

Samburu Pastoralists' Utilization of Vital Resources for Survival in Colonial Kenya.

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Abstract

This study examines the resources vital for the survival of the Samburu pastoral people in pre-colonial Kenya and their use. The study covers the period from 1895 to 1961. The study discussed the Samburu traditional land tenures systems and exploitation of resources. It examined Samburu subsistence production. This study used two theories to achieve the set objectives. It utilized Carl Marx's theory of political economy, which postulates that it is common ends that governs human relations. It is economic structure also referred to as substructure that provides the basis for the society on which the superstructure is built upon. The constituents of the superstructure are found on the analysis to reflect the interest of the dominant class. The study also uses Articulation theory of producing modes of production as advanced by Lonsdale and Bruce. Articulation theory is relevant to the study as it links the Samburu pastoralist pre-capitalist subsistence system of production to British Colonial State capitalist system of production. This study used both primary and secondary sources. The method selected to carry out this study was qualitative research method. The semi-structured questions were used in the interview. Data was analysed, categorized according to topics and subtopics. It was interpreted, written down and finally presented. The research findings will contribute to the historiography of pastoralism in Kenya.

Key Terms: Colonize, Overgrazing, Nomadism, Resource, Pastoralism

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Introduction

The Samburu trace their origin from Egypt, Nile valley and between Sudan and Ethiopia. They split from the Maasai around L. Baringo. The Maasai migrated southwards while the Samburu moved to the North. They comprised nine clans. The Samburu today live in Samburu central, Samburu North, Samburu East, Laikipia, Marsabit and Isiolo. There is no agreement on the age of nomadic pastoralism (Smith, 1992, pp.126-133). Theories of origin revolved on archaeologists' findings and Mythical Theories. There is evidence of the domestication of cattle in Africa by 9500BC in the Sahara. Domestication came into effect seven thousand years BC in the Near East. It developed in the second millennium BC in Kenya. There were excavated bones of cattle at a site in Ileret around L. Turkana 4000 thousand years ago.

The Samburu base the origin of their nomadic pastoralism in their popular myth, which advocates that the Samburu were dropped down from heaven together with livestock at Kisima. Many studies on pastoralism in the world and in Kenya tend to portray nomadic pastoralism as being in a backward stage of development (Fage, 1995, p.426). It is seen as backward in the sense that the features of the nomadic pastoralism in livestock breeding and economic production are characterized by low income and large expenditure of labour. Production, experience and knowledge connected with livestock breeding were handed down from generation to generation in practical and identical form. Pastoralists were accused of following the herds and flock (Spencer, 1966, pp.1-20, 140).

Lawrence Krader advocated that nomadic pastoralism mode of subsistence, combine both symbiotic and parasitic relationship with environment (UNESCO, 1959, pp.483-506). The herds supply herdsmen with

food, clothing and transport and the herdsmen protect herds and flock from predators and winters. Spencer maintained that plants are integral part of life among the Samburu as they provide fodder for animals, food, tools, building materials for people and medicine for both people and animals. A large part of the Samburu country is semi-arid and prone to prolonged drought (Bogomov, 1959, p.4). They had mastered their environment and landscape that is characterized by irregular and unpredictable rainfall and recurrent drought (Roy, 1992). Illius and Connor observed that nomadic pastoralists had developed over the years certain strategies of adapting to their immediate environment in finding water especially where water was scarce and grass was in plenty. Ecological disasters in the last three decades of the nineteenth century depopulated the

Samburu lands to an extent that they almost lost their uniqueness (Mungeam, 1966, p.39). The catastrophe attacked cattle the backbone of the Samburu pastoral economy (Waweru, 2006, pp.126-138). The disasters included; cattle plagues such as rinderpest, pleura-pneumonia, and outbreak of insects swarm like locust invasions. There was outbreak of small pox, measles and malaria. The effects resulted in mass destruction of cattle, ruins of thousands of the Samburu and whereabouts of many is still not known up to date. Some sought refuge among the Rendille, the Turkana, the Elmolo, the Dassanetch and the Borana. Their strength during the advent of colonialism was in fact not stable. Juul (1994) on the other hand advocated that the Samburu exploitation to land existed. He noted that, rights to exploitation were acquired by a virtue of territorial affiliation. They depended on environment to the whole network of customs, institutions, ideas and culture. Colonists considered nomadic pastoralists as people who overgrazed pasture and ruined environment.

British colonial officials assumed that pastoralists, Samburu included had no idea on individual land ownership. They argued that the Samburu were not known for valuing the environment, which they destroy through overstocking. The central argument is that the Samburu customary land tenures, grazing rights as well as their knowledge and skills of mobilizing stock and environmental resources to sustaining their survival have been ignored. Their very rich experience in herding, conserving and protecting vegetation and use of provisions of nature were totally ignored. The Samburu attachment to cattle as well as their cradle ancestral land of Lorroki Plateau where the first Samburu appeared or dropped down by God they called Nkai was ignored and overlooked by the dominant Colonial State. The situation led to violation of trespassing laws on Laikipia white ranchers' farms, breaching of rules governing grazing schemes and struggle over the possession of Lorroki Plateau.

The Samburu pastoralism life style has customary land tenures. They have very rich knowledge of their immediate environment as well as herding experience for sustainable development. Such knowledge and experience has not been addressed sufficiently. This study is a historical inquiry into the origin of the Samburu attachment to nomadic pastoralism, traditional land tenures systems, resources used (grass, water, forest, wildlife resources, indigenous knowledge of the environment) and pre-capitalist subsistence production. The study interrogates the Samburu struggle strategy for survival in the face of ecological disasters that fell upon them in the last three decades of nineteenth century. It inquires Samburu steady resistance against colonial domination and its oppressive system of forced labour land alienation, forced taxation, creation of native reserves,

forests reserves, grazing schemes and registration regulations in the first half of twentieth century

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review traced the origin of the Samburu and their migration waves. This review concerns with evolution and fluctuations of land tenures systems as dictated by time, population explosion and demands for lands (Ochieng, 1990, p.36, 230). It highlights conditions necessitated the pastoral occupation of large land tracts. The review investigates the Samburu traditional land tenure systems, resource use and control, pre-capitalist subsistence production as well as Samburu pastoral knowledge of exploitation and tapping of nature resources. It interrogates ecological disasters that rocked the Samburu population and shattered their pastoral economy in nineteenth century and their adaptation strategies before all these were subjected to historical break by the Colonial State. The review elaborates how repressive colonial policies of establishing the colony affected the Samburu traditional livelihood.

The review examines capitalist colonial policies of transforming the Samburu pre-capitalist subsistence production using Carl Marx's theory of political economy that put emphasis on the economic structure of the society also known as substructure. The study also uses Theory of Articulation of producing modes of production to link the Samburu pre-capitalist subsistence production to Capitalist system of production of the British Colonial State. The Samburu might have originated from Egypt. Theories of origin of Nomadic Pastoralism, concentrate on the work of archaeologists. Harrison claimed that rules for use of land were developed when man moved from hunter and collector stage to pastoralism (Smith, 1992). He maintained that nomadic pastoral rangeland caused the customary tenure regimes to be perceived as

virtually none existent. On traditional land tenures, Unruh maintained that pastoralists depended on availability of land tracts, forests and rangeland where they have freedom of movement and access to natural resources on which their subsistence depended upon (Chang, & Harold, 1994, pp. 1-23). It is land, which provides pasture, water and minerals. Ndagala on the other hand, advocated that customary land tenure, included regulations on access to herbaceous wood, vegetation and wild life existed and observed (Adrian, 1997, pp.10-14).

Paul Spencer in the gerontocracy of the Samburu maintained that there is no explicit ownership of the land in Samburu. On subsistence economy, Spencer observed that subsistence production of the Samburu revolved around livestock (Spencer, 1965). He noted cattle, give most in return. Goats and sheep provide meat in dry season. Donkeys were used as pack animal. Krader advocated that mode of subsistence of the herdsman combined both symbiotic and parasitic relationship with environment (Krader, 1957, p.499). Herds support herdsman with transport, milk, hides, meat and goods for exchange with other economies. On the other hand, herdsman protected herds from predators; supply them with grass, water and leaves. Commercialization of pastoralism was a partial shift in production goals from meeting subsistence goals and needs to producing for the market (Svensson, 1987, p.5).

The Samburu had relations with surrounding societies therefore; different types of exchanges and market existed (Harrison, 2004, pp.1-40). At the end of the 19th century, pastoralists were at Centre of the regional network of exchange. Illius and Connor advocated that pastoralists had developed over the years, certain strategies for finding water in their environment especially where water is scarce (Lees, &

Bates, 1973, pp.187-192). Such areas were important for pastoralists as they contain water, which was crucial during dry season. Samburu observed the land scape followed the topography and associated drainage lines to the foot of the slopes where water penetrated the soils and stored near the ground surface if geological circumstances are right (Helldorf, 2010, pp.16-52). Water sources in dry season are man-made wells. The nineteenth century ecological catastrophe depopulated the East Africa lands including Samburu country (Pankhurst, 1966, p.2). It occurred in the form of cattle plagues, insects' swarms such as locust invasion and meteorological droughts. There was a devastating attack of small pox, measles amongst others. They resulted in the mass destruction of cattle, decimation of thousands of the Samburu that shattered their pastoral economy to an extent that it was difficult to imagine.

Concerning the dawn of Colonialism Helving Helldorf, maintained that Berlin conference institutionalized European Imperialism (Duder, & Simpson, 1992, pp.442-460). That resulted in scramble, partition and occupation of Africa by European powers in search for resources that were required by the European industries. They wanted land to settle their surplus population, market for industrial goods, export of capital and search for prestige amongst others (Fraktin, & Roth, 2006). In Northern Frontier District Samburu included Colonial agents' exercised massive power (KNA/PC/NFD/1/1 NFD, 1917, p.89). N.F.D. was ruled and bullied through coercive institutions. Peter Waweru maintained that pastoralists had no part to play in colonial economy as pronounced by Sir Charles Eliot the Commissioner for the East Africa Protectorate who sounded the death knell of pastoralism. His opinion became the guiding principle in formulation of policies in pastoral areas. The Colonial State therefore, alienated Laikipia from the Samburu.

The Samburu were driven out of Laikipia Plateau in 1921 and there was an attempt to drive them out of Lorroki Plateau. Settlers required cheap African labour (Spradley, 1990, p.40). They pressurized Colonial State to extract African labour for them. Chiefs abused the extraction of African labour as they oppressed their opponents at the expense of extracting labour. Boundaries for chiefs' jurisdiction were drawn to ensure firm control of African labour and collection of tax. Two forms of labour emerged to meet settler and state demands. There was migrant contract wage labour and squatting on estate. There emerged the enactment of Master and Servant Acts, which provided penal sanction for desertion. Claude Hollis, the first Secretary of Native Affairs 1908 gazetted rules to secure better treatment of workers and ordered withdrawal of coercion of employers an issue that went against the wishes of white settlers. There was fear by Government Officials of losing the confidence of the tribes. From the Center for Media and Democracy (n.d.), African pre-capitalist production and Samburu in this case was subjected to historic break in the terminology of the time that they were opened up. Kerven advocated that British administration in Kenya did not recognize grazing rights and resource use. The policies were systematically applied starting in 1935 when Provincial Commissioner announced grazing control in Lorroki Plateau and limitation of cattle to 40,000 on Lorroki Plateau.

British introduced and imposed on the Samburu who were operating at subsistence production a capitalist system characterized by high degree of centralization, appropriation of local resources and means of production (Lunenborg, & Beverly, 2008, p.1). There was enforcement of strategies for protection and exploitation of natural and human resources. In 1935, 282,200 acres of the Lorroki forest were demarcated

and completely closed for grazing. In 1936, Samburu elders reacted against the British policies of grazing control and stock limitation. In response to Samburu elders protest, The British administration in 1950 elaborated plan to expanding grazing control. In 1952, the cattle were sold in quota system fixed at 9000 per year in Archers' Post slaughtering machine. In 1950, administration made an effort to provide permanent water supplies. By 1953 Samburu District had nine boreholes and 13 functioning dams. In 1954 grazing control, spread all over Samburu District. In 1956 grazing control was restructured under the name of grazing scheme. In 1961 one third of the Samburu District was covered with grazing schemes. Severe drought struck Samburu country between 1959 and 1961. The community complained and petitioned against the controlled grazing. They defied grazing rules. In response, the Colonial State surrendered to the elders' demands and grazing control was abolished.

METHODOLOGY

This research is descriptive analysis that offers a detailed description of the past events utilizing social concepts. The Samburu nomadic pastoralists inhabit Samburu Central Sub County, Samburu East Sub County, Samburu North Sub County, Marsabit, Isiolo and Laikipia Counties. The research used secondary sources that were the description of events by persons other than eyewitnesses. The secondary sources for this research were obtained from libraries in Kenya, online sources, journals newsletters and primary sources. Primary sources also include archival materials from Kenya National Archives as well as Samburu District reports of labour recruitment, taxation, politics, veterinary, intelligent reports and court records. The data collection procedure used is qualitative search due to its strength in inductive approach. The study involved 35 people. Eighteen

from Samburu Central, one from Samburu North, nine from Samburu East five from Marsabit one from Laikipia and one from Baringo. The study used the so called the interview schedule to collect data. Data collection and analysis were done simultaneously. The procedures involved data organization, recording and categorizing themes. Identification of themes, categories and patterns enabled me to evaluate, analyse and determine adequacy, credibility and usefulness of the information. Interpretation was done in the form of antecedents and causes in the historical causation. Causes were interpreted in light of the motives of the participants involved. I cited the significance and implication of the findings. Description, analysis and explanation led to the statement of the theory under the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Samburu Traditional Land tenure Systems

Land tenure is a manner in which individuals or groups in the society hold or have access to the land including conditions under which such land is held (Adriansen, 1997). It is a process of acquiring, allocating and possessing land. Land authority that was tribal, clan heritage and family controlled Land allocation. Customary tenure regimes included regulations on access to pastures, water, herbaceous, woody vegetation, minerals, wild fauna and flora. The system suited ecological and social conditions. Land rights were enjoyed collectively and equally. Paul Spencer claimed that there was no explicit landownership amongst the Samburu (Spencer, 1965, p.2). Some anthropologists of the western descent refused deliberately to recognize the existence of the traditional tenures systems since such an admission and evidence could have been used to justify socialism, communism and bar compulsory alienation of land and eviction of Africans from their ancestral land.

Western anthropologists were foreigners indoctrinated in western legal anthropological philosophy and sociological concepts therefore; they could not examine alien systems without resort to western conceptual glasses or perspective. Western scholars treated African history up to contact with European as homogeneous so that written History does not consciously and systematically explore the actual development of ideas and institutions in pre-colonial Africa. Well known anthropological studies such as those of (Evans-Pritchards, 1940; Spencer, 1965) overlooked many developments of Africans History (Martin, 1990). The institutions of the pastoral societies were analysed in the vacuum of time and space. Their systems of production were not described in a regional and historical viewpoint. The pastoralists were people described in terms of their obsession with livestock. Pastoralism was also described as cultural commitment and not as a food production strategy.

Suruan heights in Ndotto Mountain belong to Loimisi clan of the Samburu. Lekadaa, a man of the Ltarigirig age set (1865) of the Loimisi clan gave a river to his daughter married by a man of the Lolmodooni family of the Lorokishu clan as a reward. The river was known as Nkidi. Letiuwa family claimed Ntasate region as the ancestral land. Lenkurukuri family possessed Musei area in Ndotto Mountain. Lenkeuwa got an area known as Keleswa in Ndotto Mountain. Mount Kulal was shared between Lmasula and Longeli clans. The northern region known as Arapal belongs to Longeli clan while the southern region of the mountain also referred to as Katap belongs to Lmasula clan (Ntoisa Leorkupa, 2017). In Matthews Ranges, Lekangu family of the Lgwenya sub clan of the Suiyei clan sold Loosikiriashi River for a donkey to Loiborsikiriashi sub clan of the Lngwesi clan (Lolpus Leakono, 2017).

In Marsabit, the following areas have been inhabited and considered ancestral land by the Lorokishu clan they include; Ulaula also known as Lolmolog, Karare, Leiyai, Kuturuni and Songa (Nkuten Lekadaa, 2018). In Mount Ngiro, South Horr side of the Mountain belongs to Lkirina sub clan of the Lorokishu. Uwaso Rongoi region was shared between Surtoi and Lotimi sub clans of the Lmasula. Lare orok and Tuum sides of the Ngiro Mountain belong to Lmaraato sub clan of Lmasula of the Samburu. Loonjorin side of the Ngiro Mountain was the property of the Lparsivia sub clan of the Lmasula. Majority of the Samburu lived under communal tenure system prior to colonial intrusion especially those who lived in the plains and plateaus since they had cattle and flocks in thousands. The Samburu traditional land tenure systems existed until they were disrupted by the colonialism (Leramo Lelenkeju, 2017). They lived in Laikipia, Lorroki, Marti-Ebarta, Wamba, Marsabit, and Isiolo. Such open access tenure system suited them since they required collective responsibilities to defend their rangelands from hostile neighbours. They also required military strength to extend their rangelands.

Water and Grass Resources

In order to cope with dry spells, the Samburu set aside some regions for dry season grazing. They called the regions *paga* (closed). In dry season, the elders authorized the digging of wells. The water sources were modified by digging wells and opening up of water ponds. Water sources were shared and used with owner permission. Stocks in dry season were divided into sheep and goats, subsistence herds (cattle) and surplus herds (cattle) to ease control and management. Access to grass and water was well coordinated based on clan, region and family. The elders and warriors institutions enforced rules. Regions and clan alliances allowed accession to territories of each clan; region and family. Clans were

divided into localities. Each locality had elders' council to coordinate use of resources access, control and settling of disputes. They enforced customary laws in regards to access and use of the resources. Localities were divided into residential areas or settlement and households. The elders of the settlement granted grazing and water access to herders passing temporarily through that area.

The elders of the settlement enforced the access rules and forbade construction of the permanent settlement in their areas of jurisdiction. Samburu over the years had developed strategies of finding water in the environment whenever there was scarcity. Spurs of wild animals, appearance of elephants to an area, the changing of the colour of some weaverbirds, roaring of ostrich, urinating of forelimbs by males' goats and production of peculiar voices from cattle throats at night were indications of impending rains (Lesurunka Lenkaaka, 2017). The production of certain sounds by frogs, laying of mouths to the ground by camels while standing and appearance of some insects known as sanampurr in the rivers valley were also indication of impending rains. The presence of thick grass, baobab *adonsomia digitala*, ever green acacia, Loiragai and Itungai trees were indication of underground water (Helldorf, 2010). The Samburu also depended on some stars for prediction of promising future and impending of disasters. The stars were Lakira dorop (short stars, Lokirai (that crosses the sky), Saneneg (light star) and Nkakwa (small clustered stars).

In a situation that could result in a severe shortage of the grass and water resources followed by massive death of animals, Morans were sent by elders to find out areas that were not severely affected by the drought Kipeeko Lesoipa (2018). The reports of the findings were presented either at Naapo or at

specified place near the settlement preferably in the loip (shade). The grass and water search mission was known as *Saa* (singular) and *Saki* (plural). Naapo was an enclosure in the middle of the Manyatta. It had fire maintained by elders. It was a routine for the elders to meet in the Naapo in the evenings and in every morning to discuss the affairs of the community. It was where visiting elders from other settlements were welcomed. The gate of the Naapo faced to the North. The Samburu had traditional weather broadcasting men, prophets, diviners and traditional priests/Laisi. They were involved in all decisions making processes concerning moving the livestock, migration issues and consulted in the time of war. The Samburu once in a while lived in Baringo North alongside the Pokots when Lpetaa and Lkipayang were Morans c1809-1830. My mother rebuked us not to stand like Lmarteuin lekerio (anthills of Kerio) when others were seated. By then the two communities seemed to be friendlier than they are today. It occurred that their children herded cattle together.

Unfortunately, the bulls fought. One bull belonged to a Samburu family and the other to a Pokot family (Longotorio Leparachao, 2018). The bull from the Samburu family killed the bull belonging to the Pokot. The Pokot the owner of the bull was annoyed and decided that he would kill the Samburu whose bull had killed his. The elders from both sides pleaded and persuaded the Pokot to drop the intention. The Pokot was compensated with one heifer. After some time, the Pokot went alone then killed the Samburu consequently; war between the two communities erupted. The war went on for several weeks. According to Kipeeko Lesoipa, the Pokots were almost wiped out. The Pokots lost the war. Refugees (sepe) from Pokot swamped into the Samburu villages.

They pleaded that they should be integrated into the Samburu and become assimilated (ayalaa) because they were no longer secure from their enemies after the Samburu had wiped out their fighting force. After thorough consultation, the Samburu decided that they would not assimilate the Pokots but they would make covenant (Lmumai) such that the two communities would never fight again. The arrangement for the agreement was reached. The site was identified. It was located in the Baringo North near a Mountain known as Tiate. In the agreement, cattle were slaughtered from both sides. A deep hole was dug. The blood of the slaughtered animals was mixed. The spears of some Samburu and Pokots were smeared with the blood from the slaughtered livestock (Ntupa Leparkumoi (2017). The spears that were smeared with the blood were broken from the Shafts and dropped into the hole. One stone was smeared with the blood. Each Pokot and Samburu present held that stone in his hand. That stone was also dropped into the hole. Both the broken spears and the stone were buried. Roasted meat from the livestock slaughtered was mixed then eaten by both parties.

Livestock Resources

The Samburu food production revolved around cattle, sheep, goats and donkeys. Cattle gave most in return. Donkeys were used for transport (Fraktin, 2014). Milk was the main diet for the Samburu (Fraktin, 2004). The Samburu produced surplus cattle that contributed to their use for trade, rituals ceremonies and dowry. Small stock had high productivity rate due to a short birth interlude, short gestation period and a high twins' births. The Samburu could easily depend on building up their small stock following a drought as they could salvage quickly following a drought and got traded with the large livestock particularly cattle.

When a Samburu was born, a goat or a sheep was slaughtered immediately for women to eat. The slaughtered animal was known as Moor (Lemees Lenaisulaa, 2017). The word moor is a Samburu word that means do not separate. The word means a call to God not to separate the mother and the newborn baby through misfortunes. The woman who had given birth was fed with blood from live cattle for seven days thereafter cow or a steer was slaughtered. It was called Lbuutan. The blood of the slaughtered animal was mixed with water squeezed from the chyme (fast stomach ruminal content). It was given to the woman to drink. She was assisted to vomit. When Lbuutan was slaughtered, present members of the community from that village would have their share of meat except the Morans. Several livestock were slaughtered for the woman to eat in the course of breastfeeding in the process known as abiooki ntomononi (strengthening the mother of the baby) (Lesurunka Lenkaaka, 2017). One year before the circumcision of the boys began all over the Samburu country, the Samburu gathered annually for every fourteen years. A ceremony that marked the beginning of the new age set was conducted.

A steer was taken to one of the secret groves on the top of Mount Ngiro then slaughtered (Aar Imongo). Incoming age set was given a name. The mass circumcision of the boys followed after a year. In preparation for circumcision, cloaks made of sheep skins were made for every initiate. Four months to the circumcision, the boys picked cloaks all over the Samburu country on sub clan and locality basis. They sang a song known as lebartu asking for animals to eat. Whenever they went to a family asking for a goat a sheep or a steer, they were never denied. Going round singing was also a platform for asking the elders of the fire stick a permission to be circumcised. They were also looking for strength before they set out for

gum collection journey in search for silalei (*Boswellia hildebrandtii* gum). After some weeks the elders of the fire stick stopped them. On coming back from gum collection journey, all parents with boys to be circumcised were settled in the manyatta known as Lorora. When temporary houses were completed boys led by warriors went to collect sticks for bows and arrows. On coming back, they had sheep and goats slaughtered and roasted for them.

On the day of the circumcision, the boys were sent to fetch water from Lake Kisima (Kalel Lemuruka, 2017). The water was mixed with milk from the cow and used to wet the head hair of initiates when shaving before they were circumcised then the remaining water was poured onto the initiates during circumcision. For every initiate, there must be a hide preferably from a steer, which the initiates sit on during circumcision. There were also goats' skins known as *algeseni* some weeks before the circumcision. The mothers of the initiates wore the dried and decorated skins of the goats when milking the cows that had calved for the first time whose milk was mixed with water poured onto the boys during circumcision process. For some families, a male sheep was slaughtered some hours to circumcision to get the skin on which the initiate sat on (*Ikiteuwenet*) during circumcision on top of the steer's hide. Part of the sheep meat went to the circumciser.

Payment of the circumciser was a female sheep or a goat. The initiates were fed with blood mixed with milk (*saroi*) for a week there after; every family slaughtered an oily sheep. Meat was separated from the bones. It was fried then given to the initiates to eat. Oil was also extracted from the meat was cooked thoroughly then given to every initiates to drink (Jerre Leparashao, 2018). Sponsors prepared the attires for the initiates that included headgear made of ostrich quills, weaved palm leaves round the head where the

initiates attached the birds they killed, using bows and arrowheads with round tips covered with silalei gum the initiates had collected then initiates went round the villages in the locality in groups of two, three to five where they were given sheep and goats to eat. On coming out of the seclusion, every initiate slaughtered a steer. The sponsors got their share of the meat. The graduated Morans to warriorhood got meat from right side of the slaughtered steers while the elders took similar meat of the left side of the slaughtered steers. Women, uncircumcised boys, girls, children and visitors got their share each.

After some months, the elders made an arrangement for the new warriors to go to the bush in groups of four to seven to eat meat so that they could grow well and become strong. Five big fatty steers were eaten continuously. The first two steers were referred to as of the faeces. The third steer was referred to as of the blood. The fourth steer increased meat in the bodies of the Morans. The fifth steer made Morans became emotional overwhelmed by extra ordinary shivering and fists. Moranship passed three stages before they became elders. The stages included the naming ceremony, which was the biggest, the killing of the bull and the occasion of the milk of the leaves. In the three stages each and every Moran slaughtered a steer.

The Samburu marriage involved many resources (Nkaimerri Lasakwel, 2018). The bride was provided with a new cloak (Ikila), a leather skirt made of skin (legesana), new beads known as mporro around her neck, new earrings called suritiai, beads around her head and new shoes made of skin by her family. She was also provided with three calabashes. One was called malla yonkoriong filled with milk (calabash carried on the back). Another was known as lbolboli. It was a small gourd filled with oil extracted from rikoret meat (steer slaughtered during wedding ceremony).

The third calabash was called naililiorri filled with milk given to the bride on the way to husband home. The resources provided by bridegroom family included the dowry; (eight livestock). The mother of the bride took the lion share. She got a calving cow and one sheep.

The father of the bride took only one heifer. The brothers of the bride father took other heifers while two of distant relatives of the bride's father took a calf and a sheep. Many resources were also involved in the death of a mature person who had a family, children and had died at home. When a person was in critical condition and was seen that he or she could die any time, the person was shaved (Lesopia Leaduma, 2018). The person who did the shaving was given a female sheep or a goat. When the person had died, the right leg was adjusted to the right position. The person who adjusted the leg was given a female sheep or a goat. The ground where the dead person was buried was marked before it was dug. The person who marked the ground got a heifer. If the dead person was a man the livestock mentioned above were provided by the first born son of the dead.

If the dead was a woman the animals were provided by the last-born son of the dead. If the dead was a man, who had many wives the first-born son of the first wife provided the animals. When a person had died the married sons of the dead slaughtered sheep each. The oil was extracted from the slaughtered animals; was given to the dying or the dead person. The milk was also given to the dead person saying; that was oil and milk from so and so (names of the sons) starting from the eldest to the youngest son. Only male children gave oil to the dying or dead and carried out rituals surrounding the death of parents amongst the Samburu. Before the dead was taken to the grave the dead was wrapped in a new cloak prepared for the purpose. The dead personal

properties he or she wore were withdrawn. The dead were again wrapped in a hide on top of the cloak preferably of a steer that was slaughtered and not that had died of a disease then downed to the grave.

The bereaved family mourned for some months (Longotorio Leparachao, 2018). The family members could not engage in marriage, circumcision and age set rituals. After the mourning period, sons of the dead person would look for a rightful old man in the community who would carry the meat of the male goat (scape goat) that had to be slaughtered. The old man looked for his one assistant. The castrated male goat was provided by the last born son if the dead were a woman and by the first born son if the dead were a man. The sons of the dead took the male goat out of the home early in the morning and their male children if present say a kilometre South or North of the settlement. The male goat handed over to the old man and his assistant. The goat slaughtered and skinned. Fire carried by the sons of the dead was lit. Fatty parts were dropped into the fire then sons of the dead with their male children if present basked in the smell around the fire. They were not allowed to eat meat from the goat. When the old man had completed skinning, he gave one leg to his assistant. The family members of the dead and the old man company dispersed at the same time and none was allowed to look back till they reach their homes.

Plants used by the Samburu

Samburu had elaborate plant knowledge before such knowledge was subjected to decline and control through barbaric Forest and Witch Craft Acts during colonialism (Dodson, 1963). The plants were used as food to people to supplement livestock products, fodder for livestock, and medicine for both people and livestock, used for religious and industrial purposes. In the rangelands, timing and distribution of plants'

nutrients were highly variable. The variability was due to rainfall, different soils types, different plant species and different stages of the plant growth cycle. The Samburu pastoralists used that variability to their advantage to maximize the productivity of their herds and as food supplement for people.

In the rangeland, the skill combined the mobility, which enabled pastoral herds to track and exploit unpredictable concentration of nutrients in the dry land (Sato, 1997). Pastoralism in that regard outperformed sedentary animals. If a critical research is not conducted now the said plant knowledge will have disappeared from primary sources soon. From the written sources; the writers focused only on the Samburu ethnomedicines for example Elliot *Traditional medicine and concept of Healing Amongst the Samburu Pastoralist of Kenya*, *Concept of Health and Diseases Amongst the Ariaal Rendille Herbal Medicine* and R.W.Bussmann; *Ethnobotany of the Samburu of Mt. Ngiri South Turkana*. These writers deserved rewards for their accomplishments but it is high time for researchers, institutions and scholars to allocate more resources on the detailed studies of the food plants.

Lekadaa maintained that the Samburu, who lived in lowland for example in Samburu North and Marsabit, depended upon a root tuber known as Njasi to supplement their diet during food crisis (Nkuten Lekadaa, 2018). It looked like a sweet potato. Inside it was brown when ripen. It was eaten raw and sometimes it was roasted. Sanatei (*Cassia Longiracemosa*) was another root tuber that the Samburu depended upon for decades. It looked like sweet a potato. It was cooked and eaten. It was found in Ndooto and Ngiri Mountains. Larakash was another root tuber depended upon for food by the Samburu in hard times to supplement their diet. It was dug out; the skin was scrapped off like an animal. It had a liver

and a heart that were cooked then eaten. It was found in Ndooto Mountain.

Nanyon was a root tuber that also looked like a potato. It was a reliable wild food. It was dug out and eaten raw. It was found only in the lowland of Ldonyio Mara Mountain (Lkitosian Leshiipi, 2017). Lmonto was another root tuber food found in the Samburu country. It looked like a potato. It was dug out and eaten raw. It was found in Lesidai Pura and Lesiolo in Samburu West (Keswe Lewarges, 2017). Losira was a root tuber that was depended upon by the Samburu in hard times. It was dug out and eaten raw or roasted then eaten. It looked like a potato. It was found only in a place known as Learoni west of Loosuk location in Samburu Central. The plant was depended upon by the past generation who lived in the region. Lpulei was a tree found only on the slopes of Ndooto Mountain. The trees produced fruits that had long been used by the Samburu to manufacture oil. To extract oil from the fruit was an uphill task.

It was cooked from evening until morning the following day. It was cooked again until a fatty substance was formed there after taken to the shade to cool in a tin container. When cooled a hole was made on the substance. A liquid substance came out which was cooked again till no more fatty substance was seen. It was taken to the shade to cool. The oil came to the top layer and it was ready for use. The fatty substance that remained behind was used as fat to smear the bodies. It cured diseases like arthritis. Lkinoi fruits (*Lannea alofa*) were collected in dry season and eaten to supplement livestock food Lmolweya Lekukuton, 2017). They were found in plenty in Wamba, Ndooto and Ngiro Mountain (Lemees Lenaisulaa, 2017). In Marsabit, Sumalilei, Lama and Loka fruits were depended upon for survival in the time of food crisis. Lama and Loka were processed to

produce oil. Napingei/Loisiashi was a root tuber (Sirekon Lepulier, 2017). It was found in lowland of Lkere and Ereer in Samburu East (Lesurunka Lenkaaka, 2017). The Samburu pastoralists dug it out in dry season then fed it to the cattle. It Saved hunger stricken cattle in 1959 prolong drought. Lopitara and Lodwa poro were shrubs found in Nkaroni, Kipsing and Taleh regions of Samburu and Isiolo County. When cattle fed on those shrubs, milk and blood became bitter and smelly consequently, all external parasites on livestock that included ticks, lice amongst others died and dropped.

Plants as Medicine and Other Uses

The Samburu attribute most illness to the effects of polluted food and contact with the sick. Treatment involves herbal purgatives to clean the patients (Letiyan Lesuyai, 2017). Plants were used to treat wounds, health changes brought about by malaria, internal disorder, parasites, sexually transmitted diseases, skin problems, burns, wounds and fractures associated with the daily dangers of the livestock keeping. Plants medicine for people and animals included leaves, seeds, roots, flowers, gums and barks. Lmugutan was a tree found in the lowlands areas of Samburu East. The medicine extracted from roots by boiling then used to treat worms for both people and animals (Nkuten Lekadaa, 2017). Lekadaa observed that Lparaa was a tree found in the hills and plateaus in the lowlands. Its milk was used to treat cancer diseases cases for human beings and Lmongoi for animals. Lngalaiyoi (*Cisscus*) was a shrub found in the lowlands areas for example Nkaroni plains. Roots were boiled to extract medicine.

The medicine was used to restore sight (Fraktin, 1999). Lgilai orok (*vepris eugeniifolia*) was a tree found in the Ngare Narok River valley in Lorroki Plateau. Medicine was extracted from its roots and leaves used to treat

malaria and yellow fever. Keswe maintained that Imakukuti (*clerodendrum myricoides*) was a tree found in the highlands in Lorroki forests (Keswe Lewarges, 2017). The medicine was extracted from its roots. The roots were boiled and soaked in water, milk, oil and blood to extract medicine that was used to relief bones pain, headache and treat chronic gonorrhoea. Seketet (*myrsine africana*) was a tree that was found in the highlands especially in Lorroki Plateau. Its seeds were crushed to extract medicine. After crushing, the seketet could be boiled in water, milk and oil. It was used to cure cough and pneumonia for people and livestock.

People who were wounded were given to drink. When boiled in oil, it was poured to wounds. Losesiai (*Osyris abyssinica*) was a tree found in Lorroki forests. The barks were boiled in milk then given to children to immunize them against children diseases (Lkitosian Leshiipi, 2017). Losesiai was also used to treat udder diseases of the cattle. There were trees in the highlands that were highly valued. No religious ceremony could be conducted without them. When burnt they produced good smell. They were: Ltarakwai (cedar leaves), Lngeriyo (olive leaves), Lkukulai (*Rhamnus staddo* leaves) and Lgilai (*Vebris eugenifolia* leaves). In the lowlands Leramo Lelenkeju maintained that the trees that were used for religious purposes were; silapani (*Cordia sinensis*) sushai, (*Barleria spinisepala*) Lgweita, siteti (*Grewia bicolor*) and silalei (*Boswellia Hildebrandtii*). Silapani and sushai leaves were burnt to produce good smell when making sacrifices.

Seki was used to make religious sticks/stuffs used by the Samburu traditional priests known as Laisi and Laibons when presiding over traditional ceremonies, blessings and curses (Leramo Lelenkeju, 2017). The trees used for witchcraft were; Lokumeki, Logildia and

Leparmunyo (*Toddalia asialica*). Lokumeki was found in both highlands and lowlands. It was used by Laibons in witchcraft to destabilize enemies. The barks were tied in knots consequently, the enemy would relax, lose senses and direction. Logildia was a tree found in the highlands especially in Lorroki forests. Its dry branches were used in cursing enemies and thieves. Lmorijoi (*Acokanthera longiflora*) was found only in Lorroki Plateau (Keswe Lewarges, 2017). It was used to make poison used on arrows.

The traditional poison industry was located at Noonkukula in Seketet. Forest resources were controlled, managed and maintained by the Samburu tradition (Lerawan Loldepe, 2017). The rules were enforced and maintained by the council of elders through the imposition of isolation, fines, physical force and forced migration. The elders ensured a sustainable use of trees, herbs and shrubs. The traditional system management of conserving forest resources was characterized by religious manifestations and culture. Some parts of the forests were set aside as sacred groves. The plants in such areas were excluded from access by unwarranted groups. The trees under which the Samburu male initiates slaughtered animals during their graduation to Moranhood after seclusion were never cut. Trees where burial sites were dug beneath were not allowed to be cut. The medicine men ensured a sustainable exploitation of the medicinal species. The Samburu collected deadwood for firewood and practiced selective maintenance of the valued species for medicinal plants. The forest management was under the supervision of the family, clan and community.

Exploitation of Wild Life Resources

Wild life was considered as resources by the pastoral communities (Enghoff, 1990). It was never viewed by the pastoralists as competitors. Their aesthetic value

was highly appreciated (Saitoti, 1978). That made wild life to be tolerated by pastoral communities throughout history. The Samburu pursued pastoral mode of life (Fumagalli, 1977). Hunting was done occasionally to scare away or kill animals that molested settlements by killing livestock or causing damages to waterholes. In Samburu there were numerous elephants, rhinos, lions, buffaloes, giraffes, kudus (greater and lesser) Grevy's and common zebras, leopards, waterbucks, Oryx, impalas, Grant and Thomson's gazelles, elands and ostrich amongst others. Exploitation of wild life resources by the Samburu was not for commercial reasons (Ocholla et al., 2013). The resources were utilized for nutritional values, aesthetic reasons, religious values, cultural uses, industrial demand, and body parts for medicinal value. The Samburu hunted wild animals for food in the time of food crisis. They hunted wild animals that have similarities with livestock for example those that chewed dung and had their hoofs divided into two however, not all wild animals that had their hoofs divided into two were eaten.

No Samburu had ever eaten wild pigs and warthogs despite the fact that they have their hoofs divided into two (Loiture Lenyasunya, 2017). The culture forbids eating them with reason that they have teats on the chest just like cats and dogs. The culture also prohibited eating of any bird, reptiles, and amphibians and insects except honey from bees. Fish was not eaten because of the smell it has but no cultural effects would follow the person who had eaten it. Eating of elephants, rhino, zebras and porcupines was totally forbidden (John Lesiokono, 2017). The reason as to why elephants and rhinos were not eaten was that they have colour similar to that of the donkeys. The other reason as to why elephant was not eaten was that it has similarities with human beings as the elephant trunk was likened to human hand. Those who

ate elephant meat and sold elephant tusks in the past were seen becoming rich very fast but within a short while, the wealth got lost then followed by extremes poverty. The reason given was such that the elephant stretched its trunk when feeding. It also shrunk the trunk when putting food into its mouth.

The quick wealth the person got was compared to the stretching of the elephant trunk when it was feeding itself while the quick loss of the wealth was likened to swift shrinking of the elephant trunk when putting food into its mouth. Domestic animals killed by the elephants were not eaten (Lerawan Loldepe, 2017). The reason as to why the Samburu did not eat zebras was that zebras like donkeys, have a black mark on front legs on the side that faces the chest (black symbolizes bad luck). The family of the person who had eaten zebra would be as small as that mark, poor and eventually vanished. When a rhino had released its dung, it crushed, dispersed and scattered all over the place. The families of the Samburu who ate rhinos were known to have been scattered to different directions and got assimilated to other tribes. The domestic animals killed by rhinos were not eaten. The families of those who ate porcupines were rarely seen in public. They were stricken by extreme poverty and eventually they were vanquished. Some Samburu clans maintained a special totemic relationship with potentially dangerous animals such as lions, elephants, rhinos and snakes.

CONCLUSION

The Samburu is a Maa-speaking Community consisting of nine clans. It originated from Egypt. The origin of nomadic pastoralism in this study is based on Archaeology and Mythical Theories. Nomadic pastoralism among the Samburu is deeply rooted in all aspects of life and it will not come to end soon. Samburu land tenures existed and were explicit. Harsh

environmental conditions changed the Samburu southern movement from around Lake Baringo to northern trek that took them to southern Ethiopia. Samburu Morans were organized in five divisions to fit the security interest of the community. The Samburu allotted much more resources to ceremonies surrounding the birth, circumcision, marriage and the death. The Samburu used plants for; food, medicines and religious purposes. The Samburu in the past had well established structures that maintained sustainable use and control of forest resources.

Samburu used wild life resources for; aesthetic, nutritional, religious, cultural and medicinal values. They also hunted some wild animals for food during food crisis. The Samburu never used wild life resources for commercial reasons. The Samburu had well established cultural mechanism of wild life conservation. The Samburu traditional industries revolved around iron, wood, leather and mats production. The Samburu traditional labour was based on; family, joint, communal and burrowed labour. Samburu traditional labour stressed the value of cooperation. The forms of the Samburu traditional trade were barter trade slanted towards distribution. The Samburu were confronted by external trade prior to the dawn of colonialism.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is an urgent need for a research on the Samburu traditional knowledge of the plant use and possibility of domesticating the rare food and medicinal plants that are on the verge of extinction where they grew initially. More traditional use of wild life resources and conservation methods are yet to be uncovered through research. Furthermore, there is need for research on Ndorobo views on survival strategies in regard to use of wild life and forest resources. There is a critical need to re-examine and research on language similarities between the Samburu and other communities in the East Africa, Eastern Africa and Africa as such is not given the required attention in this research. There is need to review pastoralism in different dimensions in order to give answers to questions as to why nomadic pastoralism has continued to flourish in the face of the so called modernism and progress. The Governments should allocate more resources in terms of budgetary allocations to research on tenure systems that are suitable for pastoralists instead of condemning and branding pastoralists as lawbreakers, thieves, illegal grazers and bandits who invade private lands.

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