

## **Impacts of Colonial Policies and Practices on Kamba Song and dance Up To 1945.**

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**Abstract:** Song and dance are powerful cultural medium in any society. This is especially so in countries where other forms of communication and cultural expression, such as written word are not yet fully developed. The history of many developing countries where colonial domination was evidenced indicates that the colonized people were always able to express themselves through song and dance in complete defiance of the oppressor. Song and dance was used not just as a preserver but also a transmitter of history. This paper seeks to assess the impacts of colonial policies and practices on Kamba song and dance up to 1945. Due to the view of the colonizers that the Africans were primitive and barbaric the colonial masters introduced policies which favored them. These policies led to a definite change of the content of Kamba songs sang at that time. In order to accommodate the changes to the environment, culture, political and economic life of the community, several changes were experienced at the time. This paper present the findings from the study that was conducted on the Kamba of eastern Kenya and shows that over time the community evolved dynamic song and dance styles that responded to the changes within their midst. This paper hopes to contribute to scholarship in terms of the key contribution of Kamba song to the historical transformation of society. It will help scholars expand their knowledge and perspectives on African cultural studies, especially creative and performing arts. It would hopefully sensitize other researchers to realize the fact that African song and dance have dynamic aspects what can be studied like any other aspect of culture.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Kamba community expressed their feelings and thoughts through song and dance. The singers were specialized and the songs were rich in content and form. Kamba song had utilitarian function as they were used in every vital part of life, such as childbirth, initiation, marriage, death, among other events. Song and dance among the Kamba community had far more important role in the daily life than it is in our lives. Song and dance was part of their everyday work, religion and various ceremonies that were held by them. Mwikali (1990) observes that the importance of cultural pride and loyalty to the community was emphasized in social activities, improved consciousness and encouraged appreciation for Kamba traditions. Kamba song and dance was a bonding agent that inspired the Kamba community to reflect on their past and present conditions. Ethnic and political identity developed and song and dance helped in ritualizing this process

When the Europeans invaded Kamba land, the community was bound together as an organ. The community life was regulated by rules, customs and traditions handed down from generation to generation. The welfare of the community depended on the observation of tribal taboos and rights (Mwikali 1990)

The coming of Christian missionaries and colonial masters had a great impact on the community's song and dance as they perceived the community's customs and beliefs as old and retrogressive. They introduced their own policies which they expected the community to follow without questioning. With the introduction of western education and religion, Kamba traditional practices were watered down as the community struggled to adjust to the new system of government, economy, religion and education. This greatly eroded Kamba song and dance as well as other traditional practices. These policies included;

### **II. CHRISTIANITY**

The coming of the Imperial East Africa Company in 1889, and the subsequent British rule, saw a burgeoning of missionary activity. The East Africa Scottish Mission opened at Kibwezi and the independent Stuart Watt established himself at Ukambani. Later in 1895, the Africa Inland mission came in to Ukambani. The missions encountered numerous misfortunes. The missions were decimated by famine and a number of missionaries were killed in raids. The Kamba people conditioned to regard every stranger as an intruder, having had experiences with the Maasai tribe and the British settlers, they did not embrace the strange white people. But through the protection of the British Sub-Commissioner Ainsworth, Scott and his team found a fine site to settle

and build their thatched houses. By the first annual meeting of Africa Inland Mission in October 1896, Scott and his team installed missionaries in four locations: Nzau, Kangundo, Sakai and Kilungu.

It did not go well to the Europeans with the kind of unity the Kamba had through their traditions, customs, rules and regulations. The Christian missionaries perceived most of the Kamba traditions and culture as primitive. Their seriousness and respect they accorded to their religion proved it too difficult for the missionaries to win souls to Christianity, something that irritated them to an extent of cutting one of the community's *ithembo* tree (shrine) at Machakos where the community members used to go to worship.

There was a serious fight between the Kamba and the colonizers who insisted that the Kamba religion was demonic and witchcraft was the key aspect of their religion and hence the community was in need of knowing God. That provoked the Kamba people even to react more. Elders and religious specialists held a meeting which sought to curse those who participated in the cutting of the shrine. Every aspect of Kamba life was religious hence it was an abomination for the colonizers to interfere with their way of worship.

There songs were melodiously sang accompanied by vigorous body movements which made the missionaries and the colonizers conclude that these were the socializing agents. To counteract the Kamba religion, tradition and culture, the missionaries introduced western religion to the community for instance by setting up churches in Kamba land example at Kalamba in Makueni County. The Kamba people did not readily welcome the religion. The missionaries opted to appeal to the government for security. This subjected the Kamba to untold harassment and abuse from the security officers who viewed the Kamba as uncultured. Consequently, a group of Kamba people majorly women and children defected their traditional religion and adopted Christianity. Those who embraced Christianity got a chance to enjoy other privileges accompanied with the new religion. For instance, the children of the converts could acquire western education. Also the parents were assisted to construct tin – thatched houses something that made the preservatives of the African religion get humiliated (Kioko 2012).

The expectations of the missionaries was to have the Kamba fully follow their ideologies without questioning. Africans did not buy such ideas because they wanted to partly embrace Christianity and incorporate the African religion, culture and traditions. The missionaries on the other hand advocated for total transformation hence chaos with the Kamba who in turn sought to establish independent churches and schools where they could carry on their cultural practices as well as express their faith.

Since song and dance was the key uniting factor among the Kamba, the missionaries and the colonizers had to get a way to make the Kamba feel involved and their talents and love for song and dance not interfered with. Therefore, the missionaries opted to introduce their own music which was used to brainwash the Africans in order for them to change their culture which was deemed as uncivilized and barbaric by the missionaries (Kenyatta, 1965). The content of the music was far different from what the Kamba used to sing. Some of the people received these 'goodies' inform of musical instruments and indoctrinated Christian music and dance industry of the Kamba. Those who converted to the new religion (Christianity) demonstrated to the rest of the community that the new music was more entertaining and enjoyable than the traditional ones. This they did by faking the excitement derived from the improved African music and dance. (Mbotela, 1956).

Being partly unresponsive, the Kamba community forced the missionaries to recognize that the community had their traditions and culture which bound them together and was as important as that of the missionaries. The community became adamant to the teachings of the missionaries. The community opted to resist the missionaries. On the other hand the missionaries realized that it was nearly impossible to convince and subject the Kamba to their religion and their way of life. The Kamba culture and tradition was entailed in their song and dance hence the only way the missionaries could win the Kamba people was through incorporating the Kamba songs in their teachings and church services. The missionaries accepted to modify the Kamba song and dance in order to trick the community in the foreign religion. Through this modification, the missionaries adopted the rhythms of Kamba song and dance and composed church songs. This was the start of the change of Kamba song and dance. Though influenced by the foreign religion, Kamba people could sometimes go back to their traditional way of life. But at long last the Kamba song and dance started varnishing with time (Mwikali, 1990)

To make music more appealing to the community, the missionaries introduced new musical instruments that replaced the traditional instruments like the flute. This was done in condition that the singers would entertain the missionaries. This was a way of making the African singers always engaged not to think of the exploitation which they were facing. Therefore the community was neglected from being entertained by their sons and daughters. The new songs were praising the whites and their culture. Kamba song and dance was slowly fading away.

The Kamba had to be trained on how to play the new musical instruments. The singers devoted themselves to knowing how to play the new musical instruments as it was seen as fashionable. To compel the Africans to conform into Christianity, missionaries introduced the sol-fa tonic into the Kamba traditional music. This was to help in translating the Kamba songs into hymn songs which could be used in worship. (Kinyatti, 1980). The new musical instruments were used even in playing the traditional songs, something that eliminated

the traditional musical instruments. Due to these improvement in musical instruments, Kamba song and dance started changing and adopting western style.

### **III. COLONIAL EDUCATION**

Missionaries introduced western education in Kenya. The greatest focus of the missionaries was to spread Christianity but they were compelled to start schools as a means of converting Kenyans into Christianity. They had first to deal with illiteracy in order to spread the gospel. This is because the Africans could neither read nor write. They could not also communicate in any other language other than their mother tongue of which the missionaries could not understand. In 1908, the missionaries formed a joint committee on education that later became the Missionary Board of Education, representing all protestant missions in the British protectorate. The first mission school was established in 1846 at Rabai, near Mombasa. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the colonial administration took over control of African education from the missionaries, the goal of education changed as the government was after producing a semi-educated labour force to develop the colony's economy and provide chiefs and headmen to help in administration( Kapiyo, Kiruthu and Muma ;2011).

According to Adwar (2005), up to 1925 the colonial government in Kenya offered technical and agricultural education to the Africans living in Kenya as they argued that Africans had no mental capacity to pursue higher education and only required industrial education – which would prepare them for jobs such as clerks and office messengers. Responding to this bias, the Africans not only clamored for better opportunities but also set up independent schools to give quality education to their people.

Other than biasness in the quality of education offered, the colonial government and the missionaries set a policy that was to compel the Africans to convert to Christianity if their children had to acquire the mission education. The Kamba felt that their children were discriminated due to the culture of the community. The children who were allowed to attend the missionary schools were those whose parents had converted into Christianity, something that locked out majority of to-be students. The community reacted by setting up independent schools.

The period between 1940 and 1963 had significant improvement in education sector. This was initiated by the experience of the ex-soldiers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war which totally changed their point of view on education. The soldiers got to realize the importance of formal education rather than just being a tool of colonialism. Also through interaction to different people from different countries, the Kamba soldiers shared their experience of colonialism with other fighters from outside Kenya. The Kamba soldiers got to hear the views of the other fighters which really boosted their morale to press on in quest for independence.

Due to the growing demand for mission education, tougher school rules and regulations were put in place. The mission education was aimed at inculcating Christian doctrines to the learners. Those learners who attended the mission schools were not supposed to attend the traditional ceremonies as well as 'wathi'. This had a great effect to Kamba song and dance since it was passed from a generation to another through the word of mouth hence when one generation was cut off then the future generation would be affected.

Due to competition for white collar jobs, Africans were excluded from secondary school education. The Africans started independent schools to compete for jobs this meant that less time or none was allocated for song and dance since those who went to school were committed to school work.

There was a total difference between the European form of education and the Africans. The Africans education was much better because it dealt with the person as an individual and developed him as a whole being. It was a rounded form of education putting into account the character formation within the family circles, then with the whole local group and within the whole tribal organization through a course of initiation ceremonies with its numerous groups. The white man's education was tailored to equip one with skills that enabled a person to serve in offices (Nzewi, 1999). Learners hardly had time for traditional song and dance.

#### **Abolishment of female genital mutilation**

According to Mwikali (1990) the Kamba traditional way of life, a woman was presented as a tool of entertaining man. Women were seen as weak and subject to men. This left the Kamba women under the mercy and care of their men. This exposed women and girls to a lot of torture and suffering in the hands of the men something that they accepted without questioning. A girl at the teen age was ready for marriage, something which undermined the power of girls and women to make a choice on who to marry since theirs was to wait for whoever presents the expected dowry to her family. This made Kamba women always desperate since it was like a 'second slavery' in form of marriage. For one to get married as a woman, you had to undergo female genital mutilation failure to which one was treated as an outcast. After circumcision, the process of healing was hectic and very painful due to the discomfort one had to undergo. This could also bring about complications when one was giving birth. The missionaries' and the colonizers joined hands to deal with such instances which saw one gender disadvantaged as well as being inhumanly treated. The missionary advocated for civilization and banning of FGM something the society was not ready to adopt.

Other than female genital mutilation, the missionaries also encouraged monogamous marriage something that was highly rejected by Kamba men. To ensure that the above practices were watered down, the missionaries banned Kamba song and dance in order to do away with solidarity. The colonizers further used divide and rule method in Kamba land so as to deal with Kamba unity

Those who maintained the African religion and way of life were barred from accessing western education and other goodies. This compelled them to start independent schools in order to promote the fast dying African culture. 'Non believers' wanted to preserve their culture as it gave them identity. Of major concern to them was female genital mutilation which was the key point of difference with the missionaries. They felt that having their girls uncircumcised would lead to immorality in the community. In fact they also went ahead and started the independent churches which could accommodate both the African culture and tradition as well as embrace Christianity. The Europeans did not want to hear anything about Kamba song and dance since it was seen as an advocate for Kamba culture. There arose ill-feelings between the two groups that is the converts and the preservatives on which culture was acceptable to the community. This led to slow death of Kamba song and dance.

#### **IV. LAND POLICIES**

A number of land acts and ordinances were passed by the legislative Council to empower the settlers to take up most arable lands. Land allocation was based on racial lines in the highlands, Asians and Africans being disregarded.

The following are the main policies that were enacted.

- 1) The Indian Acquisition Act (1896) empowered the authorities to take over land for the railway, government construction and public utilities.
- 2) The East African Land Order in Council (1901) defined Crown Land as "all public land which is not private". The government could take any land at will, sell it or lease it for use by the settlers.
- 3) The Crown Land Ordinance (1915) provided for a land registration scheme for settlers. Crown land referred to land occupied by reserved for Africans who could be evicted at any time. Africans' land could be sold, leased or simply carved out for settlers. Farm sizes were increased from 5,000 to 7,000 acres.
- 4) The Kenya Annexation Order in Council (1920) announced that Africans were tenants of the crown even in the reserves.
- 5) The Native Lands Trust Ordinance (1930) stated that African reserves belonged to Africans permanently
- 6) The Carter Commission (1932) fixed boundaries of the white highlands, leading to population pressure in the reserves as all Africans were removed from the highlands and resettled in reserves.
- 7) The Kenya Highlands Order in Council (1939) fixed the boundaries of the white highlands and permanently and exclusively for Europeans.

The above land policies emphasized European land ownership at the expense of other races. The African land tenure system was replaced with British system. As the quest for land continued, the Morris Carter Commission was set up to fix the boundaries of the white highlands following a report by the British commissioner to Kenya between 1900 and 1904 after his visit to various parts in Kenya, where he observed that the land was viable for agricultural activities (Kapiyo, Kiruthu and Muma; 2011). He appealed to his home country to grab such an opportunity by coming and settling in Kenya and start plantation agriculture. He called for white settlers to alienate Kenyans from their lands and push them to the reserves. This further affected the Kamba song and dance since the community could no longer enjoy their freedom. The settlers were considered as a special group which needed special treatment. Their interests were primary and important than those of the Africans. The colonizers needed finances for smooth running of the country, administration and maintenance of the newly constructed Kenya- Uganda railway. This called for the settlers to actively engage in agriculture to offset such costs which proved to be too expensive to the British taxpayers (Kapiyo, Kiruthu and Kimori, 2011).

Other than the above costs, the British also wanted a source of cheap raw materials for their industries. This compelled the settlers to start big plantations since the land was made available to them by alienating Kenyans. Labour was also readily available. Africans were forced to work in European farms. To ensure that the Kamba people could not boycott to work in the settlers farms, the colonizers introduced taxes to the Kamba. Since their lands had been taken by settlers the only way to afford the taxes was through working in settler farms to get few coins which could enable them pay their taxes. Moreover, kipande system was also introduced which barred members of the community travelling beyond their geographical regions. This really helped the settlers with cheap labour all through.

To avoid any form of competition, the Kamba people were banned from the growth of cash crops i.e. sisal and cotton. Colonial land policies further encouraged the settlers to actively practice agriculture. Because of their bitterness, the Kamba people composed songs to express their pain since after being pushed to the reserves which were never productive, life changed. Things were no longer right, poverty, suffering and misery characterized the life the Kamba people lived.

The situations in the reserves forced many Kamba people to look for alternative settlements. Those who settled at Europeans farms became squatters. This meant they were allowed to live on the farms in return for labor, Kamba people also sought paid employment in returns since the majority of them were reluctant to work on Europeans farm. These affected Kamba song and dance in the sense that many people relocated to towns and others were locked up in the white farms such that they could not perform the song and dance.

By 1930s there was pressing need for more land to graze the Kitui and Machakos Kamba livestock but most of the land could be utilized for the purpose was already in the hands of the Europeans. Due to overcrowding there was serious soil erosion. In response the colonial government introduced a number of measures to correct the situations including de-stocking. The Kamba expressed their ill feelings towards the same through songs and dances

In order to control soil erosion, the Liebig's group established a meat processing plant which was meant to destock the Kamba region. The colonial government started seizing the Kamba animals to sell them to meat plant below the market price. This action provoked the Kamba people into forming the Ukamba members association (UMA) in 1938. The party was led by Muindi Mbingu (chairman), Elijah Kavula (vice-chairman), and Simon Kioko (treasurer) among others.

According to Kiruthu, Kapiyo and Kimori, on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1938 UMA wedged a protest march against the colonial government towards the forceful destocking measures. On the D-day, a group of Kamba men, women and children walked with their animals to Nairobi to protest against destocking of their animals. This move was initiated by Muindi Mbingu and lasted for six weeks as the members of the community demanded to see their governor their tolerance and perseverance moved the governor to honour their request and demands. UMA members adopted a unique mode of protest from other political organizations by mobilizing the whole community through song and dance in a peaceful protest against the government. The Kamba song and dance was seriously being affected as the community members had no enough time to practice it.

## **V. FORCED LABOUR AND TAXATION**

The Kenya's pre-capitalist forms of production were subjected to a historic break in the autonomous development: in the terminology of time they were literally 'opened up'. They became part-economies, externally orientated to suit the dynamic of a capitalism which had been imposed upon them from outside.

The colonial masters introduced settler and corporate production as the mainstay of the colonial economy. The state forcibly seized land, livestock and other means of production not only from the Kamba people but also other communities. The state provided the settlers and corporate capital with the necessary infrastructural, agricultural and marketing services and credit facilities. Above all, the state created, mobilized and controlled the supply of Kenyan labour for capital. The state required massive supply of labor to build and maintain the colonial economic infrastructure and the administrative bureaucracy.

The British used five main policies to secure and control Kenyan labour. First they established reserves in 1926 and as Africans lacked sufficient land in their reserves, they had little choice but to migrate to the European farms in search of jobs or stated another way. Through the initial act of alienating land to settlers, the colonial state deprived some Kamba of their means of production and laid the basis for the entry of Kamba in eves increasing number into the wage labour force. Those forced to work could either abandon Kamba song and dance because they could not get time to practice or perform nevertheless, they could compose songs to address their issue. An example of such songs includes:

*Twina kimako kingi na woo ngooni syitu*  
*Nundu wa thina wa mumaita*  
*We musungu nuu kuu kwitu,*  
*Nutunoete, atuvana miunda, oosa yu mbesa syitu*  
*Ona kukunanwa nituukunwa*  
*Mundu mweu thi na ndukauke ingi*

*We are worried and angered*  
*Because of the problems we are undergoing*  
*Problems brought about by our enemies*  
*Who is a white man?*  
*We are tired of you*  
*You have taken our lands, even our monies you are taking*  
*You even beat us*  
*You white man go and never come back*

Second, the British imposed taxes. The government imposed hut tax and poll tax, together amounting to nearly twenty shillings, the equivalent of almost two months of African wages at the local rates. But taxation was a double edged sword: it encouraged peasant commodity production as much as wage employment. Thus to keep Kenyans from competing with the British farmers, the government imposed the third means of encouraging Kenyan labour; forbidding them to grow the most profitable cash crop.

Fourth was forced labour. Forced or compulsory labour was widely used and became institutionalized. This was period when massive supplies of labour were required to lay the very foundations of the colonial economy: rail lines and roads had to be built, dams and ridges constructed, administrative centres erected and forests cleared and settler farms established. Forced labour inevitably became the most reliable means of securing labour. Few government officials or settlers ever questioned the need for some form of labour coercion. For many it was even an act of benevolence, a necessary ‘shock therapy’ for people deeply mired in idleness and indolence. In 1918, the Resident Native Ordinance was passed which demanded that all payments be made in form of labour and not in cash. This was to compel Africans to provide cheap labour to their master.

Fifth, with thousands of Kamba people migrating to look for work, the colonial government introduced the pass or kipande system to control the movement of African workers and to keep track of their employment histories. The, kipande system was first passed into law in 1915, implemented by 1919, and abolished in 1947. For a period of 18 years all African men leaving the reserves were required by law to carry a pass or kipande that recorded a person’s name, fingerprint, ethnic group, past employment history and current employer’s signature. The kipande became one of the most detested symbols of British colonial power though the Kamba people had little recourse but to carry their identity all the time; failure to produce it on demand brought a hefty fine, imprisonment or both. The move was to suppress the Africans from rural-urban migration and ensure continuous supply of cheap labour to the white settlers. These policies had a great impact to Kamba song and dance as majority of them had been enslaved and they could not get time to compose and perform Kamba song and dance.

The society members were kept busy through forced labour which saw majority move from their rural areas to urban centers. Those who opted to escape from the untold suffering went on to form bands in towns which they used to express their feelings as well as to appeal to the other members to unite to fight the British out of their land and expose the bad deeds of the colonizers.

Those who could not avoid the forced labour equally had songs which motivated them in their work and express discontentment with the wages and the mistreatment they underwent. They could sing to express their hopes in the near future after they get back their freedom. They expressed their worries and fears with the direction the colonizers were taking against the once bound together community.

Due to the busy schedule the Africans had after being subjected to forced labour, holidays and weekends became the only occasions to enjoy song and dance being performed by different bands. This was different from how things used to be because song and dance was performed round the community life. Preservatives of the African culture and tradition viewed the converts and African singers who were incorporated in this bands as outcasts and traitors who had sold the community identity to the intruders cheaply. Many this “traitors” were hated and branded names which described their character as malicious and self-centered people. As time went by the negative notion of the society to the converts and the singers who sang western music started fading away since those who excelled in this music became well off in the community.

According to Mwaura (2016), Song and dance well reflected the culture the Africans expressed through time, space and complexities of human relationships such as health, sickness, work, joy, life and death. The Kamba sang songs that expressed their resentment towards colonialists. All these noble roles and traditional music were being watered down by the missionaries and the colonial administrators.

Since the Europeans could not comprehend Kamba songs because they were sang in local language and in idioms, the missionaries appealed to the colonial government to ban Wathi which was the most popular song sung by the Kamba. It brought people together from different clans both young and old. The missionaries felt threatened by the role of wathi to the community. There followed strict measures to any Kamba song and dance as wathi was totally banned.

### **First World War (1914-1918)**

Following the outbreak of the 1<sup>st</sup> world war, the able bodied Kamba men were forcefully recruited by the British army to fight on the side of the colonizers. This meant that the community was rendered defenseless inserting a lot of fear and worry among the women and children who were left behind. Other than loneliness and sorrow, the Kamba women were also overburdened by both agriculture and domestic activities. Women and children sang sorrow songs to express their bitterness and sufferings from loneliness. Such songs expressed their anger as they remembered their men who were suffering outside.

Such songs included;

*Nzui mbai, nyamu ngengani eee*

*Kavaluku nyamu yi vunguuu eee  
Kavaluku ni kamawui nani kakengani  
Ni kokie na kiw'u na ila nzoka ndaasa yawetiwe ni syokimau  
Nikesi uvungu wi muyo  
Andu maitu nikamatwaie kauni  
Angi mowawa na tutina atumia na anake  
Ma kusunga mbai....  
Yiya woo, kyeva na thina munene kwitu*

*The dangerous animal, the cunning animal  
You hare (white man) you are cunning  
You hare you are a liar and cunning  
The hare come through the waters and the long snake prophetess Syokimau prophesied of  
The hare has sweet lies  
Our men have been forced to participate in the war  
Some are dead others are injured  
We don't have warriors to guard the community  
Ooh pain, worries and suffering has been now part of us*

African men who had gone to participate in the war sang various war songs to motivate themselves as they fought their 'enemies'. When the war ended, the veterans from their fighting grounds moved back home victoriously with their heads on high. They came with knowledge of various war songs and dances. The songs which were maybe in Europeans and other languages were adapted and later translated to their various themes of the Kamba war songs. This included a song like the one below which promoted patriotism.

*Match forward together we win  
Together we win divided we fail  
Forward match soldiers  
Together we win fight on  
Fight with determination we shall win  
Forward matching forward match soldiers*

Those men who managed to come back from the war were weak and unhealthy. Due to the exposure to new environment, new diseases emerged which affected the fighters. In the villages such diseases spread, something which gave the community a period of great misfortune and suffering. To keep the community strong and united, song and dance was the only source of comfort.

Due to the outbreak of a new and contagious disease among the community, famine struck Kamba land. Both animals and human beings suffered the consequences. Song and dance was the only source of consolation as they sang 'that at the end all will be well'. Kilumi dance was done to which was made to appease the ancestral spirits who were thought to have been offended. Rituals and ceremonies were done which was accompanied by song and dance.

### **Second World War 1939-1945**

According to Killigray and Plaut (2010), due to the unfavorable colonial land policies, there came a prolonged drought in 1939-1940 and accompanying crop failure, known as the "famine of the Italian". This encouraged the Kenyans from agricultural Kamba of eastern Kenya who had not traditionally joined the European army in large numbers to enlist. Those left behind suffered severe famine that led to the weakening of the community. Mostly women and children faced the adverse repercussions of the drought which led to death of both human beings and animals. Songs were used to express their feelings as they associated the famine with colonialism. It was seen as a bad omen due to the intrusion of the land by the foreigners. The songs composed reminded the Kamba people of the prosperity of the community prior to colonialism. Such songs include;

*Nthi nzeo ila Ngai watuathi, mie nayo  
Ila twikaite ithyi na maaithe maitu na muuo na wendo  
Tutiima na tuiketha,  
Tuyaakosa leu na tutaamanya yua nikyau  
Indi oila mundu mweu wookie kuu  
Nitwonete nai  
Mbua niyaekie kua na leu wathela  
Syisya indo situ, na syana syitu ni syuuwaiwe ni nzaa*

*Mundu mweu wi muumani*

*A good land that God blessed us with  
We have dwelt in it with our forefathers and peace and love always prevailed  
We tilled the land and it was productive  
We never lacked food and never before did we know what famine was  
But when the white man came things changed  
Rains have stopped and we could not produce food  
Our children and animals are dead due to lack of food  
Cursed you are you white man*

During this period, Kamba people joined the African rifles in large numbers. However, racial segregation in the British army meant that they were commanded by white officers. The Kamba were not able to rise above the rank of the warrant officer. They served in the successful east African campaign against the Italians, as well as Madagascar and the Burma campaign against the Japanese, alongside troops from West Africa. Kamba also served in the Royal Navy and some individuals also served in the Royal air force.

The economic mobilization in Kenya land during the drought period led to unprecedented level of urbanization in the country, swelling the population of Mombasa and Nairobi by as much as 50%. The urban environment favoured the growth of nationalism. The urban centers enabled different communities to interact and overcome tribal prejudices that prevailed among some groups. The Kamba in particular discussed on the fate of the community in the hands of the colonialist. A slogan was formed that brought the Kamba people together. The move saw many Kamba people who by then had fled to the towns pull together to chat the way forward for the community. These people could meet in social halls and angrily discuss the issues affecting the community.

According to Ness (1992), the Second World War caused panic among the Kamba people, this is due to the experience of the first world. Many ran away into the bush to hide and those outside the region started streaming back home apparently fearing being conscripted into the war as carriers corps.

This did not make the colonizers to sympathize with the Kamba but instead forcibly recruited them to the army. This had a great impact on the community in that, source of labour to the community went down hence production being affected of both agriculture and local industries. Women had to assume the role of the men in the absentia of the men. In remembrance of the members of the community who had been taken away for the war, the members of the society sang songs. Consequently, soldiers who came from the war introduced new songs which they had learnt during the war period. Such songs encouraged the soldiers to fight on as they were determined to see into it that they were successful. Other than the songs, they also adopted new dancing styles and musical instruments which changed totally the nature of the Kamba song and dance. The songs they commonly sang were nationalistic songs which expressed their loyalty and love for their country. Such songs motivated and united the citizens during the war. 2<sup>nd</sup> world war veterans on coming back home shared their experiences with the locals compelling the community to compose nationalistic songs which were usually sang in kikamba language. Dances were introduced which were very different from what the community was used to. Due to this changes the new songs and dance styles were highly welcomed in the community.

By this time Kamba soldiers returning from the Second World War were much less likely to accept to degrees of racism which had existed in the country before the war. This was because of the exposure and interaction with other people from outside the world. Those soldiers who came the war bitter as they argued that “we Africans were told over and over again that we were fighting for our country and the democracy and that when the war was over, we could be rewarded for sacrifices we were making. The life I returned to was exactly the same as the one I had left. No land, no job and no representation, no dignity. (Kanjio Muchai Kenyan KAR veteran).The war veterans became agitated for the sacrifice never appreciated. The soldiers opted to mobilize the community through songs in order to advocate for their rights and sensitize their kinsmen that united they could overthrow the Europeans.

Education was another key issue which was emphasized on by the war combatants and soldiers to the community. Education was seen as a key factor in the struggle for independence. To start with the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war fighters took their own children to school something which awakened the community from the deep slumber of ignorance due to illiteracy. This is because the community took them as a role model who were to illuminate some light to the community as they had been more exposed than the other members of the community. This increased the number of learners who enrolled for formal education.

Through education, western culture was well felt, as the system of education denied learners time and chance to participate in the community’s ceremonies and practices. The learners spend much of their time in school hence no time to listen to the grandparents educate hence since song and dance was part and parcel of the teachings then being negatively affected. Also learners who attended mission schools were totally barred from

attending to anything traditional. This really affected the community's song and dance as well as other Kamba traditional practices and ceremonies (Parry, 1994).

## VI. CONCLUSION

Colonial policies had a great impact on Kamba song and dance. For instance, colonial land policies reduced Kamba people to squatters on their own land. As a result majority of the landless men sought an alternative method of living by moving to urban centers to seek employment. This affected song and dance as they could not participate in it and also it overburdened the women with both domestic and agricultural activities. Hence could not devote their time for song and dance.

Colonial education and Christianity were fully against Kamba song and dance as the teaching of Christianity viewed Kamba song and dance as evil and satanic. In fact the missionaries branded the Kamba traditional religion as devilish and immoral. The youths who embraced Christianity and colonial education turned against their own culture. They could not participate in song and dance. This impact led to slow death of the Kamba song and dance.

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