *oral literature* as "those utterances, whether spoken, recited or sung, whose composition and performance exhibit to an appreciable degree the artistic character of accurate observation, vivid imagination and indigenous expression" (1983: 1). *Koito* is undeniably part of oral literature because it is an indigenous performance which would be incomplete without singing of traditional songs and chants rendered artistically by a traditional performer.

The African Child (1959), by Camara Laye is an autobiographical novel that states that performances went for hours and hours and only stopped when performers were tired. In any case, another set of performers would take over and the performance would continue. Performance took place in any empty space and might move on the road from village to village, river to river or from ridge to ridge.

That year I danced for a whole week in the main square of Kouros. We would dance until we were out of breath; but we were not the only ones dancing. The whole town would dance with us. Soon those who were spectators would be dancing too. They would crowd in the open space and would take intimate part in our revels outdoing us in frenzy – men and women. Each day we had to dance more for we were dancing and the whole town was dancing, in the afternoon and by torchlight in the evening and on the eve of the ordeal – the town danced all day and night (1959:93).

The same case applies to the performance of *Koito*, since it is a communal affair; members of the Tugen community converge for songs and merry-making (*Serema*) in praise of the bride and the bridegroom. Drinks (*kipketin and busaa*) are shared in the process. By the end of all this, which will take place overnight till morning, people will go to their homes as the bride and groom start their family officially.

Ola Rotimi (1981) states that the term drama from a cultural perspective refers to imitation of an action or a person. The main purpose of this imitation is to entertain and to enlighten. He goes further to mention that rituals that possess the style of imitation, enlightenment and entertainment can be regarded as drama. In addition, he states that plot which consists of

suspense and conflict is an essential aspect of drama. By stating so, Rotimi asserts that indigenous performance qualifies to be referred to as dramatic as imitation is an essential element of drama and that traditional performances are an imitation of past activities. He further stresses that suspense and conflict are significant in drama and when the two are missing then mimesis will communicate the presence of drama in a performance.

Chukwuma, Helen (1994) asserts that the most important element of traditional drama is music, song and dance. J. P. Clark (1981) asserts that if indeed drama is about elegant imitation with aspects of ritual, speech, mime, music, song and dance then Africa is endowed with drama. *Koito* is indeed dramatic because it makes extensive use of songs, music and dance. For instance, the song below is sung by the groom's mother-in-law as a way of welcoming the groom officially to be part of the bride's family. It continues to emphasize that in case of some work to be done on the bride's home, the groom is welcome to assist:

Cheburet, Cheburet we!
Nyo ker karwee,
Cheburet, Cheburet, we!
Nyo ker karwee eeh
Cheburet we nyo ker karwe
Kikurin mamang'ung we!
Nyo ker karwe

Translation

Cheburet, Cheburet my son-in-law
Come and make the fence
Your mother -in-law is calling you
Come and make the fence

This song is sung by the groom's mother-in-law to ask the groom to be ready to assist anytime assistance he is sought for.

Awoonor, Kofi (1975) also agreed with Chukwuma that it is drama if it is performed; it should have actors and impersonators, characters, sequence of events, music, dance and costume.

Clark in the *Theory of Ethno dramatics*, which explains more on indigenous drama mentions that mimesis is an element of traditional drama. He adds costume as an important element of traditional drama as it acts as a mode through which a story is presented artistically. J.P. Clark continues that all the various aspects of performance such as tone, gesture, and facial expression, dramatic use of pause and rhythm, the inter-play of passion, dignity, or humour, receptivity or the reactions of the audience are all displayed in an indigenous performance. Before the performance begins, the people chant with each other, looking forward to some great entertainment. They laugh, scream, shout, make body movement and sing. The performers sometimes wait eagerly for the ceremony to commence so that they can display their expertise, release their tensions, and experience a mental state different from everyday activities.

On the other hand, Nketia, J.K (1965) highlights costume, dance, music, mime and gestures and non-verbal language as the essential elements of traditional drama. He also mentions that imitation is more superior when it comes to traditional drama. Therefore, Clark, Chukwuma, Awoonor, Nketia are in agreement with the presence of indigenous drama by listing its ingredients to include; music, dance, mime, costume and language. I therefore agree with the above scholars that indeed indigenous drama is in existence as my study on *Koito* has ascertained the presence of such elements of imitation, music, dance, mime, costume and use of language.

Chukwuma Azuonye in his *Oral Literary Criticism and the Performance of the Igbo Epic* states that, performance is a discourse or speech act in which music, dance and drama are fully integrated to constitute an indivisible aesthetic form. Performance is extremely important in oral literature because without it, oral tradition remains lifeless. Oral literature is vastly enhanced and it is given its proper character by the manner in which it is performed. The nature of performance, the voice and the mimicry, the stimulus and the response of the audience is central to oral literature. The performance also needs to be placed in its proper setting – the time of the day and the season. The performance has its messages as well as its

aesthetics which can be learned through the language of drum, songs, the clapping of hands, the characterization and the elastic and plastic body movements of the actors; the participation of the audience and their imitation of the masquerades and the ululating, the rattles and songs which accompany these dramatic aspects.

Much more dramatic is the traditional festival that is fully dramatic not necessarily in the sense of the west that would insist on a particular structure, form and content which even historically had not been static (Enekwe, 1981). The dramatic experience therefore gained by an African in a traditional African festival is holistic and communal. It could be religious, ritual, social or even individualistic at some point. This shows that experience is at different levels. This has not been dealt with using practical examples in a festival.

Furthermore, theatre is the focus point of all arts, which include paintings and decorations that is used to enhance the visual aesthetics of the performance or presentation. It is then combined with other arts like music, dance, sound and drama inclusive. By elements of design as used above, it implies the visual adornment of the performance. Edwin and Alvin (1999:11) refer to elements of design as visual aspects like costumes, lighting and some form of scenic background and a non-visual aspect; sound. Drama in this sense implies the dramatic text that is performed; a story, an incident, or an event that has been put into paragraph. Whatever the source of the dramatic story, it must be present for theatre to occur. Thus, the drama text in itself could be referred to as drama, but when performed before a group of audience with the combinations of all the other arts, it becomes theatre. Elements of drama as posited by Aristotle in his poetics are: plot, character, theme/thought, diction/language, music and spectacle. While Edwin and Alvin (1999:12) summarize the elements of theatre as: performers, audience, Director, theatre space, design aspects; scenery, costume, lighting and sound and finally the text which includes focus, purpose, point of view, dramatic structure and dramatic character.

(Mitchell, 2006) stated that in performance; the drummers introduce their drumming patterns. Songs are rehearsed so that everything is well articulated and mastered for performance. The audience already knows the song as it might have been sung in the previous years. The rhythmic clapping of the hands, the rhythmic body movements, which is in tandem with the drumming, the melodious singing, the language, the facial expressions to

show feelings, the costume of the performer, all combined aesthetically to reveal the beauty and the semantic content of the song and the performance. The chorus of the song enables the audience to participate actively in the performance. Again, there is repetition of some lines which contributes to the rhythm and substance of the song and the performer.

Manhood (1973) attested to the existence of traditional forms of drama in East Africa with a particular reference to Kikuyu dances and funeral dances of the Nyakyusa of Tanzania, both of which she takes as examples of African “Pre-drama”. Akporobaro (2012) also contended that traditional African festivals which are oral performances do provide fertile ground for both elementary institutions and advanced academic exercise. He says that these African cultural institutions are rapidly disappearing and need to be documented and discussed. The numerous angles or frames which can be discussed or analyzed include the religious, philosophical, aesthetic, cultural to the literary and mythological.

Kennedy (1973) notes:

In African festival and rituals, the actor is not alienated from the society; he is the sharer of the experience and not the dispenser. The actor is part and parcel of the culture being portrayed; he becomes a complete performer when his speech, mime, music and basic acting style synchronize to create a total life (p.24)

The well-choreographed and synchronized dances, and the different body movements and facial expressions constitute the non-verbal aspect. Songs, incantations, humming, screaming, and among others form the verbal aspect of the performance (Kennedy, 1973)

Nazareth (1978), in his discussion of East African drama, asserts the fact that it is well known that Africa had dramatic forms before the coming of the colonial rulers from Europe. He concedes the fact that West African forms of drama, including religious drama, have survived and have exerted a powerful influence on modern Nigerian dramatists, Wole Soyinka being an outstanding example.

In conclusion, I have looked at *Koito* performance among the Tugen people to explore its dramatic elements. Backing up my study with the use of theories, it has come to my realization that indeed *Koito* performance is dramatic in nature. Regardless of what had been mentioned by scholars like Ruth Finnegan that African indigenous performances are not dramatic, I can still mention that African heritage is rich with performances which are dramatic and are yet to be explored. This is well discussed in the subsequent chapters.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by one theory; Performance theory. Performance theory, according to Richard Schechner (2009), is rooted in practice and is fundamentally interdisciplinary and intercultural. Apart from being ethnic, intercultural, historical, and ahistorical, performance is also aesthetic and ritualistic as well as sociological and political. Schechner's perspective on performance was greatly influenced by Victor Turner (1988). Turner asserts that performance entails daily repetitive practices which are artistic in nature. He drew this theory from his works amongst the Australian Aborigines, the New Guinea tribesmen and the Balinese.

According to performance theory, performance simply depends on everyday conflicts, tensions and pressure of life, different rites and ceremonies that have been ritualized in the society. The performance in this case acts as a tool for societal commentary where people comment on the general happenings in their lives during the performance.

In addition, Schechner states that ritual, play, games, sports and theatre have four common aspects. These include; value of objects, time, rules and non- productivity of goods. Time is classified to; structured time, set time and symbolic time. Objects in performance acquire a different meaning from that of outside performance. Rules apply in games as well as in theatrical performance.

Turner in addition explains Van Gennep's structure of rites of passage which consist of three stages. These stages are separation at the pre-liminal phase, transition which occurs at the liminal phase and incorporation at the post-liminal phase. He stated that all rites of passage begin by separating the individual from his or her customary environment. At this point Turner noted that the individuals were in between two worlds as they neither belonged to their previous society or the other. When they pass this period they are finally accepted into a new group a process called incorporation.

Hymes contributed to this theory by focusing on folklore as seen in his later essay, "Breakthrough into Performance" (1975). In it he looks at performance as situated in a context and the emergent quality of performance. "The concern is with performance", he says, "not as something mechanical or inferior . . . but with performances, something creative

is realized, achieved even transcendent of the ordinary course of event". Every performance, according to him, has to have the following qualities: interpretable, reportable and repeatable. He explains how tradition exists for the sake of performance and is realized through performance. Hymes' contributions have been so central to performance theory, that Peter Claus and Frank Korom say, "Hymes' work was surely a 'breakthrough'. This is relevant to Koito performance as it is done repeatedly in the Tugen community.

Bauman (1986) adds that the performance can be seen as a special mode of communication and the performance itself provides the frame within which the messages being communicated are to be understood and interpreted. In any performance, the performer assumes the responsibility for a display of communicative competence. On the other hand, the audience also assumes the right to regard the performance and performer with special intensity. The performance itself becomes constitutive of the domain of verbal art. Bauman states that the concept of performance includes the, "spontaneous, unscheduled optional performance contexts of everyday life". Performance is always controlled by the rules of a given community about speaking in general. As an example, it takes up the question of the relationship of aesthetic and ethical values. Certain performances may be aesthetically very enjoyable though frowned upon ethically. Therefore, Moral systems are very crucial in the performance. The question of competence required of a performer depends on the nature of the performance and the cultural systems in which the performance takes place. But all the patterns of performance, genre, acts, events and roles are always interactive and interdependent and so cannot occur in isolation.

In performance, Bauman also includes what Hymes calls 'metaphrasis'. This refers not to performance itself, but to the imitation of performance. Along with text, and event structure, another phenomenon that may also be said to emerge during performance is social structure. Here Bauman mentions some of the recent works in sociology, which stress on the emergence of social structure in social interaction itself. Performance, most often being a public event, leads to social interaction where the spectators willingly surrender their time and attention to the performance. The performer being the focus of attention from the audience gains prestige and control over them. Because of this control, the potential for transformation of social structure also becomes available to him. As Bauman says, the

performers are feared, "because of the potential they represent for subverting and transforming the status-quo".

In conclusion, the theory above played a significant role in exploring drama in *Koito* performance which is a Tugen wedding ceremony. Performance theory is about the ritual performances which are of importance to a particular community. It talks about those activities which bring people especially those from a particular community together. *Koito* as a ritual performance brings the Tugen people together in celebration through; dance, song and music. From Turner's perspective, *Koito* performance in particular consisted of the three phases of separation, transition and incorporation. It begins with the girl and boy separated from their customary environment. The girl goes to her grandmother (*kapkokoe*) to be guided and directed on her roles as a wife and mother. The boy on the other hand, is sent to the home of his grandfather (*kapkukoe*) to be taught as well on his roles as a husband and head of a family. At this point the yet to be bride is neither a wife nor a girl and the yet to be groom is not a husband nor a boy. They neither belonged to their previous society nor accepted into the other. At this point they are characterized by humility, seclusion, sexual ambiguity and in a state of being equal. This phase ends when the individual is finally incorporated into the new group which is husband and wife.

1.9 Research Hypotheses

The research asserted that:

- i) There existed literary and dramatic elements in *Koito* traditional wedding ceremony among the Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya and thus *Koito* is literary and dramatic.
- ii) A shift was realized between traditional and modern *Koito* performances.

1.10 Research Methodology

The study made use of the qualitative research method. According to Guazzo (2008), qualitative research method enables the researcher to get a rich set of data that is not easily obtainable with the use of the quantitative methods. Therefore, I was involved in fieldwork where I observed, interviewed, recorded and participated actively in the performance in its natural setting. I interviewed three renowned Tugen oral artists who are endowed with

knowledge about the *Koito* performance alongside the bride, groom, their parents, singers and dancers and the performers of this ritual drama.

Apart from qualitative method, I also employed the historical method. This is whereby the performance was being analyzed in terms of its past and compared to the present. The information was then used to make a prediction about the future as it is stated by (Equizaoikpe 2008). The research was backed up by one theory which is; performance theory.

Koito was my specific point of reference and therefore I studied it among the Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya. By so doing, I was able to discover the dramatic and literary elements of *Koito* performance. The study areas were ten villages of the Baringo North region. The data was collected through observation, interviews and active participation. Therefore, for effectiveness of this study, I attended *Koito* performances and got involved directly in the performance through singing and dancing.

1.11 Chapter Outline

This project is organized into four chapters:

Chapter I was an introduction to the study itself. This chapter comprised of background to the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives, research questions, justification, scope and limitations, literature review, the theoretical framework, research hypotheses, and the methodology used in the study.

Chapter II of the study demonstrated the literary and dramatic elements of *Koito* traditional wedding ceremony among the Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya.

Chapter III of the study focused on studying the emerging contemporary *Koito* performance among the Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya.

Chapter IV is a conclusion of the study. It summarized the whole project. I have given my opinions on the findings and made recommendations where necessary.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE LITERARY AND DRAMATIC ELEMENTS OF *KOITO* TRADITIONAL WEDDING CEREMONY AMONG THE TUGEN OF BARINGO KENYA

2.0 Introduction

This Chapter discusses the literary and dramatic aesthetics of *Koito* performance among the Tugen of Baringo County in Kenya. This performance is preceded by the different activities which are crucial to its success. The importance of this chapter lies in the fact that it confirms the existence of drama and theatre in Africa. This counteracts Finnegan's assertion 1970 that African traditional performances are not dramatic as she said,

though some writers have very positively affirmed the existence of native African drama, it would perhaps truer to say that in Africa, in contrast to Western Europe and Asia, drama is not typically and developed form (500)

In preparation for *Koito*, both the bride and groom are expected to have gone through the circumcision ceremonies. It was a taboo (*kekirei*) for uncircumcised people to get married. Alongside circumcision the boy has to go through a traditional ritual called *Kiprili*. This was performed by the boy's father prior to him getting married. This was a traditional dance and singing whereby the yet to be groom puts on a cow-skin artwork tied with a string called *tolkuku* which produces loud noise when he walks. This ceremony took place at a specific setting which was designated and no woman, uncircumcised male and children were allowed. This place was known as *kaptum* to mean where a sacred ceremony was held.

According to Michael Chesikaw, when a boy is ready for marriage, it is his duty to identify a girl to marry. In the Tugen setting it is a norm for a girl or a boy to get guidance from elders in matters concerning marriage when he or she is growing up. The boy will then go out for 'hunting' looking for good qualities in a girl such as that of being honest, industrious, trustworthiness, respectfulness and calmness.

When the boy is out for the search, he should bear in mind the clans (*ortinwek*) he should not marry from. This is crucial because failure to observe this will attract curse (*chubisho*) to oneself and even to the generations to come. Once the boy identifies a lady to marry, he will

let his father know about it. There are some important questions which the boy's father should inquire from his son. He should inquire about the girl's parents; their names, where they originate from, their clan and the totem of each parent. It is also important for him to know if there is a history of witchcraft, mysterious diseases or madness in the girl's family. The father, with the assistance of other elders from his clan should also inquire if there has been any form of intermarriage between the two clans before and if there was, then they would wish to know if it successful. They should also check if there has been any form of community conflict between the two communities. They also conduct checks on if there is a member of their clan who was killed by a member from the girl's clan. On the other hand, the girl should approach her mother over the issue so that she can pass the message to her father. When it is confirmed that there is no hindrance to their relationship the boy and the girl are advised to go ahead with their relationship. Then from there the boy's father start talking to the girl's father before the young man officially visits the girl's home where the whole process of *Koito* begins.

Prior to the *Koito* there is also a seclusion period where the girl gets advice and guidance from her grandmother, mother or her aunt. At this point she is in limbo she is neither a child nor a wife yet; she is in a liminal stage. Liminality means a threshold of transformation, it is a period of comfort; a time when old habits, beliefs, and personal identity disintegrate and are replaced by others. The yet to be bride and groom has a chance to become someone completely new. The purpose of this is to guide the girl on the roles she will assume when she gets married. According to Kobilu there is a common statement which the girl is told; "*ui tebi kou yeu koyo*" which means when she gets there she should act the way those people act. Just like the wise saying; "when you go to Rome do what Romans do." This is important in nurturing resilience in the girl as she is expected to stay and build her home. She is guided on her wifely duties like taking care of her husband's needs which include cooking, washing, giving him his conjugal rights, supporting him in providing for the family. She is also guided on her role as a mother, that she should take good care of her family ensuring that the needs of her children are catered for.

On the other hand, the boy is also prepared for marriage this involves him visiting *kapkukoe* grandfather's place or *kapmamae* maternal uncle's home to be guided on his duties as a

married man. What is being emphasized most is for him to be hardworking and industrious as he is expected to be the head of the family. He is also expected to protect and provide for his yet to be family. He is reminded that that girl is someone's child whose parents gave out to him out of love and therefore he should not at any time abuse her in any way.

2.1 Dramatic and Literary Elements of *Koito*

Aristotle (384-322 BC) in explaining about drama came up with six features of good drama. Plot is the first aspect and this refers to the sequence of events in a play. The second feature is theme which refers to the message of the play. It is the main idea or lesson to be learned from the play. In some cases, the theme of a play is obvious; other times it is quite subtle. Another aspect is characters; these are the people (sometimes animals or ideas) portrayed by the actors in the play. It is the characters who move the action, or plot, of the play forward. Dialogue, according to Aristotle, is another important element which refers to the words written by the playwright and spoken by the characters in the play. This helps move the action of the play along. Music/Rhythm is also very important in drama; music as described by Aristotle refers to the rhythm of the actors' voices as they speak. Finally, is the spectacle which refers to the visual elements of a play; sets, costumes, decor and special effects. It is simply everything that the audience sees as they watch the play.

If aesthetics is for the artist as ornithologist is for birds (Newman, 1952), then there is need for the instrument 'aesthetics' to be used in this work. Newman summarized by saying that the elements of drama are the aesthetics which bring the events in the performance to life. Istok (2012), in an analysis of the complexity that aesthetics has assumed, argues that in a work of art, various factors and aesthetic elements interact to define and set aside that particular work. Aesthetics, as used in this study refers to the performance elements of beauty which are embedded in *Koito* performance. This forms a major part of the focus of this chapter which is directed at exploring the dramatic and literary aesthetics of *Koito* performance. One cannot achieve this without a clear exploration into the stages, from its inception to the final actions of the festival's performances.

2.1.1 Plot

A plot comprises the events that make up a story or drama, particularly as these events relate to one another in a pattern, or in a sequence, as they also relate to each other through cause and effect. The plot of drama contributes enormously to the thematic development of the story, and the emphasis mostly falls on cause and effect. Ola Rotimi (1981) states that drama is defined by plot which comprises the conflict and the suspense. Finnegan (1970) also states that imitation which is an important aspect in drama is associated with other elements, which include; sequence of events, semantic content, characters, a particular view, regular music and dance.

Crow (1983) sees the plot as the dramatic story telling. This implies that the story is told through the arrangement of some spectacular actions. *Koito* is performed in all Kalenjin dialects but they differ from one dialect to the other. For instance, among the Kipsigis according to I.Q Orchardson on *Notes on the Marriage customs of the Kipsigis*, the first step to *Koito* begins while the girls are in the initiation; that is when the father of the forthcoming groom pays a formal visit to the father of the young lady he wants for his child. The son advises his father whom he wishes to wed. He converses with the father and mother of the young lady and offers one dairy animals. This bovine is definitely not a real offer; neither does the man anticipate an answer. They simply talk about appropriateness as per tribe or age. Following a couple of days he makes a second visit when the young lady's father uncovers by his conduct whether he is happy to consider the proposal or not. If he does, the process begins, if not the suitor is advised to try elsewhere.

On the other hand, Sanjelo Rolee, in his article dated August 17, 2012 on *Kalenjin History and Culture*, states that the first step was the engagement which involved the preliminary visits made by the young man's father to the father of the girl selected to be his wife. In this case the first person to make a visit is the father to the suitor. The first visit is known as *Kebendii kooita* (one goes to the presentation of cattle) this is the first main visit of the suitor's father to the father of the girl. On this first visit the suitor's father dressed in a robe made of blue monkey hide, to symbolize bravery, visits his son's in-laws to be home. After showing up at the young lady's home he would remain at *mabwaita* (the family special stepped area) and make an impression on the young lady's father. He did this by setting a *noogirweet* (ceremonial stick) at the *mabwaita*. This was the sign that he was ready to start

talks with respect to marriage. No *tugaap kooito* (steers of endowment) were brought on that first visit, yet an underlying understanding is made and the young lady's father organizes another gathering day. Normally one bull or one bull in addition to six sheep or goats was taken at this particular stage. Inquiries were posed about clanship, family relationships and different issues which may be hindrance to the marriage. At this point background checks are made and the matter of involvement in witchcraft had to be crucially looked into. They get to find out if witchcraft had been practised by any member of the extended family at any time and also if there were any strange deaths. When all this is checked and the absence of any is confirmed, the process of *Koito* begins. In case of any form of witchcraft and strange deaths, the process is terminated.

According to Mzee Kipchebet Amdany, *Koito* performance among the Tugen people involves a series of events which begin after initiation of both male and female. Initiation into adulthood acts as a gateway into marriage as it gives the man and the lady the authority to look for a partner. In the Tugen setting, the man is the only one expected to go searching for the lady. It all starts with the man visiting areas where traditional dances and songs are performed with the intention of looking for one to marry. When he spots one, he can decide to approach her at the moment or wait for an appropriate time to let her know. He will then let his father know about his pursuance. If the clan, totem and whereabouts of the girl's parents are known and that there is *kinta*, breast (this means that the girl's clan is marriageable by the man's clan), the father gives his son a go ahead. If the whereabouts of the girl are unknown, then background checks are made before the father gives a feedback. When it is confirmed that all is well as far as marriage between the two is concerned, the yet to be bridegroom makes an impromptu visit to the girl's home in the evening after the sun sets. He goes in the evening because during the day in a normal Tugen setting, people go out to fend for the family, most probably working in the farm as laziness in this community is highly criticized. The man goes to the girl's home while wearing traditional regalia (costume). He puts on *uroi* goats skin, *sonai* beads on the neck, *ngemertin* ear rings which hang, *chabas* bangles on his wrist and *sonai ak narya* beads fixed using goat's skin on his forehead. *Twolion* traditional bell is tied on his right leg and *kipkurkurion* jingle bells are tied around his left thigh. He is also armed with a bow without arrows and a club; this symbolizes his bravery as it is expected of any Tugen man. The jingle bells will make noise on his way

and people will know that he is a man visiting a certain home intending to get a girl to marry. On his way he should not greet or talk to anyone. When he approaches the girl's home he shakes his *twolion* traditional bell vigorously as he enters the compound. The girl who is ripe for marriage in that home or the one they had met before will then welcome the man without uttering a word. Instead, she will only demand the spear, the club and shield. The man will then follow her into the house.

In the house, the man will be directed to sit on a special stone called *koiboboi* a stone for men. The man should not talk instead he should only answer questions when asked by the father or mother of the girl. Since he came in the evening, the suitor is served with cornmeal *kumyo* and *chebokaiwa* fresh milk or with vegetables whereas meat is not served. The purpose of this is to humble the suitor as meat is a highly valuable meal and therefore served to special people in the Tugen community. After the meal the suitor is shown where to sleep, he is taken to *siroino* the boys' hut.

Come the following day, the father of the house will have a short session with the suitor to ask him some questions concerning the origin of his family, about his parents, if he has ever gone for raids and if yes what he gained. Most of the questions asked are to test his bravery. The suitor is then released to go back home and ask his parents to visit. If the suitor is rejected, he is asked to go for another girl in the future. The suitor having given the go ahead for marriage will send his parents for the second and third visits and accompanying them are elders from their community. When they are asked for the intention of their visit they will mention that they are coming to ask for a cow *tany*. A cow symbolizes the girl since it is a highly productive animal and also highly valued in the Tugen community. And so the girl is expected to bear many children and be productive in her new home. In the subsequent visits, the groom's side would make a visit whose purpose is to carry *kipketin* traditional brews to the girl's home. On that particular day eight gourds of *kipketin* and *busaa* traditional drink are carried to the bride's home as a way of thanking the bride's family, clan members *bikap oree* and their neighbours for giving them a jewel.

To express their message effectively, they sing songs in praise of the girl. An example is the song below:

Iman kakekonech, iman kakekonech,

Iman, iman, kakekonech,

Eng eut nebo tai

Kakonech cheptangwany,

Cheptangwany kobilu

Iman, iman kakekonech,

Eng eut nebo tai

Iman kiribe, iman kiribe

Iman, iman kiribe

Kobilu ne kakekonech

Translation

It is true that we have been given; it is true that they have given us,

It is true; it is true we have been given

From the right hand

They have given us their daughter *Kobilu*

From the right hand

It is true we shall take good care of her

It is true, it is true, and we shall take care of her

Kobilu who is now ours

The groom and his people make several trips to the bride's home taking the liquor gourds but they cannot drink it. They should get there in the evening before the sun sets carrying eight gourds of *kipketin* traditional drink. The last visit by the Groom's clansmen acts as a climax as there will be a dance called *serema* merry making which will take place overnight till dawn when they leave carrying their empty gourds. The drinks seal the bond created between the two communities but it is not a form of dowry. The last visit is made the following day by his small sisters or cousins aged twelve years and below to accompany the girl to her new home. These small girls are a symbol of meekness and humility to show that the suitor's family is welcoming her with a lot of humility in their hearts. This time the family of the girl

invites the elders, mainly old men to come to the girl's home to give an official send off to her new home. The grandparents of this girl will spit saliva on her as a way of blessing the girl as they also speak words of blessings to her. The girl will then prepare her belongings not forgetting her special stick *sintiit*. The stick is well shaped and decorated with special marks. It acts as a symbol of authority and a symbol of marriage which her parents will instruct her to keep safely as she keeps her eyes open.

The lady will then start her journey at mid-day being accompanied by the young girls. She will then be taken to her parents-in-law home but not to her husband's. She will stay there for four days then on the fifth day, she goes to her husband's. On this day, the lady together with her husband visit the animals' pen *kaptich* to be given their animals thereafter, they leave for their home in the evening to officially live together as husband and wife.

2.1.2 Spectacle

Spectacle in drama entails aspects of costuming, landscaping and enhancements in production. Spectacle is one of the aspects that have elevated arts, especially drama as the playwright creates the mood of the play in order to captivate the audience. Crow (1983) calls it the 'larger than life' element in every dramatic production. Spectacle can be seen here as something exhibited to view as unusual, notable, or entertaining. In this context, the focus is on *Koito* and those eye-catching aspects worn by the actors which make them stand out from the rest.

In his discussion of the Elements of Traditional Drama, Nketia (1965) highlights dance, music, costume, mime, gestures and non-verbal language as the essential elements of traditional drama. He also states that imitation is more superior when it comes to traditional drama. All these are evident in the performance of the *Koito* and it will be discussed in detail in the passages below.

Costumes and make-up play very functional roles in traditional African drama. Costumes are a visual reenactment of a people's history and a reminder of their traditions. Apart from appealing to the eye, they also send a message to the audience. Wilson (1986: 36) describes the significance of African signs and symbols and categorizes them broadly into 'the instrumental, the demonstrative, iconographic, extra mundane, visual and institutional. He

says that visual method of conveying message comprises of the utilization of hues and dressing, appearance and general conduct to impart certain emotions or feelings and mentalities. Visual materials especially in costumes convey depths of meaning, and they tell mythical and historical stories. For instance, feathers, beads, chains which may appear ordinary assume thematic and cultural preserves. Koito performance which is dramatic in nature asserts the above. According to Mzee Kipchebet Amdany alias Chermani, when a suitor is visiting the home of her betrothed, he puts on *uryo* goats skin. Apart from acting as a costume, this also communicates social and economic aspects of the Tugen people; they are livestock keepers and the value they put in livestock. He puts on *sonai* beads on the neck, *ngemertin* ear rings which hang, *chabas* bangles on his wrist and *sonai ak narya* beads fixed using goat's skin on his forehead. The beads *sonai* and *ngemetrin* reminds the Tugen people of their history as in the olden days, people made use of the available resources to invent something new. Women would collect seeds of *otonwo* croton seeds, and use them to make beads *sonai* as they could not have much to do then, apart from taking care of their families and supporting their husbands in the field. *Ngemetrin* ear rings are made from metals, in the olden days Tugen men use to smith metal into desirable shapes for both decoration and for economic purposes. This therefore, preserves the Tugen culture for posterity.

Twolion traditional bell is tied on the suitor's right leg and *kipkurkurion* jingle bells are tied around his left thigh. The jingle bells are important as they communicate on the occasion at hand; that there is a man visiting a certain home with an intention of getting a wife. He is also armed with a bow without arrows and a club; this symbolizes his bravery as it is expected of any Tugen man.

Moreover, outfits and beauty products are significant aspects of drama. They give the interpretative importance of the physical appearance of a character. Therefore, they are profoundly emblematic and cannot be overemphasized. Costumes are utilized as a type of emblematic articulation of oneself just as an open device that deciphers its sociological impacts at some random time. For instance, a suitor who puts on *chabaas* bangles which are white in colour made of elephant teeth portrays his high social status. Hence, ensembles have the essential point of changing an entertainer into a character while conveying important information to the audience. An entertainer wears an ensemble to depict a character before a

live audience. Ensemble has the feature of catching the audience mental focus, increasing their disposition and passing on the message, through non-verbal methods.

Anthony Duruaku asserts that costumes intensifies the aesthetic values of the play by giving it fundamental information and synchronize the entire interpretation. Costumes does not only serve the purpose of clothing but most importantly plays the role of cultural identification. In *Koito* performance, the bride also puts on traditional regalia. This is put on the night of *serema* merry making prior to leaving for her husband home. She puts on *uroi* two goats skin one to cover her from the top and another from her waist going down. These *uroi* have a special name; *koliko*. The *koliko* is decorated with *siger ak sowoi* beads of different colours which hang and so produce pleasant sounds when she moves. This identifies her as the bride because she is the only one who puts on such. Her ears are pierced and *towoik* ear rings made of silver which should be four in number are fixed starting from a small one to a big one. Four and not any other number of rings on her ears are symbolic as even numbers other than odd numbers symbolize blessings in the Tugen community. This is in the essence that the teats of a cow are four therefore this girl will be as highly productive just like a cow. Her neck is decorated with *sonai* beads of many assorted colours to bring out her beauty. On her upper arm are *sonai* beads of different colours and on her wrists are *tobokon* bangles which are in three layers. The same *tobokon* are also worn on the fingers. The legs are covered with *titirwo* bangles which are in two layers. *Legetyo or momos* is worn around the waist to keep away hunger. This communicates that the Tugen region is marginalized where food is scarce and they had to devise ways to counter the hunger. When she is preparing to leave for her new home, the bride is given a special stick *sintiit* which is highly decorated. It acts as a symbol of authority in her new home. She is instructed to keep it safe as she keeps her eyes open. This is metaphorically used as it means that the girl in case of hostility on the other side should not take it in, instead she should not let it happen to her as she can come back to her parents. At this point she will not be like any other ordinary unmarried woman but a woman with authority over her home. Anthony Duruaku in addition states that the goal of costuming is to set the mood and style, communicate on the setting, identify the characters and cater for the practical needs of performers and synchronize the whole production. Thus costumes set the day apart and create the tone and sets the mood of the day as they are worn only on such occasion and not on any other day.

Furthermore, apart from the actors' decorations, gourds for carrying *kipketin* beer during *serema* merry making are also decorated. They are wrapped with *sinendet* and enclosed with *nerkwo- koroshon* anointed twig to symbolize the purity and how sacred the event is.

Finally, most suitors go barefoot but the Morani put on a pair of anklets made from Colobus monkey (*Kimoso*) skin – one with a row of white and row of orange beads, and the other with green and orange beads at the top edge. The monkey was caught and killed by the Morani, who then made the anklets and would wear them particularly for the ceremony. This was a symbol of bravery.

In conclusion, it is clear that *Koito* is dramatic as the costumes worn during the performance make it aesthetic and artistic. These costumes reflect the people of this particular community as they communicate on the artistry and aesthetics of this particular group of people. To summarize the importance of costume, Mark Twain, as quoted by Julie Umukoro states that a man is nothing without his clothes. This is because clothes do not merely make the man rather the clothes are the man.

2.1.3 Character and Characterization

Finnegan (1970) in regard to drama states, "most important is the idea of enactment, of representation through actors who imitate persons and events" (501). She continues to state that mimesis is additionally connected with plot, linguistic content, the dialogue between characters; particular view, regular music; and dance. In the African traditional drama, the choice and signification of character is vital and fundamental to the expression and conveyance of meaning. The characters symbolize values, beliefs and philosophy of the community; this brings people together.

According to Mzee Kipchebet, in *Koito* performance, all the characters involved are active participants. This is because *Koito* is a communal function and it is all about happiness and merry making and therefore everyone around gets in the mood of joy. During the night of *Serema* merry making the bride who is the main character in the occasion is surrounded by other characters including the dancers and the singers as they sing praises and chants as they merrily dance. The elders, clans' people, the bride's parents and relatives are also part of the characters at the night of the *serema* merry making. They take part in the singing and dancing. Children and uncircumcised youth are not allowed to participate in *Koito* performance. Mzee Chermani relates that the circumcised youth who are not married get an

ample opportunity to choose a life partner in the night of *serema* merry making. This is the reason they are recommended to attend.

Koito just like most traditional African festivals, the audience is a participating one, and it is part of the community of the active performers. The audiences who are also part of the characters come and go at will depending on force of spontaneity brought by the tempo, rhythm, and inspiration experienced by the audience. The performance is fluid. The performance is for all present at the bride's home. Without audience participation, the beauty of *Koito* is lost; there is no performance. It is as a result of the audience that *Koito* becomes profoundly interactive. The audiences join in the dance and also sing the chorus. Some members of the audience also perform actively with the parents of the bride and with the bride as well. Some audience can even engage in a dialogic display with active performers who include the singers and singers of the day this becomes highly interactive. This participation of the audience forces the active performers (parents of the bride and the elders) heighten their level of performance. All of them are aware of the essence of the festival, which can only be realized through a profound participation. The audience knows that every performance of *Koito* has to fulfill a high level of expectation in the community. This is the reason for the audience participation to ensure the success of the performance. According to Kobilu, the only way to differentiate the audience and the performers is through costumes and properties that are used. The male performers will have a *songolion* a special hat with a cock's feather on the head and a flywhisk in their hands while the other male audience will not have the same. The same to the mother of the bride who wears a highly beaded goat skin while the other women's goats skin is not highly beaded. This is important as it identifies the main characters from the minor characters.

2.1.4 Setting

This is the physical space where the events in *Koito* take place. The performance takes place in the house of the bride's parents. The suitor is welcomed into the house and directed to sit on a special stone called *koiboboi* stone of elders. When he is listened to and allowed to marry their daughter he is asked to go back to his people and come back carrying the *kipketin* traditional liquor which will be taken in the night of *serema* which will take place in the house of the bride's parents overnight till dawn. At this moment of *serema* merrymaking, fire is lit using firewood to provide lighting.

According to Mzee Stanley Kipkulei, the performance of *serema* is not confined to a raised platform. It is such a way that the main performers who include the dancers, main performer who is usually an elder, the bride's parents and the bride are the ones close to the fire place. The others including the clans people and villagers who are the active audience occupy somewhere far from the fire place. The floor is not carpeted instead it is covered with white soil. That is why at the end of the dance, the participants are all white because of the dust, and that is the beauty of the *serema* performance.

2.1.5 Songs

Songs are an important genre of oral literature. In this context, *Koito* would be incomplete without songs. Basically they are poems and chants composed to be sung during the performance. *Koito* traditional songs are a sub-genre of oral literature and hence a literary form normally composed and sung on this particular occasion. The song is just one way of conveying a message to the bride, groom, the bride and groom's parents and to the audience. These songs are highly repetitive with the purpose of stressing the message to the intended person. Repetition is a literary feature which renders this *Koito* performance a literature piece.

Nandwa. J. and Bukenya. A. (1983) state that songs and dances pervade the whole spectrum of African traditional life. They give examples of songs sung on different occasions for example lullaby, sacrificial prayer, wedding songs, recitation of heroes and nuptial songs. Nandwa and Bukenya went ahead to state that, "Verse is almost inseparably connected with poetry which is the most powerful expression in language of the emotions..... (1983:87). They also mentioned that the composition of songs is not regarded as complete until it is actually performed as oral chants. The same applies to the songs sang during the *Koito* performance. It involves body movements and acting to convey the intended message. It makes use of chants *kesal*, this is evident during merry making *serema* at the bride's home the whole night before she can be released to her husband's home. The purpose of this is to praise the bride; they would mention the good character passed to her by her parents, mention her importance as a female child and what is expected of her as she transits to becoming a wife and a mother as it is seen in the song below:

Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo changkomen
Iya cheptanyo, iya, iya cheptanyo

Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo cherukwen
Iya cheptanyo, iya, iya cheptanyo
Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo nikiwal
Iya cheptanyo, iya. Iya cheptanyo
Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo chebutkwen,
Iya cheptanyo, iya, iya cheptanyo
Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo chebutngui
Iya cheptanyo, iya, iya cheptanyo
Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo cheripga,
Iya cheptanyo, iya iya cheptanyo

Translation

We are praising our daughter, our daughter Changkomen (the one who has let to bringing of liquor in plenty)

Iya our daughter, *iya, iya,* our daughter

We are praising our daughter, our daughter Cherukwen (the middle child)

Iya our daughter, *iya, iya,* our daughter

We are praising our daughter, our daughter nekiwal (the one we are proud of)

Iya our daughter, *iya, iya,* our daughter

We are praising our daughter, our daughter Chebutkwen (the one who fetches firewood)

Iya our daughter, *iya, iya,* our daughter

We are praising our daughter, our daughter Chebutngui (the one who fetches vegetables)

Iya our daughter, *iya, iya,* our daughter

We are praising our daughter, our daughter Cheripga (home keeper)

Iya our daughter, *iya, iya,* our daughter

We are praising our daughter, our daughter Kiboret (firstborn)

Iya our daughter, *iya, iya,* our daughter

Kabira, W. and Mutahi. K. (1982) mentioned that the adaptability of the song makes it the most responsive sort of regular day to day existence and to the consistently evolving conditions. They proceeded to specify the roles of the songs, for example, a means of entertainment, medium of conveying information, political mobilization and transmission of cultural values. This is true as the songs sung during *Koito* performances are not fixed as one can introduce or omit some words or phrases. This is evident in the song below which is sang by the groom's side as they visit the bride's home while carrying beer *kipketin*.

Kisetei korosyot sinendet oliny mi boyon ne kakurso

Kicham cheptanyo amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kicham cheptanyo amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kikonech moitangwany ne sere berurto nenyo kapsande

Kararan lee

Kicham kiboret amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kicham towenyo amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kicham chebaibai amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Kicham chepkwenyot amu kikurech

Oleiyo ooh

Translation

We have a man from our side who has asked to be accompanied

We love our daughter because she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

They have given us their blessed calf, what a joy for the groom's side!

So lovely my people

We love our daughter for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

We love Chebaibai (joy) for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

We love Chepkwenyot (the one in the middle) for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

We love towenyo (last born) for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

We love kiboret (first born) for she has invited us

Oleiyo ooh

In the song above, the soloist can decide to use the words *chepkwenyot* (the one at the midst of other children), *chebaibai* (the joyful one), *towenyo* (the last born), *kiboret* (the first born) or *cheptanyo* (our daughter) depending on what describes her well.

Chesaina, C. (1991) in *Oral Literature of the Kalenjin*, states that the song is one of the most flexible classifications of Kalenjin oral writing as it covers varying backgrounds in Kalenjin culture. She keeps on expressing that songs are significant segment of customs, for example, those associated with birth, naming, weddings and initiation ceremonies; they all have explicit social capacities. She continues to say that Kalenjin songs are performed rather than sung in a static position on the part of the participants and therefore they facilitate body movements. Most Kalenjin traditional songs according to Chesaina allow many people to participate in the performance. Some songs consist of only one verse which is repeated as many times as the performers wish therefore it becomes the soloist's discretion to fade it out gradually after gauging the mood of the performers. This repetition of words, phrases or even whole verses not only contribute to the rhythm of the song but also emphasizes important points in the song. This repetition also enhances the theme of the song. For example the song below clearly depicts that in Koinon soloists can prolong the song as long as they wish as they allow other people to participate in the performance, they also improvise the song as she sings along by substituting some names as mentioned by Chesaina (p. 12)

Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo changkomen.....solo

Iya cheptanyo, iya, iya cheptanyo.....all

Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo cherukwen.....solo

Iya cheptanyo, iya, iya cheptanyo.....all

Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo nikiwal.....solo
Iya cheptanyo, iya. Iya cheptanyo.....all
Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo chebutkwensolo
Iya cheptanyo, iya, iya cheptanyo.....all
Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo chebutngui.....solo
Iya cheptanyo, iya, iya cheptanyo.....all
Kisale cheptanyo, cheptanyo cheripga,.....solo
Iya cheptanyo, iya iya cheptanyo.....all

Translation

We are praising our daughter, our daughter Changkomen (the one who has let to bringing of liquor in plenty).....soloist
Iya our daughter, iya, iya, our daughter.....all
We are praising our daughter, our daughter Cherukwen (the middle child).....soloist
Iya our daughter, iya, iya, our daughter.....all
We are praising our daughter, our daughter nekiwal (the one we are proud of).....soloist
Iya our daughter, iya, iya, our daughter.....all
We are praising our daughter, our daughter Chebutkwen (one who fetches firewood)...soloist
Iya our daughter, iya, iya, our daughter.....all
We are praising our daughter, our daughter Chebutngui (one who fetches vegetables).soloist
Iya our daughter, iya, iya, our daughter.....all
We are praising our daughter, our daughter Cheripga (home keeper).....soloist
Iya our daughter, iya, iya, our daughter.....all
We are praising our daughter, our daughter Kiboret (firstborn)..... soloist
Iya our daughter, iya, iya, our daughter.....all

2.1.6 Rhythm

Rhythm is defined as the pace of dramatization, and furthermore alludes to the beats of the presentation. In drama, rhythm must be altered, regardless of the drama’s length, and it corresponds to the emotional state of the performers. Rhythm can also be said to be the movement with uniform and patterned recurrence of a beat. In music, it is the pattern of regular or irregular throb caused by the regular happening of strong and weak melodious beats.

According to Justin Cash, categories of rhythm in drama can be categorized as follows: Rhythm in exchanges of dialogue between performers during singing and dance. This is evident in *Koito* as the performers of songs converse at a regular interval during the performance. Most *Koito* songs are in call response mode. This involves a soloist singing a line then the others respond. This creates rhythm as it happens regularly. The dialogue can also be between the singers and the bride or the groom. This includes asking her or him questions at a regular interval this makes the performance interesting and lively. Rhythm according to Cash is also seen in the movement of a performer; this is evident in his/her dance steps, which are synchronized. This is the case in *Koito* as the performers during the performance portray unity in their body movements. For instance, they all move their legs forward and backward as they hit the ground and the same is repeated in the successive performance.

Rhythm is also evident in the non-vocal sounds made by *Koito* performers; this involves the performers shaking their anklets (*singirilen*) as they hit the ground hard using their feet. Women performers on the other hand harmoniously shake their neck laces following the beats of the song sang at the moment. The movements express joy and thanksgiving. It is said by Avorgbedor (2003), that man naturally expresses himself. Both actions and reactions penetrate methods of life and living. The performers in *Koito* take one stride forward or back while the body movements are sideways, diagonal, and uniformly consistent. There is no part of the body that is atrophied at the moment of movement.

Cash also states that rhythm is realized in the repetition of words and phrases. This is true for *Koito* performance as Chesaina (1991) states that repetition is the commonest stylistic characteristic of Kalenjin songs. She continues to say that it involves repetition of words, phrases or even whole verses and that apart from contributing to the rhythm; repetition is used to emphasize important points in the song. In *Koito* therefore, most lines and words in a song are repeated to emphasize on the important message. For example, in the song below which is sang by elders in praise of their daughter during the night of *serema* merry making before she goes to her new home.

Ncheke chu ee

Ncheke chu ee

Ncheke chu ee
Ncheke chu ee
Ncheke chu ee
Kas anyone emoo
Ne nyonei mutyo
Kas anyon emoo
Ne nyonei mutyo

Kongoi cheptanyo
Eeh woiyo
Kongoi cheptanyo changkomen,
Eeh woiyo
Kas anyon emoo
Ne nyonei mutyoo
Kas anyon emoo
Ne nyonei mutyoo

Boi boi boisiek
Eeh woiyo
Boiboi boisiek
Akopo changkomen
Eeh woiyo
Kas anyon emo ne nyonei mutyo
Kas anyon berur ne nyonei mutyo.

Ncheke chu toroch
Emo ne nyonei mutyo
Toroch emo ne nyonei mutyo
Toroch konyit ne nyonei mutyo
Toroch iman ne nyonei mutyo

Translation

Here are the ones

Here are the ones

Here are the ones

Here are the ones

Here are blessings that are coming slowly

Here are blessings coming slowly

Thank you our daughter

Eeh woiyo

Thank you our daughter, our daughter Changkomen (beer in plenty)

Eeh woiyo

Here are blessings coming slowly...

Here are blessings that are coming slowly

Clansmen are delighted

Eeh woiyo

Clansmen are delighted because of Changkomen

Eeh woiyo

Here are blessings coming slowly...

Here are blessings that are coming slowly

Here they are

Embrace blessings coming slowly

Embrace happiness coming slowly

Embrace friendship coming slowly

Embrace respect coming slowly.

The song above may not have an ending because the lines can be repeated continuously as other words are substituted with others. In this case the soloist is the one to determine how long the song will be. The repetition of lines makes the song rhythmical and thus enhancing its beauty and the beauty of the whole occasion. Other than creating rhythm and beauty, the

song stresses the message that the elders are happy that their daughter was patient and respectful enough to have adhered to the norms and traditions of her people when it comes to marriage. And that is the reason she is referred to as a blessing, happiness, respect and friendship.

According to Chesaina (1991) in her book *Oral Literature of the Kalenjin*, the Kalenjin songs are performed rather than sung in a static position. Rhythm to her therefore becomes a very important component of these songs as it facilitates body movements which are often an integral part of the total meaning of a song. The same is true for *Koito* as the rhythm in particular songs conveys the message of the song more effectively than the song itself following the regular use of gestures and body movements.

Koito also makes use of idiophones to create rhythm in songs. Chesaina (1991) states that Kalenjin songs abound in idiophones and that apart from punctuating songs and adding extra musical appeal, idiophones are important components of Kalenjin songs as they contribute to the rhythmic beat and, help regulate body movements. In *Koito*, idiophones are important as they create rhythm in the song as it is when the idiophone is rendered that a change in body movement among the performers is realized. For instance, in the song:

Oleiyo.....*solo*
Ooi.....*all*
Oleiyo.....*solo*
Ooi.....*all*
Kongoi towenyo*solo*
Ee ooi*all*
Kole boisyek kongoi*all men*
Kole chebyosok kongoi*all women*

Oleiyo.....*solo*
Ooi.....*all*
Oleiyo.....*solo*
Ooi.....*all*

Kongoi cheptanyo.....solo
Ee ooiall
Kole boisyek kongoiall men
Kole chebyosok kongoiall women

Oleiyosolo
Ooi.....all
Oleiyosolo
Ooiall
Kongoi changkomensolo
Ee ooiall
Kole boisyek kongoiall men
Kole chebyosok kongoiall women

Translation

Oleiyo.....solo
Ooi.....all
Oleiyosolo
Ooiall
Thank you our daughtersolo
Eewoi.....all
The men are gratefulall men
The women are grateful.....all women

Oleiyosolo
Ooi.....all
Oleiyosolo
Ooiall
Thank you Changkomen.....solo
Eewoi.....all
The men are gratefulall men

The women are grateful.....all women

Oleiyo, *Ooi* and *Eewoi* are idiophones which are rhythmical and used to regulate the men and women's body movements; upon its mention the performers skip a bit as they bow their heads as a sign of acceptance. It is a sign of giving blessings to the bride as she goes to her new home.

2.1.7 Dance

According to Ukadike, every chant, drumbeat, songs chorus and dance replicates nuances that serves as part of a ritual (Ukadike 1994: 24). Dance expresses the convictions, attitudes, norms and values, of a specific culture. It is what is installed in the way of life that can be reflected in the dance of a particular social group. For instance in *Koito*, *serema* merry making which is both song and dance performed in the night of the marriage ceremony showcases the community's attitude towards marriage, it also presents itself as a norm because this is a ritual which is highly regarded in the community. Its high regard is because it acts as an opener to a new stage in life which involves procreation and keeping the family name. It is also crucial as it is a ceremony where one gets to learn the values of his or her community and live by it. Other than the groom and the bride acquiring values and morals, the audience and all the characters involved get to learn values too as this dance bring the clan members including the elderly and those who are yet to get married together; children and uncircumcised men are not invited.

Microsoft (R) Encarta (R) 2006 states that dance can be artistic, visual or for entertainment. It goes past the only practical development of work or game to turn into an encounter that is pleasurable, energizing, or tastefully important. In doing so, it can likewise communicate feelings, mind-sets, or thoughts, recount to a story, or serve strict, political, monetary, or social needs. This is true in *Koito* as the dance is not merely a way of passing time but it expresses the mood of the day which is joy and bliss as it is a celebration of one of the pleasant lifetime event in the community. Therefore, the characters who are involved in the dance, dance with vigour and an expression of happiness written all over their faces. The *serema* dance which involves movement of the body is important in telling a story about the Tugen people as during the dance a lot of acting takes place where a performer goes ahead to dialogue with the bride telling her how important she is to her parents and to all her clans

people to have brought them together in the celebration. The performer can also choose to bring the bride's mother on board during the dance to give her praises as he dialogues with her. He does all this through singing and use of gestures as he swings his body, twisting his neck gently as he stamps the ground barefooted. This aesthetic dance brings a lot of pleasure to all the characters and audience involved. It becomes even more pleasurable as *kipketin* traditional beer is taken to charge to performers and give them more energy.

Writing on dance, Okafor (5) states that dance is a prevalent mode of correspondence or articulation in African societies. It involves manipulating the human body at a specific time and place so as to offer articulation to thoughts and feelings. In *Koito* this *serema* dance is only performed at night during a marriage ceremony and not any other celebration and any other time other than in the night. It is only performed at night as during the day the community members are in their places of work fending for their families as they take care of their children. In the evening they are tired and this dance is a way of relieving fatigue. The *kipketin* taken has a stress relieving element which keeps them active and rejuvenated the all night till dawn. This teaches the community the idea of hard work as they rebuke laziness which brings poverty to the family.

Serema is performed at night in the bride parents' hut around a blazing fire. The performers would go round the fire and others with valour jump over it as a sign of bravery which is crucial to all Tugen men. The fire burning is a symbol of continuity and procreation in the Tugen community. For instance, Michael R. Chesikaw (2019) in the foreword of his book; *The Orror Marriage Process*, mentions, "Marriage in the Orror (Tugen sub- dialect) community is the beginning of the "lighting of fire" which means procreation for posterity and the process is both delicate and meticulous. A small miscalculation can trigger a disaster in that the "fire can go off" or blow one up. Fire is both good and bad depending on how it is handled – and so is marriage". Therefore, the lighting of fire at night is not only for purposes of lighting but also to show the importance of fire as it is used symbolically among the Tugen to represent procreation in marriage. Literally, fire going off is a symbol of bad omen in the context of marriage.

Serema dance involves patterned and rhythmic body movements accompanying the wedding songs. In Tugen community *Koito* dance must accompany the wedding songs, failure to which the wedding is rendered unproductive. The performers' body movements go well with the rhythm of the song this brings in harmony in the performance. Most songs are sung at a fast pace to reflect the joyous mood of the day and so the dance as to be fast as well. Such movements are particular to this *Koito* performance and not the case in any other ordinary day.

Eze (2) emphasizes that the dancing movements in drama is gotten from the ordinary development of the individuals either grinding or in different activities for example, in the movement of hunters while hunting and from regular cultivating exercises, for example, cutting, hoeing and planting. Among the Tugen of Baringo County, planting millet is common because the place is rocky and may not be so productive for maize and beans. Therefore, during weeding the farmers use hoes (*mokombo*) as this penetrate between the rocks. Therefore, the movement is such that the hoe in two moves weeds the millet which is between the rocks then pause before moving to another rocky ground. The same is done repeatedly till the weeding is completed. This movement gave rise to the Tugen traditional *Koito* dance where the performers would strike their thighs using their palms twice as they swing their shoulders, pause then the process continues till the song ends.

In *serema* dance, the performer moves his body in varied ways, for instance, the performer can twist it round, bend, stretch, jump, and turn. By varying these actions and using different motions, human beings can devise countless number of movements. Within this limitless reserve, each culture emphasizes certain aspects in its dance styles. *Koito* being a ritual performance occurs repeatedly among people who have shared beliefs, values, interests and a common history. It is also ritualistic because it is borne out of the ritual festival of marriage. This is as defined by Van Gennep; in his *Rites of Passage (1909)* that ritual drama entails "rites which accompany every change of place, state, social pattern and age". Victor Turner (1953) influenced by Van Gennep also defined a ritual as "prescribed formal behaviour for occasion not given over to technical routine (but) having reference to beliefs, and mystical beings and powers." Since it is a ritual performance, *Koito* dances are not new to the performers as they perform repeatedly. With this repeated performance, the dances are

improvised by day and therefore with each performance there is a new dynamic and body movements employed.

Chukwuma, Helen (1994) states that traditional drama is invariably music oriented with the attendant features of dance and song. J. P. Clark (1981) asserts that if drama is elegant imitation of action with elements of ritual, language, song, mime, music and dance then there is evidence of drama in Africa. This is quite evident in *Koito* because the performance will not be complete without the dance. During the night of *serema* merry making, the characters sing songs of praise to the bride as they dance. The dance involves the movement of all parts of the body. With the costume, the dance becomes colourful as the costume put on by the characters which are the anklets and those on their wrists produces sounds rhythmically making the performance interesting.

Wherever boys and girls are in Africa, there is dancing (Taiwo, 1967). *Koito* dance is an expression of happiness as the bride and the groom are being praised for their pleasant character-traits. During the *serema* merry making night at the bride's home, her parents together with her clan members except children and uncircumcised men come together to praise the bride.

Akporobaro (2012) states that songs, dance, and drumming, are the purest and commonest forms of emotional, psychological, and social entertainment in the African world and in all cultures. Songs, dance, and some forms of drumming, which generate rhythmic movement, often go hand in hand, in a complex mutual enhancement and aesthetic communication. *Koito* dance indeed beautifies the whole *Koito* performance without which the performance is futile.

In conclusion, dance is significant in any society as it brings people together for instance in *Koito* performance, when group of dancers are performing the *serema*, there are audience who gather to watch and participate in the performance. In line with the above view, Enekwe (11) states that dance plays an important role in the society in realizing societal harmonious living and togetherness, this leads to a deep sense of communion with each other. This brings an end to individuality in the society and in broader perspective help in preserving the culture of its people. *Serema* dance helps to preserve the people's culture in the sense that the

language of the people which is Tugen is used in their dance. During the performance, the dancers also make use of local costumes for dance performances, this showcases the beliefs, attitudes, norms and values of the Tugen people. This dance also goes a long way into improving the physical wellness of an individual this is because in *serema* dancing, every aspect of the human body is exercised. This rejuvenates the performer and gives them the strength to not only perform well in the next dance but also to carry out their daily activities it is also believed that dance can cure diseases.

According to Enekwe (12) the traditional dance has supernatural and enchanted values. It is used to ensure procreation and to chase evil. Dance prompts autohypnosis and happiness, besides freeing members from the everyday encounters of brain and body. It not only offer the youth a chance to flaunt themselves, but also acquaint them with skills thus preparing them for work. This is true for *serema* because apart from being a source of enjoyment and improving ones fitness, it is also a way of inviting good fortune in the lives of the groom and bride as bad omen is rebuked using all possible terms. It also serves as an avenue through which young circumcised men open their eyes widely as he can find his suitable bride then.

2.1.8 Imagery

Imagery in drama refers to the use of descriptive language that appeal to the human mind. It leads to formation of a mental picture. Imagery adds layers of deeper symbolic meaning to the performance. Aspects of imagery include; symbolism, simile, metaphor and personification. Use of imagery in performance is very crucial as it contributes to the effective conveyance of the intended message.

Imagery is a dominant aesthetic in the performance of *Koito*. For instance, even number is highly regarded in the Tugen community as it is considered a number which carries good omen. Odd number is not recognized as they believe things should appear in doubles. Number four is a symbolic number which symbolizes favour and blessings from the gods. This is traced to the traditional Tugen society where livestock are of high regard. Number four is gotten from the teats of a cow, they are four in number and because a cow is a source of providence in most Tugen families and also being a female, they use it as a sign of procreation, and thus it is highly respected. In *Koito* performance the suitor will come asking for a cow to mean a girl. Cow symbolizes the girl the suitor is coming to ask for a hand in

marriage because that girl is expected to be a provider and also expected to give birth to many children as a sign of procreation when she gets married.

In the past before the drinking of *kipketin* traditional liquor was used to bind the two communities together, two gourds of milk were carried by the groom's side to be taken at the night of *serema* merry making. In the recent past, eight gourds are carried by eight people from the groom's side to be taken in the bride's home. When the two communities drink the liquor it symbolizes a bond which will have been formed; it is a symbol of unity among the two communities. *Sinendet* a twig is wrapped around the gourds. This twig acts as *koroshon* sanctified twig, this symbolizes the purity of the whole process of marriage as the bride and groom are also expected to be pure; they should be virgins.

Sintiit a thin walking stick given to the bride by her parents is highly symbolic. It symbolizes authority given to the bride in her new home. When she is leaving for her husband's home she is given the stick and asked to go and have her eyes wide open. This is to mean in case of any ill treatment, she should go back home but she should not leave her *sintiit* behind.

2.1.8 Theorizing *Koito* traditional wedding ceremony as literary and dramatic

Performance theory by Richard Schechner is relevant in this study because it deals with ritual performance which *Koito* performance is one of them. Schechner states that the theory depends on everyday daily conflicts, tensions and pressure of life, different rites and ceremonies that have been ritualized in the society. The performance in this case acts as a tool for societal commentary where people comment on the general happenings in their lives during the performance. Richard Schechner is backed by Carlson (1996, p. 37) who defines performance as:

“...all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers.”

Carlson's assertion qualifies *Koito* a form of performance as it has performers and audience to complement the performance. Performance therefore is not only about the performers and the audience it encompasses art forms, which include dance, music/song, dialogue, poetry which are fused with other dramatic elements. Therefore, this study concurs with the fact that *Koito* suites Schechner's model on performance in relation to drama and theatre. Performance theory is about the ritual performances which are of importance to a particular community as

it brings them together. *Koito* as a ritual performance brings the Tugen people together in celebration through; dance, song and music.

Van Gennep *Les Rites de Passage* (van Gennep 1960:198) explains three procedural stages of ritual which is, separation, transition and incorporation. In his schema the people engaged in ritual first have a preparatory stage, and then they enter a state of being in between two worlds in which the normal rules of social life are suspended and replaced by special procedures and observances. Then they emerge into the everyday world in a transformed state. The nature of these different “states” is culturally defined. This is evident in the traditional *Koito* performance which begins with the yet to be bride and groom being separated from their customary environment. The girl goes to her grandmother (*kapkokoe*) to be guided and directed on her roles as a wife and mother. The boy on the other hand, is sent to the home of his grandfather (*kapkukoe*) to be taught as well on his roles as a husband and head of a family. Between the separation and incorporation phase is the transition phase where are in between two worlds; the yet to be bride is neither a wife nor a girl and the yet to be groom is not a husband nor a boy. They neither belonged to their previous society nor accepted into the other. At this point they portray the sense of humility, seclusion, sexual ambiguity and in a state of being equal. This phase ends when the individual is finally incorporated into the new group which is husband and wife when the *Koito* is performed.

Schechner states that ritual, play, games, sports and theatre have four common aspects. These include; value of objects, time, rules and non- productivity of goods. Time is classified to; structured time, set time and symbolic time. Objects in performance acquire a different meaning from that of outside performance. Rules apply in games as well as in theatrical performance. In *Koito* performance, time is important as it dictates the plot or sequence of events since the time of betrothal up to the last step when the bride is walked to her new home to become a wife. Objects within these performances take on new and special meanings, and their value within the context of the performance may be entirely different from outside. In *Koito* for instance according to Mzee Stanley Kipkulei, *sintiit* walking stick which is given to a bride by her parents acquires a different role which is not any other ordinary stick but a special stick. This becomes the bride’s symbol of authority in her new home, where she is instructed to go and keep the walking stick *sintiit* safely as she keeps her eyes wide open and she should not persevere in case of any ill treatment. In normal days that

stick will not have any other meaning other than a walking stick or for the purpose of looking after cows. *Kipketin* traditional brew is also another object which acquires a special meaning during the *Koito* performance. This is because in normal days the drink is taken but it is simply for enjoyment. On this day it is taken by the members of the bride's side to symbolize the sealing of friendship between the two communities.

Koito as an example of a ritual performance has rules which have to be followed lest it attracts curses. Among the Tugen people, for *Koito* to be effected it has to be ensured that the two are not related by blood. When background checks are made and it is noted that the two are related by blood then any further progress is terminated. It is also a rule that the groom's side bring eight (not any other number) gourds of *kipketin* traditional drink to the bride's home and that the groom's side is not allowed to partake in it. Later after it has been taken the groom's side is given back their gourds as they are not supposed to remain at the bride's.

Therefore performance theory asserts that *Koito* performance is dramatic as it makes use of imagery which is evident in symbols like *sintiit* and *kipketin* which are important in the performance of *Koito*. During the performance, songs are sung accompanied with the *serema* dance. The characters put on special costumes and make-up and this makes performance theory suitable for this study because it deals with performance.

2.1.9 Conclusion

In this Chapter, I looked at *Koito* traditional wedding ceremony of the Tugen people and explored the dramatic and literary aesthetics in it. This has led to the theoretical conceptualization of *Koito* as literary and drama. From my research, there is a need to consider *Koito* performance both drama and literary. This led to exploring the effect of modernization on the performance of *Koito* as the world today is turning modern in all aspects. This is discussed in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER THREE

CONTEMPORARY *KOITO* CEREMONY AMONG THE TUGEN OF BARINGO COUNTY IN KENYA.

3.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with how *Koito* traditional festival has been affected by the changing trends in the society. This transformation is in terms of the form and content of *Koito*. The changes have affected the plot, flow of music, songs sang, dance, costumes, rhythms, makeup, and characters involved. This dynamic nature of traditional festivals is due to globalization, post colonialism and postmodernism. This has led to the shifting grounds of aesthetic discourse, and has generated new terms and principles guiding *Koito* festival. Current *Koito* performance unlike in the past, which was characterized by imitating animals and the people who lived in the pre-colonial period is characterized by pastiche, fusion of different systems and beliefs, reconstruction and absolute contradiction all culminating to a different practice.

Michael R. Chesikaw (2019) on *Learning from Indigenous, The Orror Marriage Process* states that:

As is the case with other postcolonial-colonial African communities, the *Orror* culture and traditions have changed considerably due to the influence of the western cultures and traditions of Christianity and education. Westernization has distorted our communal psyche and replaced it with individualism. The social focus has shifted from the clan to an immediate family unit, so much so that marriage processes have been individualized and commercialized through the introduction of monetary dowry and expensive show-off...

The present-day parents have unconsciously accepted this brain-washing and by extension accepted the commercialization of marriage engagements, contrary to the blueprints of the cultural practices that our fathers and grandfather espoused. It all reminds one of the metaphors that was told about "Monkey see, Monkey do" There is a cultural parallel between the limping at the conservancy and the way the *Orror* community members are copying other communities' traditional practices. This has left the senior elders asking

the present-day Sowe, *Korongoro* and senior *Kipkoimet*: Why are the younger *Error* ages sets limping under your watch? (P. 49)

Wilhelma Kalu (1981) states that marriage is impressively exposed to modernization. Economic situations in the contemporary society experience constraints which alter the functioning of important cultural values in the society. Marriage which was meant for reaction has now acquired an economic status thus losing its meaning. This therefore forced Kalu to see the need to redefine the characteristics and the functions of marriage in the contemporary society. With modernization *Koito* just like other African traditional festivals has been subjected to change. Apart from modernization, interaction with neighbouring and other communities together with religion has really affected *Koito* marriage process among the Tugen. According to Michael Chesikaw, *Koito* which was initially a communal affair has transformed into an individual affair whereby personal interests and preferences are put first. This is because formerly the choosing of a bride was done by the father of the bridegroom or assisted by the community. Currently, the bridegroom chooses a bride of his own or it can as well be the lady looking for a man to marry, this is made possible with the advent of technology. For instance, with internet connectivity, the youth can get a spouse through the social sites like in Facebook. From Kalu's assertion it is true that *Koito* has also acquired an economic status because there is the introduction of payment of dowry which was unheard of in the traditional *Koito* performance.

Mzee Kipchebet in an interview was almost shedding tears when he related how the *Koito* practice has really been despised by the upcoming generation by not considering seeking consent and blessings from their parents before starting a family. He states that today a lady and a man bear children and live together without the knowledge of their parents. A parent will later realize that their daughter or son is already having a family when his or her disappearance from home becomes suspicious. Mzee Kipchebet said that failure to inquire from elders is quite dangerous because one may end up marrying a blood relative, which is an abomination in the community.

Oral literature is dynamic. *Koito* being an aspect of culture and an element of Oral literature is passed from one generation to the next and has experienced changes over the years. Chesaina (1997: xi) states that oral literature is one of the most lively aspects of African tradition. She in addition states that if culture is susceptible to change, then it is inevitable to have oral literature in a constant state. Therefore being an aspect of culture, oral literature is

bound to change and thus it has affected the performance of *Koito* as well. Kaschula (2001: xii) notes, “oral literature exists only insofar as society allows it to exist. It is still the interrelationship between context and text, which permits it to flourish. It is not a static literature, but remains ever changing and dynamic”.

(Ogunjimi and Rasheed, 2005:36) refers Oral literature to “an offspring of culture”, and that it has always had a respectable place in people’s life as it is comprised of culturally specific interactive activities, be they visual or verbal, which constitute a continuum where people’s thoughts and actions can be shared. Traditional *Koito* performance was of great importance to the Tugen people as it acted as a unifying factor which does not seem so in the contemporary setting.

According to Shitemi (2009:87) initiation ceremonies marking transitions such as weddings, and births and other celebrations associated with planting and harvest seasons serve as mediums and platforms through which the functional features of oral literature are evident. Shitemi (2009:87) asserts that:

Oral literature is art form that has withstood the weather and storms of time; and the ravages of the convergence and divergence of cultures, languages, lifestyles and environmental dynamism. However, oral literature, being part and parcel of modes of social expression, survives over time as a genre that aptly adapts to changes and challenges. These include creation, transmission, usage, preservation and emergent orientations that require expression and commentary.

From Shitemi’s assertion, there is hope that even though *Koito* has been affected by the changing trends in the society, it cannot be lost completely as it is still practiced even in the contemporary world though in a different way. It also continues to play the role of preserving the culture of the community as it is acknowledged as an avenue through which one can transit to marriage.

Mostert and Kaschula (2010:64) in support of Shitemi’s statement argue that traditional knowledge, including oral poetry and many genres of oral literature; have been transported onto the global stage through various developments pertaining to information and communication technologies and the ubiquitous nature of the internet. Although they observe that this is a positive scenario as it opens up many avenues for practitioners of indigenous knowledge, they caution against them as their existence may bring forth threats of

abuse and the evaporation of indigenous knowledge which has served human kind for millennia. However, they still believe there is hope for the existence of oral literature in the 21st century. This clearly agrees with Mzee Chermani's assertion that with modernization, aspects of culture including the indigenous *Koito* performance may be rendered meaningless in the coming years because many individuals in the Tugen community tend to embrace the new way of life thus forgetting their past.

Sone (2001:37) adds that we are now living in the global era which is posing a serious threat to the very existence of oral literature throughout the world, but especially in Africa. Kudadjie (2006:1) maintains that "this change is inevitable; it is natural, normal and perpetual". *Koito* performance as part of oral literature has been affected by the changes that have been indicated above and it is evident that the change will always progress and it is up to the community concerned to continue upholding it or render it insignificant to them. Some of these changes for instance as a result of modernization has affected the plot of *Koito* performance such that it is now for material gain other than it used to be. Unlike the traditional *Koito* practice, the current practice has introduced the payment of dowry which was highly discouraged in the past.

Quayson (2011) calls it "normless" pastiche. No artiste shows any dignity or regard to an original work that is copied or imitated. Today in the arts, and precisely in performances, the original work is battered rather than improved. This has happened to the *Koito* performance; the original indigenous performance is of no importance to the contemporary Tugen people as they are quick to embrace the new way of performance.

Therefore, the concept of modernization in this chapter proves to have led to the excessive disregard of the Tugen traditional values related to the performance of *Koito* and in its place are the modern values and norms related to the performance of *Koito* festival. Despite these changes, all is not lost because some aspects of drama and literature are still alive in the contemporary *Koito* performance. These aspects which include; plot, costume, make up, songs, dance and music, setting are discussed in detail in this chapter. Though the traditional Tugen *Koito* festival has lost due to modernism, it has gained some aspects too. These remaining elements have been guarded by the dominant forces which have rooted Tugen culture deeply. The theory below helps us understand how modernization has influenced the performance of indigenous African festivals *Koito* being one of the affected performances.

3.2 Modernization theory

It is evident that modernization has really transformed the whole performance of *Koito* from a totally cultural and communal practice to an entire commercial and individual practice. Modernization Theory states that progress and development of a society is not where it is, but where it is going. Therefore it is true to say, no society ever remains stagnant. Traditional modernists often tend to stress that the incorporation of Africa into the capitalist mode of production was meant to leap-frog Africa into development.

(Offiong, 2001, p. 38- 39) states that modernization theory renders the customary performances as backward and hindrance to development while the contemporary performances are highly regarded. This leads to classifying traditional societies as inferior to the contemporary societies. This explains why many Tugen people are attracted to the modern way of *Koito* performance rather than the traditional because they don't want to appear backward. Apart from affecting the dramatic aspect of traditional *Koito* performance, modernization has also led to the introduction of bride wealth. This is paid in form of livestock which some people today substitute the livestock for money. This bride wealth is a symbol of appreciation to the bride's parents by the bride groom's parents and it is discussed in detail in the paragraphs below;

3.2.1 Bride wealth

Marriage is a social institution that cuts across all societies in the world. Among many African communities, marriage is accompanied by marital transactions that may take the form of bride wealth, gift exchange and sister exchange (Jones, 2011:98). The marriage payment is done in full or in installments. Bride wealth which is common in the contemporary Tugen community is given to the bride's family by the groom's family to act as a symbol of appreciation to the bride's family and the bride's clan at large. Kiprop, (2015: 15); Rutto and Maritim, (2016:59); Peristany (1964: 59) are in agreement with the above by stating that in the contemporary *Koito* performance, livestock were presented by the groom or his kin to the kin of the bride to ratify marriage. In addition, the entire bride wealth would not be the sole property of the bride's father but part of it is shared with other relatives. (Nanda and Warms, 2013: 202). This is evident among the Tugen as the *Mwaita* oil which in form of cash is shared among the clan members of the bride.

Tarugarira and Mazambani (2014: 66) states that with the introduction of the cash economy, the bride has become progressively commoditized. It degenerated into a fundamentally

commercial transaction between generations of males as women became bartered goods. As the cash economy became increasingly important, to the survival of households, and village elders started to manipulate the bride wealth system. This is the reason of hiking the bride price among the Tugen people as some would wish to get more wealth as a result of their daughter getting married. More money is demanded for bride wealth in cases where the bride is well educated and earning a living as well. Among the Tugen of Baringo, four heifers are given to the bride's parents as a compensation for the upkeep especially when the bride was young. The heifers should be mature to symbolize that the groom is already a grown up and ready to take care of his family without relying on his parents. *Chepng'aibai* is given to the mother of the bride by the mother of the groom. This symbolizes the appreciation for the sacrifices the mother made in raising her daughter. Furthermore, *Mwai* oil which symbolizes cash in thousands is presented to the bride's kins. Thus all the forms of bride wealth are substituted with money as the contemporary Tugen people view presentation of livestock a backward affair. "A working lady usually fetches between sixty to one hundred thousand Kenya shillings but can be comparatively less for the less educated." (Soi, 2014:19). This is true among the Tugen people and it is a clear indication of how bride wealth has now been commercialized among the Tugen people. Two aspects; religion and education have propagated the modernization of *Koito* ceremony among the Tugen people of Baringo as discussed below.

3.2.2 Religion

Most Tugen people are Christians. Christianity was as a result of colonialism which led to the Tugen traditional religious practices. In the traditional past, the Tugen people used to go up a high place to pray to their god *Asis Sun* and continued believing in it till the onset of Christianity brought by the missionaries. Modern religion has really affected the traditional *Koito* performance. For instance, there are songs which are no longer sung today because the contemporary Tugen people view it as a way of extoling and worshiping the ancestors or the gods. Christianity rebukes such songs as they believe that there is only one deity to be worshiped and that is God. Those who still embrace the singing of the traditional songs are regarded backward and idol worshippers especially by the staunch Christians in the contemporary Tugen society. Aspects of Christianity are evident in the contemporary *Koito* performance for instance in the song below which alludes to the bible a verse in Mark 10: 9 which is, "Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Kikiser eng Mariko taman koitet sokol
Ichek che kakituyo, komabestoichi
Kotou tumtab Abraham koweche Sarah
Kosulda anyun ng'atutiet
Asai anyon tumtanyo
Kongoi kiptaiyat amu saramek che kerkei
Jeiso labkeiyetab tainyon
Mi taitab kelyekyuk
Amuu wendi kosuldoi

Translation

It is written in Mark 10:9
Those who have been joined no one should separate
He initiated the union between Abraham and Sarah
And the law was fulfilled
Thank you God for the beautiful couple
Jesus is the light of your path
He is guiding your feet
And he is going to make everything successful.

Furthermore, the traditional regalia or costume is no longer worn because it is also assumed to have a connection with the traditional gods. Instead the characters in the contemporary *Koito* performance put on modern outfit. For the ladies they put on dresses or skirt suit which are identical in colour and design while the men don khaki trousers and shirts having the same print with the dresses of the ladies. The outfit of the groom and the bride are unique; this is to identify them. Mzee Chermani states sarcastically that it is ironical that the Christians discourage the putting on of the traditional costume though they can stand ladies with very tight dresses which expose every part of their bodies and men sagging their trousers. With this Mzee Chermani states that with modernization the Tugen people have been subjected to mediocrity.

Religion not only affected the mode of dressing or costume and the kind of songs sang, but also the plot in general. This is because in the contemporary *Koito* performance prayer is the key to the whole process. An elder would say a short prayer to God asking him to bless the ceremony and bless the union between the groom and the bride. When the whole process is

complete another prayer is said to God as a way of thanksgiving for letting them conduct the performance successfully. Unlike in the past, prayer was not considered of great importance as they could neither pray at the start nor at the end of the *Koito* performance. In the contemporary age, the marriage counseling in the church or just having a religious person guiding the yet to be bride and groom on what is expected of them in marriage, has taken the place of secluding them at a place where they could be talked to by elders of the respective clans.

Serema merry making, a form of dance has also been affected by Christianity as Christians want it uprooted since it is believed to propagate promiscuity as the performers would dance holding each other and some of the moves are deemed evil. *Kipketin* tugen traditional brew which is drunk to seal the newly formed relationship between the two clans is no longer of importance. It is discouraged as it is said to render those who partake of it drunk and end up behaving in an ungodly manner. Getting drunk and disturbing others is also discouraged in the holy Bible. Instead, today the participants drink *Mursik* sour milk, soda or any other soft drink. As they share, it is believed to unite the two clans.

3.2.3 Western Education

Education has overwhelmingly affected the traditional *Koito* performance. African educational system was purely informal before colonization. Children were taught and guided by their parents and knowledge was inherently passed on from one generation to another. There was absence of classrooms or schools where they were taught mathematics, science and languages; knowledge was passed on through daily practice. Sons were taught by their fathers, grandfathers or uncles how to hunt, fight, protect and fend for their families, while the daughters were taught by their mothers how to cook and care for their families. These values were passed through practice and telling tales and stories in the open night sky, around a large fire, where the children gathered to enjoy the stories and that is how Oral Literature was preserved then. In the contemporary society, children are taught to read and write, to be confident, assertive, and independent. These children will have missed out on those important values taught in the traditional society. In relation to *Koito*, girls in the contemporary society are not taught how to relate with men, how to cook and take care of their families. On the other hand, boys miss out on the teachings on how to protect their families and be a responsible husband and father. Mzee Chermani in a pitiful tone mentions that the current youth seem so lost in matters marriage because they don't adhere to the rightful procedures

(plot) in marriage as they get married on their own then after giving birth to children they come seeking blessing from their parents. For him and his age mates, they did not go to school but they were able to get married as per the norm. Mzee Chermani blames education to have debunked crucial values and morals expected of the youth as far as *Koito* is concerned.

Traditional *Koito* performance has aspects of song and dance, proverbs, use of imagery and taking of traditional cuisine which symbolizes newly made union and friendship. Today, the younger generations miss out on these as the education they have acquired in school has taught them that the aspects are archaic and behind them. They end up overlooking them for instance they do not listen and watch the indigenous songs and dances. Instead they are always on You-tube listening and watching the contemporary songs and dances. Traditional dishes such as brown ugali and *sagik* traditional vegetables taken during the traditional *Koito* performance which is a special meal shared by the two clans to symbolize the union between the two clans are deemed of low quality by this contemporary generation. The kind of meal they like taking today is a dish consisting of fried chicken, rice and chapatti which was not taken in the past. Proverbs which were used to pass moral lessons to the bride and groom in the traditional *Koito* performance have been disregarded completely in the contemporary *Koito* performance. This becomes hard especially in cases of intermarriage between Tugen and other tribes outside Kalenjin. In such cases, if the need of using proverbs arises, they tend to use proverbs in Swahili or in English. Education has brought about globalization, which has necessitated intermarriages even with other races thus; it has really rendered *Koito* and all its dramatic and literary aspects meaningless as they no longer apply in such a setting.

In line with religion, Education has let to choosing a costume of one's choice. Most brides nowadays search online the kind of dresses they would wear during the contemporary *Koito* performance. As Mzee Chermani said, many ladies today have overrated the costume because they put on a dress which exposes most parts of their bodies in the name of the trending fashion. Therefore, it is clear that education has really affected the *Koito* traditional performance as it makes it wane with time.

3.3 The surviving dramatic and literary elements of contemporary *koito* performance.

3.3.1 Plot

Modernization has rendered some dramatic and literary elements of the traditional African practices meaningless. *Koito* being one of them has also been affected. Even though some

aspects are lost, others are improved while others are retained having been subtly spiced by modernization. Traditional *Koito* practice has got an element of plot where events are sequenced from the beginning to the end. This aspect of plot is not lost in the contemporary *Koito* performance. Instead there are changes which have taken place due to the changing trends in the society. This confirms the assertion that Oral literature which is passed from one generation to the next is dynamic. This transformation is discussed in detail in the paragraphs below.

The contemporary Tugen of Baringo County in Kenya still value the *Koito* ceremony as it is one of those events in their life that defines them. Therefore, before a girl leaves her parents' home for her husband's, a lot of steps are undertaken. These special steps in a marriage ceremony are extraordinary and peculiar to the Tugen people. Mzee Kipchebet alias Chermani stated that unlike the traditional setting where a young man spots a lady after her initiation to adulthood through circumcision, the contemporary young man spots a girl either after they finish their high school studies or even before. He stressed that in the current Tugen community, circumcision for girls is no longer practiced and therefore a man can get married to his suitable bride when the two agree on when to. With modernization, came formal education this unlike in the past delayed the youth from getting married fast as they would prefer finishing their studies then start the marriage process. Apart from the young man spotting a girl, at a community dance or simply storming a home where there is a girl who is ripe for marriage, the father of the young man would take the initiative of 'hunting' for a suitable girl for his son; this is done prior to the traditional *Koito* performance.

Today, things have really changed as the young man and lady can meet in the social media, in church, school, conferences and decide to get married and from there the young man informs his parents about the girl he wants to marry. His parents inform their relatives and they start the discussion on the suitability according to the clan. When consensus is reached about the girl's behavior and that of her parents and the entire clan, the male kin from the boy's clan make a maiden visit to the girl's home, popularly known as show-up. This visit is meant for them to introduce themselves and make their request for marriage known. When they arrive at the girl's home as Mzee Chermani says, they are welcomed at the entrance by elders chosen by the bride's family. They are ushered into a room where they sit directly opposite the bride's clan members. An elder from the bride's side will then stand and ask them who

they are. They will respond by saying “kikwan achech kesom tany” this is to mean they have come asking for a cow which is a symbol of the “bride”.

The choice of language used in the contemporary society may vary as intermarriage has now become wide spread. It is only when the members are from the Kalenjin community then the elders can pose their questions in the native language. Then immediately the lady is called upon, one elder from the girl’s side asks her a question which is, “ingen nyi bichu?” (Do you know these people?), she responds “eeh angen” (yes I know them) then the dialogue continues after the lady is asked “ara king’ololchi nta olo” (so should we talk to them?) she will respond “ang’ololchin” (yes talk to them). Then from there dialogue between the two communities kick off, having an equal number of people from both sides. The number should be even, just like in the traditional ceremony as it symbolizes blessings, favour and good fortune from the gods of the community; this is one of the aspects of traditional *Koito* festival which is retained. Dialogue is an important element of drama and it is evident here.

Thereafter an introduction is done where a chosen elder from the girl’s side stands to introduce the members present from the girl’s side. When this is done, the same elder will ask the chosen elder from the boy’s side to stand and introduce the members from the boy’s side. Later on an elder from the girl’s clan and another from the boy’s clan will each give a brief history of their respective clans. This is done to ascertain that the two are not related by blood. When that is confirmed, discussion on dowry payment kicks off. Payment of dowry is an aspect which has been brought by the changing trends in the society. In the traditional setting this was unheard-of as it is seen as a way of commodifying the girl. According to Mzee Stanley Kipkulei, the issue of payment of dowry in the traditional ceremony was highly discouraged by all means. For instance, songs were composed to satirize those parents who ask for bride price. The song alludes to the story of a man from the Tugen community by the name Kiptiren who asked for exorbitant bride price in exchange of his daughter. The song became popular in all the Tugen *Koito* ceremonies across the Tugen community.

The song is as follows:

Kialda Kiptiren cheptanyen

Kialda Kiptiren cheptanyen

Ara obong’o anee?

Ara obong’o anee?

Ara obong’o anee?

Ara obong'o anee?

Kialda Kiptiren cheptanyen

Atinye nenyoye Jepkorir

Tos abong'o iman?

Translation

Kiptiren sold his daughter

Kiptiren sold his daughter

So to whom do I belong?

So to whom do I belong?

So to whom do I belong?

So to whom do I belong?

Kiptiren sold his daughter

I have my daughter, Jepkorir

To whom do I truly belong?

Mzee Stanley Kipkulei continued to mention that in the discussion on payment of dowry, following an earlier consensus among the bride's clan members, a chosen elder will then communicate to the bridegroom's clan members on what they are expected to bring during the actual *Koito* ceremony. The essential things to be brought are; the bride-wealth in form of heifers and goats which should be an even number, *mwai* oil which is not the literal oil but it metaphorically refers to some amount of money which will be given to the bride's kin, this varies from one family to the other some will demand more depending on how educated their daughter is and some families may demand a little willingly. This has been affected by the changing trends in the society because in the traditional *Koito* performance the literal oil is given out to the bride's family. This oil is extracted from the tail of a sheep *kecha* and that is the reason it is called *mwaipokecha* oil of a sheep. It can also be a cow's fat which had been specially kept in a unique cow-horn enclosed with a lid, this is called *raal*. In the traditional *Koito* practice this oil is smeared on the bride and the groom in the final day of *Koito* to symbolize union and peace between the two clans.

The selected clan elder will explain to the groom's clan of how educated their daughter is, telling them of her profession and if she is employed. If the girl qualifies all these then the groom's side will have to pay more because it means that a lot of resources were spent on this

lady by her parents and thus the groom's clan has to repay. The dowry is given to the bride's family and it should be in form of heifers and she-goats; both should be in even numbers. Heifers and goats are given to anticipate increase in the same way that the bride is expected to go and give birth to children in her new home thus increasing the bride groom's clan. More bride wealth will be demanded by the bride's family if the bride is impregnated by the groom before the marriage process begins. This acts as a fine to be paid by the bridegroom and it is in form of goats for the bride's kinsmen.

In cases where the bridegroom's clan men are not in agreement with the bride price they are expected to pay, they get into negotiation. Conflict which is a dramatic element is evident at this point as the two clans will have to disagree to agree by the end of the day. The conflict can get so heightened to an extent where the groom's clan is sent outside to agree among themselves the way forward. This happens when the bride's clan is not in agreement with the offer from the groom's side. This conflict will only end when a consensus is reached; the negotiation process is fair because in the Tugen community, win-win situation is expected in such a process. When they agree, the day of *Koito* is set and the elders shake hands, then *Mursik*, Tugen sour milk, is brought which is drunk by the two clans. Sharing the sour milk is a symbol of union among the two clans as the milk symbolizes the sealing of the relationship. A meal is also shared then the bridegroom's clan men are free to leave.

According to Mzee Stanley Kipkulei an elder who has officiated several contemporary *Koito* performances, on the day of actual *Koito* among the Tugen people, the bridegroom's entourage before getting into the bride's parents compound are intercepted by a group of small girls from the bride's clan. These girls communicate to the bride groom and his clan members through songs. They ask him if he will take good care of their sister in the manner in which she was being taken care of at her home. They do not let them get in unless they are given a token by the groom as he is taking away their sister from them. When this is done, they allow them to get into the compound where they are welcomed by selected elders. They are ushered into the main house. A chosen elder will ask them who they are and what their mission is. They will respond that they are suitors and they have come for a cow which symbolizes the girl. Later, the chosen elders from the bride's clan get into the room and receive the bride price as agreed earlier during the show-up. *Mursik* Tugen sour milk is shared between the two clans as a sign of friendship and love between the two clans.

A meal is also shared by the two clans as a sign of union and friendship between them. Thereafter, the elders join the people outside in the remaining part of the ceremony. An elder from the bride's announces to the crowd that the marriage bond has been established. Married women will then escort the bride from a secluded place to the arena where the ceremony takes place. They sing along as they escort the bride with her group of friends all covered with *lessos*. The bridegroom is asked to identify the bride from the group. If he manages to identify her, he is really applauded and songs are sung to praise him. If he does not, he is fined and pays some cash. This is how far modernization has corrupted the minds of the people to always think of material gain. This was said by Mzee Chermani feeling so agitated. Thereafter, the chosen members from both clans introduce the relatives to the bride and the bride groom. There will then be speeches from both clans concerning the main characters of the day; the bride and the bridegroom. After that, small girls are ushered in to sing for the bride and the bride groom; they are given enough time to do that as they can sing up to five songs. When they are through, women from the bride's clan request the bride and the groom with their team mates to move forward to be dressed. The other ladies are also given gifts such as a *lesso* as the groom and his friends are also gifted. Due to modernization, there is introduction of cake cutting which was not there before. The bride will share the cake with her clan members but not with members from the groom's side. This is a symbol of thanksgiving to her people. Gifts are also given out in form of utensils and lessos to the clan members and relatives of the bride. The gifts are from the groom's side; this is also a symbol of appreciation for taking care of the bride who has now belonged to the groom's clan. Vote of thanks is moved by an elder from the bride's clan then a prayer is said before the groom and his clan members together with the newly acquired bride who is now a wife set to their homes. The bride starts a new life at a new home.

3.3.2 Costume and Makeup

In terms of costuming, a great transformation has taken place. Unlike the adorning of a goat skin which was evident in the traditional *Koito* festival, the characters who include the bride's and bride groom's team dress in very expensive identical outfit which is made from a particular fabric which can be a kitenge or silk. The type of attire put during *Koito* contemporary performance is fashionably designed with modern styles. The characters, who are involved in music and dance, perform with ordinary clothes, probably because the

materials for traditional costumes are expensive, or because they deem them backward. Others do not put them on due to unavailability of the materials and to some, their religious beliefs do not allow. Kobilu during the interview was spiteful towards the contemporary costume as she mentions how the dresses worn by the bride and her team mates are a replica of what is being advertised in social media platforms and they are inappropriately made as it exposes their bodies. She went ahead to say that this can promote promiscuity and immorality.

In traditional Koito performance, the suitor puts on *sonai* beads around the neck, *ngemertin* ear rings which hang, *chabas* bangles on his wrist and *sonai ak narya* beads fixed on goat's skin worn around the forehead. *Twolion* traditional bell is tied on the suitor's right leg and *kipkurkurion* jingle bells is tied around his left thigh. The bride in the *Koito* traditional performance puts on *uroi* two goats skin one on her torso area and another from her waist going down. These *uroi* have a special name; *koliko*. The *koliko* is decorated with *siger ak sowoi* beads of different colours which hang and so produce pleasant sounds when she moves. This identifies her as the bride because she is the only one who puts on such.

The bride's ears are pierced and *towoik* ear rings made of silver which should be four in number are fixed starting from a small one to a big one. Her neck is decorated with *sonai* beads of many assorted colours to bring out her beauty. On her upper arm are *sonai* beads of different colours and on her wrists are *tobokon* bangles which are in three layers. The same *tobokon* are also worn on the fingers. The legs are covered with *titirwo* bangles which are in two layers. *Legetyo or momos* is worn around the waist to keep away hunger. The bride when she is preparing to leave for her new home is given a special stick *sintiit* which is highly decorated. It acts as a symbol of authority in her new home. All these were used to promote Tugen tradition. From the interview with Mzee Chermani he decried about modernization and how it has eroded and led to the neglect of the local styles and modes of adorning the body.

In the *Koito* traditional performance, Mzee Stanley Kipkulei reported of how the *coissure* of the groom was braided long hair that had been given sparkling red ochre. The bride on the other hand, would keep her hair naturally short or her natural hair is plaited without adding any artificial hair. Around her head were beads of different colours which bring out her beauty. With modernization came different and many hairstyles for ladies. In the contemporary *Koito* performance, the bride and her maids decide on a hairstyle suitable for

them. They can decide to braid their hair using artificial hair, they can fix, weave or even applying gel, all these to enhance her beauty on that particular day. Unlike the past performance where different hairstyles and mode of dressing was used to show the age and status of individuals in the community, in contemporary times, people wear any style that suits them most.

Make-up on the other hand is crucial in the contemporary *Koito* performance especially for the bride and her maids. They put on artificial make up on their faces. Unlike the traditional ochre on the bride grooms face, the men in this case put on modern make-up on their faces. The make-up used include items such as bronzer, concealer, contour Powder or Creams, eyelash Glue, eyebrow Pencils, eye Primer, face Powder and face Primer .The above have replaced the traditional make-up used during *Koito* performance.

3.3.3 Music

There is a significant difference between the traditional *Koito* ceremony and that in contemporary. For instance, recorded music was not evident in the traditional *Koito* festival instead songs were sung to set the mood. In the contemporary *Koito* festival, music is used to set the mood of the day alongside songs. The music is recorded in compact disc then it is played. The songs sung by elders alongside the vigorous dance evident in the traditional *Koito* performance is replaced with slow moving songs sung by small girls and women. Today, Tugen people play recorded music and videos of *Koito* at the comfort of their homes unlike in the past when the traditional songs were sung only during the actual *Koito* and not in any other setting. The same *Koito* song could never be recorded in the past due to lack of recording materials and also they could not wish to contaminate their culture by bringing in western ideas.

With the global impact of modernity, modern Western musical instruments and music are evident in the contemporary *Koito* performance. The musical instruments used include: audio player, piano, keyboard, guitar, trumpet and violin. These threaten the traditional *Koito* performance because it overshadows the singing of traditional songs. Most *Koito* performances today play recorded music by some renowned Kalenjin artists who include Mwalimu Kendagor in his song “*Lakwani bunu koin*” (The child from Koin)

Lakwani bunu koin

Cheptab oret ake

Newendi oret ake

Kou ye kimwa chibo keny

Ateb nebo kot ake

Manemekei ak kot ake

Tebi kou yeu koi

Akirip inye koing'ung

Translations

This child from the other home

The daughter from a different clan

Who is now headed to a new home

Just as it was said by elders

The behavior of a particular home

Is different from behavior of another home

Behave the way people there behave

Then take care of your home

Another artist whose recorded music is played in the contemporary Koito performance is Jackson Lelei. The most played song is *Iyoni ng'o Tumi* (We are in agreement with the wedding)

Iyoni ng'o tumi?

Iyoni

Iyoni chepyosok, boishek, kabikoi, kapsande

Iyoni

Asai iyoni

Iyoni kole nee?

Iyoni

Iyoni kole woi

Iyoni, asai

Iyoni.

Translation

Who is in agreement with this wedding?

We agree

Women, men, bride's clan, groom's clan do you agree?

Yes we agree

How do you agree?

We agree

Agree by saying *woi!*

We agree

Finally is Maureen Jeruto *Otoroch Lakwet* (Greet the Child)

Tumdo nyo ongele anyiny ooh

Otoroch lakwet, asai

Chebabai

Kele anyiny ko anyiny, nebo iman ooh

Otoroch lakwet, ooh

Chebaibai

Translation

Our wedding is so sweet

Greet the child

The happy one

It is sweet, truly sweet

Greet the child *ooh*

The happy one

3.3.4 Imagery

Mzee Kipchebet in an interview said that the Tugen traditional community had a number of signs and symbols used especially for instruction to the younger generation. Symbolic objects such as *sintiit* special stick given to the bride by her parents as a sign of authority have lost meaning as they are now used by all kinds of people. Furthermore, the sound of *twolion* bell in the evening that communicate that a suitor is visiting a certain family to ask for a bride is no longer of any significant, today the same sound is just any other ordinary sound.

Even number in the traditional *Koito* had a great significance. In the contemporary *Koito* performance, any number can be used. Even number is a symbol of blessings, favour and good fortune. For instance, the gourds for carrying traditional brews had to be eight and carried by eight people. The taking of this traditional brew was a sign of union between the

two communities. *Sinendet* a twig is wrapped around the gourds. This twig is a *koroshon* sanctified twig, this symbolizes the purity of the whole process of marriage as the bride and groom are also expected to be pure; they should be virgins. In the contemporary *Koito* performance this is unheard of as people have embraced modernism. Kobilu an interviewee expressed her contempt towards the contemporary performance by mentioning that, “today the bride’s family prepare a cake to be shared during the *Koito* performance. This cake is assumed to have been prepared by the bride and it is symbolic as it expresses the bride’s appreciation to her clan members and also a way of bidding them farewell. This cake is not given to the groom and his clan members.” Mzee Stanley adds that defying the customs as seen through the contemporary *Koito* performance is a risk undertaking as it annoys the Tugen ancestors.

3.3.5 Character and Characterization

In terms of performers, in contemporary *Koito* performance, commercial performers are hired to perform. These performers can travel as far as from Nairobi or Nakuru to come entertain the audience and make the performance lively. This was unheard of in the African traditional performance. For instance, Mwalimu Kendagor had been invited to one of the *Koito* performances I had attended. He was the master of ceremony and he was also given chance to perform his wedding songs.

Apart from the performing artist and master of ceremony, the main characters are the chosen elders from the two clans who will be in charge of speeches and any activity to be undertaken by the two communities. The bride and the groom together with the maids and the groom’s friends are also part of the characters. Parents to the bride and groom together with relatives play a role in the performance of contemporary *Koito* performance too. Through an interview with the bride and the groom, they participate in singing and dancing when called upon by the artist of the day, women or the young girls. They also act as role models as they should conduct themselves in a way worth emulating by the younger generation. They are not given chance to talk to the audience throughout the performance.

Clan members of the two parties and friends are all part of the performance because they actively take part in the performance through singing and dancing. Just like the traditional *Koito* performance, the performance is communal as all the characters present take part actively in the performance.

3.3.6 Setting

In the traditional *Koito* performance, all the performance was done inside the house of the bride's father in the evening. The *serema* merry making also took part in the evening all the way to dawn in the same hut. In the contemporary performance, modern equipment like tents, chairs, tables, cameras, microphones, carpets, bouquet of flowers and decorations are available at the setting. The tents and chairs are highly decorated with the colours chosen by the bride and the groom and in most cases they match with the colours of their outfit. Therefore, the colour, which is always a bright colour, in the setting and that of the costume rhyme. These aesthetics make the setting colourful and thus setting the mood of the day. The sitting arrangement is such that the two clans sit facing each other. The bride and her bride maids have a designated tent which is more decorated than the others. The present day members of the community have already gotten used to such setting such that if those aesthetics are missing they render the arrangement of the *Koito* performance ineffective.

The traditional *Koito* performance, took place inside a hut. Huts are a rare sight in the contemporary Tugen society as most people construct their houses using blocks, bricks, and timber or iron sheets.

3.3.7 Language

Blake (2008) [8] states that language gives human beings the ability to convey intricate information on varied topics ranging from "kinship to astronomy" and to pass on such information from one generation to the other.

With modernization and its aspects such as education, religion and mass media, Tugen language has become eroded as it has been replaced with the use of Kiswahili and English languages. Modernization has led to intermarriage and because of this; the code of communication has to be switched to a common code which could be Kiswahili or English for the others to understand. Any traditional performance that is carried in another language other than its original language loses a great part of its beauty. Using another language reduces the level of identification and communication among the members of the community. *Koito* festival is endowed with these potentials and possibilities for instance in the contemporary society *Koito* can be performed in both Kiswahili and English this makes the community members lose touch with their culture. It also leaves out those who may not understand the language. From this contemporary *Koito* performance, it is evident that

globalization strips one his or her humanness this is because humanity also include being able to express oneself using one's language; language is crucial to every aspect of people's life.

According to Valdaeva (2003:379) asserts that language is affected by the advent new ideas and new occurrence and this will prompt the users to manipulate language to suit what they want to pass across to their target audience. Apart from modernization leading to many discoveries, it has affected the mode of education and religion as well. For instance, in the contemporary Tugen society the youth have greater opportunities in education and also at the job market. Through constant travel and being away from their people they tend to adopt national languages like English and Kiswahili, others even forget their native languages. And with this they also meet people from different nationalities and different tribes this can easily lead to intermarriages thus affecting the language used when the time for *Koito* performance come. The Tugen language will no longer be used in this case to allow the other party to understand what is said.

In addition, the traditional *Koito* performance makes use of proverbs and wise sayings which are no longer used in the contemporary *Koito* performance because it may be irrelevant to the upcoming generation and also to the members of the other clan especially if they are not from the Tugen community.

Lastly, change in language is evident in the songs sung and recorded music performed during the contemporary *Koito* performance I attended. Most songs performed today are in Swahili not like in the traditional *Koito* when they were performed in Tugen language. For instance, in the song:

Wengine wanashangaa

Wengine wanashangaa

Wengine wanauliza

Wengine wanasema

Bomuru ni nani?

Na sisi tunasema

Na sisi tunasema

Na sisi tunasema

Bomuru ni Evans

Aee Evans, Aee Evans, aee Evans

Simama kidogo tukuone
Cheka kidogo tukuone
Cheka kidogo tukuone
Cheka kidogo tukuone
Haa mambo bado
Usipocheka, usipocheka, usipocheka
Marion si wako

Wengine wanashangaa
Wengine wanauliza
Wengine wanashangaa
lemenyon ni nani?
Na sisi tunasema
Na sisi tunasema
Na sisi tunasema
Lemenyon ni Marion

Aee Marion, Aee Marion, aee Marion
Simama kidogo tukuone
Cheka kidogo tukuone
Cheka kidogo tukuone
Cheka kidogo tukuone
Haa mambo bado
Usipocheka, usipocheka, usipocheka
Evans si wako

Translation

Some people are wondering others are asking
Who our brother-in-law is
And we say, and we say
Our brother-in-law is Evans

Aee Evans, aee Evans, *aee* Evans

Stand they see you
Smile we see you
If you don't smile, Marion is not yours
Haa this is just the beginning
Some people are wondering others are asking
Who our sister is
And we say, and we say
Our sister is Marion
Aee Marion, aee Marion, *ae* Marion
Stand they see you
Smile we see you
If you don't smile, Evans is not yours
Haa this is just the beginning

In a popular recorded song by Rose Cheboi (very nice tumdo), it is clear that the Tugen language is dimming by the day. The song is as follows;

Kakoek anyun very good

Iyaa very nice tumdo

Ongirap eunekcho

Ak kibaibaitu

Na twende chini kwa chini

Iyaa very nice tumdo

Translation

It has indeed become very good

Iyaa very nice wedding

Let us clap our hands

And be joyous

As we dance going down

Iyaa very nice wedding

3.3.8 Song and Dance

Van Pelt (1982) once observed that in many (African ethnics traditional marriage) we find the festivities with dancing and meals at the house of the bride and at the house of the

bridegroom (Pelt 1982: 206). Taiwo, (1967) also states that wherever boys and girls are in Africa, there is dancing. This is true as *Koito* performance will be incomplete without dances by women and small girls as they involve all the audience. The performers dance to the rhythm of the songs, therefore song and dance goes together. In the contemporary *Koito* performance, the dances are not as vigorous as it is in the traditional *Koito* performance. In this case the women and girls gently swing their bodies from left to right following the rhythm of the song. The dances bring enjoyment not only to the performers but also to the audience who also take part in the dance.

Akporobaro (2012) makes it clear that songs, dance, and drumming, are the purest and commonest forms of emotional, psychological, and social entertainment in the African world and in all cultures. Songs, dance, and some forms of drumming, which generate rhythmic movement, often go hand in hand, in a complex mutual enhancement and aesthetic communication. This is true as in the contemporary *Koito* performance, the climax of the performance is when the songs and dances are performed as it elicits mixed emotions depending on what the song communicates. The songs sung carry different messages; there are those which advise the bride and the groom, others warn the in-laws against manhandling the bride when she finally gets to her new home, others communicate the new roles acquired by the bride and the groom and what is expected of them. Unlike in the past where elderly men and women sing as they impart morals to the new couple, in this case for instance Mzee Chermani says that the performance has been belittled to an extent where small girls sing words of advice into the minds of new couple in front of elders; he really felt disgusted about it.

For instance, the song below “Konyit kalyet” which is translated to “Respect peace” is sung by small girls asking the bride and groom to show respect to each other and respect all members of the community for harmonious co-existence. They should also do so, so that they can be role models to the upcoming generations.

Konyit Kalyet

Konyit kalyet kaminingetab gei

Kisomok bichu aeng oboru eng kokwoni

Si kokeer che eechen

Si kokeer che mengech

Si kokeer Kipkoimet koboto Kaplelach

Kas anyun bamuru

Makimache ngalek

Chengoit tupchenyo ilenchi kole mama

Sikeussaus mama, sikeusaus mama

Kwo kole nyaistakei asiasikchi omeng'isie

Kas anyun bamuru

Makimache ngalek

Chengoit sikikuk ilenchi kole Carren

Sikeusaus Carren, sikeusaus Carren

Kwo kole I don't care

Let me go si atun ake

Kas anyun kap Amos

Makimache ngalek

Che rektoi akolongu kou usit ak sindanot

Chang lembekta ngunyuni

Chang bitina ngungunyuni

Che kikobesio kapchi

Che kikobeek kapchi

Translation

Respect peace

Respect peace, humble yourself

We ask the two of you

To be seen by the elderly

To be seen by the young

To be seen by *Kipkoimet* and *Kaplelach* (age-sets)

Listen our brother-in-law

We don't want it
When you are with your wife
You tell her mother said this and that
Then you two start disturbing mother
Till mother prefers to move out to relieve herself from your drama

Listen our brother-in-law
We don't want to hear
When you are visited by your parents
You tell them your wife is this and that
You disturb your wife Carren
Till she says "I don't care,
Let me go get married to another man."

You family of Amos, listen
We don't want to hear
Conflicting and unpleasant stories about you
We are living in a deceitful society
There are many gossipers in this society
Whose mission is to break families
And they have managed to separate families

Tumdo ne chame chitugul

Tumdo tumdonwong ×3

Ne chame chitugul

Kasanyun lemenyon meberber bomuru

Awendi clinic uko mjini

Uko mjini iite kelyekuk keratuny rastas che bo kisasa

Yeitu kaa kemoi ilenchi bomuru

Kakosan gari uwongo mtupu

Kasanyun bomuru meberber lemenyo

Awande safari uko mjini

Uko mjini kiteb Tusker, kotamne nyama choma tugul komugul

Yeitu kaa kemoi ilenchi lemenyo leta ugali tena haraka

Koibu lemenyo yeitu meza ilenchi sikuli tena sitaki

Korire lemenyo woi, woi mama, woi, woi baba akokeikei kaitanyo

Keieki chokora cheruisot eng kalbat, chemenget maisha oletokchinkei.

Komako makengung, komako maketabchi

Komaketab Jehova che kakotuya ra

Kasanyu lemenyo, ibakach ngalekcho

Chekiname kikaput akilabat kapsiasa

Tebing'uny lemenyo, akinam kikaput koboto mokombet

Akilabat kapingui

Kasanyun bomuru ibakach ngalekcho

Chekinamei mobile akiwe loching town

Ichutate istirit ituye manyanga

Kile akiro ng'o manyanga neuni?

Ilenji yes halo, ilenji may I see you

Ilenji I love you I don't have somebody

Itu kaa koskoleny, irirtos lakoik

Ilenji I don't care Fatuma is the one I love.

Salalalalala×3 akoi rani ketuye

Kasanyun lemenyo makimache yeit metak

Kekasatin ileni kotom kiyem kentunan

Kiborun ng'o oret, kichorengung ng'o mabet

Kongeten Kamarigat akoi Tereben

Kasanyun bomurumakimache yeit metak

Kekasin ileni kotom koyam atunis

Kiborun ng'o oret kichorengung ng'o mabet

Kongeten Tereben akoi Kamarigat

Translation

Your wedding ×3

Which is liked by many

Listen our sister, don't lie to Evans

That you are going to the clinic in town

When you get there you sit and gossip

When you get to the house in the evening

You tell Evans I got late because I didn't get a means of transport

(A pure lie)

Listen our brother-in-law, don't lie to Marion

That you are travelling to town

When you get there, you treat yourself to Tusker and roasted meat

Getting home in the evening you demand ugali from your wife

And when brought, you turn down, claiming it is uncooked

You leave Marion crying, regretting having left her home for your sake

She even compares herself to a street urchin who is unsure of tomorrow

It is the will of God, that the two of you are joined

Listen our sister, avoid this,

Of picking a basket and running head for gossip

Instead pick a basket and a hoe

And head to the garden

Listen brother-in-law, please don't,

Head for lodging in town

You meet a 'slay queen'

You tell her how much you love her

And that you are single and ready to mingle

Getting back home in the evening, your children are crying; they lack food

You tell your wife "I don't care I have beautiful Fatuma whom I love"

Other contemporary *Koito* performance songs sung by children are meant to stress on the bride's beauty. From this song it is clear that the bride is the pride of the whole community.

Momusmus we Leiye

Momusmus we leiye

Momusmus bik tugul

Momusmus akole

Bunu ano tibichu

Kibunu Kamarigat ole bunu Marion ×2

Kisomin tupchenyo

Ingerech kitikin

Sikonai bomuru

Kole mebo cholos×2

Kisomin bomuru

Itelel kitikin

Ngusyin kong tupchenyo

Tos tingtoi alama×2

Translation

Do not blink blink

Do not blink blink everyone

And start asking

Who are these girls singing?

We are girls from Kamarigat (the village where the wedding was)

Where Marion was born and brought up×2

We are requesting you our dear sister Marion

That you may stand and smile a bit

Our brother-in-law should know,

That you are not toothless.

We are requesting you our brother-in-law
That you may stand and glance at Marion
We want you to ascertain,
That our sister is flawless.

The above song is sung by children and it is important as it is used to caution the in laws that in case of any damage to their sister, they are to blame. Since children in the Tugen community are not given voice, they use songs to defend their sister. Some Koito songs are light and they are simply used to create rapport between the bride's clan and the groom's clan. Most of these songs are introductory songs to welcome the visitors officially. For instance the following song:

Leo, leo ni leo kuna mambo ×2

Heshima, heshima nguruma uwanjani ×2

Achechu kabikoi, achechu kabikoi, kikosengei cheptanyo

Onakten koro kitikin onakten koro kitikin, onakten koro kitikin

Kikosengei chebaibai

Otiech koro kitikin, otiech koro kitikin, otiech koro kitikin

Achechu kabikoi

Translation

Today, today is today ×2

Respect, respect to reign in the compound ×2

We are kabikoi, (hosts of Koito) we are kabikoi, we are proud of our sister

Gently step on the ground ×3

We are kabikoi (host of the occasion)

Moreover, the contemporary *Koito* performance unlike the traditional *Koito* performance, present gifts to the bride and the groom. This is done by women and small girls. The songs are therefore sung when the gifts are being presented. These include:

Ni nani tutawatuma ×3

Wapeane zawadi

Jeptumo ak jelimo ×3

Wapeane zawadi

Ongebe circle tibichu ×3

Tandaratandara mng'aro ngalechu ra

Kisome jelimo koboto jeptumo

Asikomutwech lemenyo

Konyo yu kekatkei

Iomunee cheptanyo, iomunee chebaibai

Tandaratandara mng'aro ngalechu ra

Tandaratandara mng'aro ngalechu ra

Omutun polepole

Asimarich seretion

Tandaratandara mng'aro ngalechu ra

Tandaratandara mng'aro ngalechu ra

Ango muchinei eeh ×3

Seremek che karkei

Translation

Whom should we send ×3

To present the gifts

Jelimo and Jeptumo ×3

To present the gifts

Let us make a circle girls ×3

Tandaratandara, it is all about glamour today ×2

We request Jelimo and jeptumo

To bring for us our sister

So as we greet her

Bring her slowly

Grass should not hinder her majestic moves

Tandaratandara it is all glamour today ×2

They really fit and make the two beautiful×3

They are identical twins

Finally, there are songs sung to bid the groom's clan farewell as they take the bride to her new home. They are sung by women and small girls too. They are wished well in their new home and to all visitors a safe journey to their destinations. For instance:

Farewell

Kwaheri eeh ×4

Tumeachana sasa kimwili kipekee

Lakini kiroho tungali pamoja

Translation

Goodbye eeh×4

We have parted physically

But emotionally, we are together.

From the above songs, it is clear that a lot has happened due to the society embracing modernization. As a researcher, I made the observation that regardless of the changes evident, there are some aspects from the traditional *Koito* songs which have been maintained. For instance, repetition which is evident in the traditional songs is quite evident in the contemporary songs. Direct address which is also an aspect of traditional songs is seen in the modern *Koito* songs by the use of words like, “you”, “your” “that”, “those”. Direct translation is also evident in the songs above; this communicates that there are some words which are particular to the Tugen people which cannot be translated to English because of lack of the exact word. This could also be because the use of such words is crucial for the meaning of the song and it has to be used as a way of foregrounding them. Just like the traditional *Koito* songs, the contemporary *Koito* songs are effective in conveying good morals to the bride, bridegroom and all the participants. For example, the couple learns what the community expects of them as they take up their new roles as husband and wife. The youth who are not married yet learn from them and get motivated to always get blessings from their parents and the community at large before starting a family.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has clearly depicted that the traditional *Koito* performance has been affected by modernization. Comparing the information in this chapter to that in chapter two, it is without doubt that indeed oral literature is dynamic as the *Koito* performance has changed with time. The effect is both positive and negative but from the interviews I conducted it is clear that this modernization has to a great extent eroded the Tugen culture and thus affecting its oral tradition. These changes range from: plot, songs and dance, costumes, make-up, music, language, setting, performers, and changes in belief system. Education and religion are aspects of modernization that have led to this drastic change.

Salm and Falola (2002:60) states that oral literature provides an outlet for social criticism and commentary and contributes to social cohesion. They also observe that although Western education and urbanization have lessened the importance of oral literature, it continues to thrive in many communities because of lack of printed material and because of its prominent role in maintaining traditional culture. In support of their assertion, it is indeed that regardless of this tragic change as mentioned by Mzee Chermani, *Koito* has also gained due to modernism. These emergent aspects which include playing recorded music, use of modern equipment like microphones and decorations at the setting or the arena has not only enhanced the aesthetics of the whole *Koito* performance but also makes the performance effective and lively.

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CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

4.0: Introduction

This Chapter gives the summary of the findings of the study, the conclusion and my recommendations for further studies. It asserts that *Koito* performance is both dramatic and literary as the elements of drama and literature are quite evident from the research. The chapter also gives a summary of the differences between the traditional *Koito* performance and the contemporary *Koito* performance and how the change in the contemporary *Koito* performance has affected the traditional *Koito* performance.

4.1 Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

I found out that *Koito* performance of the Tugen people of Baringo in Kenya is both dramatic and literary. This is because of the presence of dramatic elements which include: plot, setting, dance, music, song, character, costume, make-up, rhythm, audience and imagery. In the traditional *Koito* performance, the above elements work together as a unit, contributing to the success of the *Koito* performance. For instance, I observed that, without song and dance the plot will be irrelevant to the whole *Koito* performance. Moreover, costume, character, song, dance and audience contribute to effective setting of *Koito* performance, for example the *serema* merry making songs and dance are only sung during the night of *Koito* which takes place in the house of the bride's parents. Furthermore, I concluded that all the elements of *Koito* performance play an important role in communicating about the Tugen community. For instance, the songs sang communicates how Tugen people respect the institution of marriage. Youth are advised to get consent and blessings from their parents before settling down in marriage. The songs too teach the youth and the entire community the importance of upholding good morals. The costume reminds the Tugen people of their culture and thus preserving it. For example, the goat skin put on by the characters reminds them of their livestock keeping which is still embraced in the community even today. Therefore, without this traditional *Koito* performance there won't have been the best avenue through which moral values especially on marriage were passed from one generation to the next. This *Koito* performance unites the community as characters and audiences are joined together in celebration.

On the other hand, I also observed that *Koito* performance has been and it is dynamic. It has gone through transformation in terms of form and content. The change ranges from plot,

setting, costume and makeup, songs, dance, music and imagery. This change is evident in the performance of contemporary *Koito* performance. For instance, I observed that in terms of costume and make-up, a great change has been witnessed. Instead of traditional goat skin put on by the bride and groom, the contemporary *Koito* bride and groom don modern costume made from a synthetic fiber. Furthermore, the songs sang in the contemporary *Koito* performance have borrowed words from other languages like English and Kiswahili opposed to the traditional *Koito* performance which were performed purely in Tugen language. I discovered that, this has rendered some important aspects which were best delivered in the Tugen language insignificant. It is therefore evident that a lot has been lost to modernization though some other elements of *Koito* performance have been gained. For instance, in the contemporary *Koito* performance the setting is more colourful compared to the traditional *Koito* performance and this creates more beauty and helps in boosting the mood of the performance, making it more effective.

In addition, it is true that *Koito* traditional performance is both drama and literary and with modernization some of its aspects have been lost and others improved with the advent of formal education and modern religion which have led to new aspects like payment of bride price. Even though a lot has changed with time, *Koito* will always remain relevant to the members of Tugen community as it is still recognized as one of the important performances among the Tugen people as it not only unites and preserves their culture but also acts as an important tool for moral teaching in the community. In conclusion I observed that both traditional and contemporary *Koito* ceremony cannot be dramatic and literary without performance.

This study cannot claim to have exhausted everything that pertains to *Koito* ceremony. I found areas of further studies which cannot be overlooked. I recommend a study on the dramatic and literary aesthetics of Tugen circumcision ceremony and that setting up of a museum that will preserve materials from *Koito* performance be considered for purposes of preserving the Tugen culture. For instance, the symbolic stick given to the bride by her parents, *sintiit* should be preserved for the generations to come and for further studies be it in Literature or Anthropology. Costumes and makeup such as *uroi* should be preserved too. I further recommend that a Tugen Centre for Research and Documentation be established so that more research on the *Koito* festival and other festivals can be carried out and documented

for purposes of preserving the culture and contributing to the body of literature and knowledge in general.

Finally, I urge other scholars, such as historians, anthropologists, sociologists, folklorists, philosophers, among others to carry out more research on *Koito* festival, and aid in spreading information about the festival and its importance within Tugen land and beyond. Linguists should also carry out a research on *Koito* festival to explore how language is manipulated to suit such an event. This is because language is an important aspect in the *Koito* performance.

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APPENDIX

Koito- Tugen traditional wedding ceremony

Sintiit- Special stick given to the bride by her parents, it is a sign of authority in her new home

Uroi- Goat skin worn by the bride

Orror- Tugen sub-dialect who reside in the Northern part of Baringo county Kenya

Sowe, Korongoro and Kipkoimet- Kalenjin age sets

Mwai- Oil

Chepng'abai- Gift presented to the mother of the bride by the groom's kin

Asis- Sun

Serema- Traditional Tugen singing and dancing with a unique rhythm and tune

Kipketin- Traditional Tugen brew

Mursik- Tugen sour milk

Kumyo- Ugali

Sagik- Bitter vegetables

Tany- Cow

Kecha- Sheep

Mwaipokecha- Oil extracted from the tail of a sheep

Raal- Traditional container made from a horn of a cow; it is used to store oil

Twolion- Traditional jingle bells

Ngemetrin- Traditional Tugen earrings

Chabas- Traditional Tugen bangles

Narya- Traditional Tugen beads fixed on cow skins

Koliko, Siger and Sowoi- Traditional Tugen beads worn by the bride

Tobokon and Titirwo- Tugen traditional bangles

Legetyo- Waist band worn by Tugen women to keep away hunger

Sinendet- Special twig wrapped around the gourds for carrying the traditional brew

Koroshon- Sanctified twig

Maiyweek- Kalenjin local brew

Kiror- To direct

Mabwaita- Family altar

Koibo Boi- A special stone on which old men sit on

Motiryot- Best man

Kiisyet- Small basket for storing food

Siroino- Hut for the young men

Kekirei- taboo

Kiprili- A traditional ritual carried out on men before they are allowed to marry

Kinta- Breast

Kaptich- Cow's pen

Kimoso-Monkey

Mokombo- Hoe

Tulwet ab Kony- Mt. Elgon