

Title: Mwomboko and Music Traditions of the Agikuyu of Murang' a County

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Abstract:

This study focused on analysis of the content and style of mwomboko music to determine influential factors for its assimilation within the Agikuyii of Muranga County. The study sought to find out the factors which could have led to the survival of mwomboko music genre even after other neo-traditional genres had disappeared. To do this, the study specifically analysed the rhythmic, melodic and structural attributes of mwomboko in context of Agikuyii music traditions. The textual content of mwomboko in order to expose the meanings of the messages it embodies. The role played by mwomboko within the socio-cultural setting of the Agikuyii community. The study sought to find out factors that have influenced the survival of mwomboko among the Agikuyii. The study employed the descriptive research design. Relevant information was gathered by reviewing literature related to the study. The reference materials were obtained from Moi Library, Kenyatta University, Kenya National Archives, Nairobi University Institute of African Studies, Bomas of Kenya, Kenya Institute of Education Library and KBC Library. Relevant journals, periodicals were also used. The study location was within Murang'a County since the County is one of the areas where mwomboko began. The study used questionnaires which comprised both structured and unstructured questions. The questionnaires were effective tools for obtaining important information on the role played by mwomboko and the textual content. An interview schedule was used which enabled the researcher to collect information concerning the historical and developmental aspects of mwomboko. Participatory and nonparticipatory observations were made in order to record what was observed during data collection. This was in relation to the features that characterise mwomboko and the style of performance. A sample of 45 members from three existing dance troupes, namely Kamune, Kangema and Miikangii, a District Cultural Development Officer, 3 Community Development Assistants, 2 elders from each location were utilised in the study. Purposive sampling, random sampling and snowball sampling methods were used to select the respective samples. Data from the field were analysed through qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. Research equipment included a still camera, a tape recorder, notebooks and writing pads. Music was transcribed in Western staff notation and analysed while song texts was transcribed and analysed to establish the emerging patterns visa-vis the thematic content embodied in the song text. Responses from the interviews and questionnaires were summarised. The findings were discussed and conclusions made before proposing pertinent recommendations and suggestions for further studies.