



**THE PORTRAYAL OF THE DYNAMICS OF IDENTITY IN THE SELECTED NOVELS
OF HENRY RUFUS OLE KULET**

BY

YOHANA MATHIAS

2023/HDO3/22917T

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND
GRADUATE TRAINING IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN LITERATURE OF
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

DECEMBER 2025

DECLARATION

Yohana Mathias, I hereby state that this dissertation, which is the result of my labour, has never been presented to any university for an official degree. Every cited source has been credited.

Signature Y. Mathias Date 29/12/2025

Yohana Mathias

Approved E. Magara Date 29.12.2025

Evelyn Cindy Magara (PhD)

(Supervisor)

Digitisation and Self-Archiving Consent Agreement: Theses

Agreement between Makerere University & Students (Authors of Theses / Dissertations / Reports)

1. The author is a student of Makerere University and author of the thesis / dissertation entitled:

NAME: Mathis Yohana

Thesis TITLE: The Portrayal of the Dynamics of Identity in the Selected Novels of Henry Rufus Ole Kulet

2. The author grants to the University:

- The right to deposit the electronic version of the Thesis / Dissertation into Makerere University Institutional Repositories (Mak IR) or (Mak UD); and
- The right to store the thesis / dissertation in Mak IR / Mak UD and make it permanently available to the general public via the Internet at no cost to the general public after a grace period (if any is specified). Choose one of the two options below:
- The Author may opt for immediate open access to the public
- Or Restrict access indefinitely
- Or Restrict for the specified number of years:

3. The author warrants that to the best of the authors knowledge and belief:

- The thesis / dissertation is an original work;
- The author is the owner of all the intellectual property in the thesis / dissertation; or
- The Author is entitled to deal with the intellectual property in the thesis / dissertation by publishing it on the Internet
- The Author has the right, power and authority to enter into this Agreement and to grant the University the rights contained in this Agreement; and
- The University's use of the thesis / dissertation pursuant to this Agreement will not infringe the intellectual property rights of any third party.

4. The Author acknowledges and agrees that the University is not responsible or liable for any breach of the intellectual property rights in the thesis / dissertation, in particular any breach of copyright, as a result of the use of the thesis / dissertation pursuant to this Agreement.

5. The University acknowledges that the rights granted by the Creator in clause 2 of this Agreement, do not cause any transfer or assignment of any proprietary rights in the intellectual property in the article to the University.

Signed by the Author as confirmation that the Author has read and accepted the terms of this Agreement:

Name: Yohana Mathis

College/School: Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) Department: of Literature

(Tick) Type of Degree: (Undergraduate / PGD / Masters / PhD), Reg. No.: 2023/HD03/22917T.

Tel No.: 1255764201582 E-Mail: mathisyohana023@gmail.com

Signature: [Signature] Date: 29.12.2025

Supervisor's endorsement: Yohana's work is highly Recommended!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background to the Study.....	1
1.2.1 Henry R. Ole Kulet's Writings.....	6
1.2.2 Kenyan Literature	14
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	15
1.4 General Objective	16
1.4.1 Specific Objectives	17
1.5 Rationale of the Study.....	17
1.6 Literature Review.....	18
1.6.1 Overview of Maasai Identity from Global Perspectives	18
1.6.2 Overview of Maasai Identity from Regional Perspectives.....	19
1.6.3 Representations of Maasai Identity in Literary Works	20
1.7 Scope of the Study.....	21
1.8 Definitions of Key Terms.....	21
1.8.1 Cultural Identity	21
1.8.2 Cultural Heritage.....	22
1.8.3 Maasai Identity.....	22
1.8.4 Western Values	23
1.8.5 Identity Dynamics	23
1.8.6 East African Literature	24
1.9. Research Methodology.....	25
1.9.1 Research Design.....	26
1.9.2 Data Collection and Analysis.....	27
1.10 Theoretical Framework.....	27
1.11 General Conclusion.....	31
1.12 Chapter Summaries	31
CHAPTER TWO	35
MORANHOOD, WOMANHOOD, AND KINSHIPHOOD AMONG THE MAASAI.....	35
2.1 Introduction.....	35
2.2 Critical Plot Summaries of Key Texts	37
2.3 Loss of the Maasai Moranhood in <i>Moran No More</i>	39
2.4 The Emergence of the Modern African Woman (Womanhood) in <i>Daughter of Maa</i>	47
2.5 General Conclusion.....	57

CHAPTER THREE	58
DUALITIES AND AMBIVALENCES AMONG THE MAASAI PEOPLE	58
3.1 Introduction.....	58
3.2 Dualities and Ambivalence in <i>Daughter of Maa</i>	59
3.3 Ambivalences and Dualities in <i>Bandits of Kibi</i>	65
3.4 Dualities and Ambivalences in <i>Moran No More</i>	69
3.5 Conclusion	78
CHAPTER FOUR.....	79
CONTINUITY OF MAASAI IDENTITY AMIDST THE COMPLEX IDENTITY	
DYNAMICS.....	79
4.0 Introduction.....	79
4.1 Symbolism and Imagery: Metaphors, Similes	79
4.2 Proverbs, Sayings and Idioms.....	86
4.3 Untranslated Maasai Words Serve as a Continuity of Identity.....	92
4.4 General Conclusion.....	96
CHAPTER FIVE	98
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	98
5.1 Introduction.....	98
5.2 Major Conclusions	98
5.3 Findings of the Study	102
5.4 Recommendation	103
5.4 Areas for Further Research	103
Works cited	105

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My fellow students, lecturers, friends, and family members all provided me with a great deal of help and support. Since we met as my lecturer for Children's Literature course and later as my supervisor, Dr. Evelyn Cindy Magara has provided me with a lot of academic and emotional support, and I would like to thank her from the bottom of my heart. Words alone cannot fully convey my gratitude for your ongoing assistance.

I am grateful for the assistance I received from Professor Sister Dominica Dipio and Dr. Okot Bengé, as I considered giving up during my few days at Makerere University. My classmates in the 2023/2024 Master of Arts in Literature at the Department of Literature at Makerere University: Tumwesigye Precious, Ankwatsa Ronah, Igore Eric, Abeneitwe Monica, Wegoyi Jafar, Twino Mugisha Brenda, Akampurira Fortunate, Kibuuka Samuel, Ninsiima Lucy, Asingwire Grace Stecia, Babalola John, Sserunkuma Vicent, Babirye Noerine, and Amudu Bernard, thank you very much for your support.

I want to acknowledge Danson Kahyana (PhD) for teaching me Advanced Research Methods, Associate Professor Susan N. Kiguli for teaching me two course units and encouraging me to improve my spoken English, Isaac Tibasiima (PhD), Associate Professor Ernest Okello Ongwang, Associate Professor Edgar Nabutanyi, and Eva Nabulya (PhD) during my time at Makerere University, as well as everyone else I may have interacted with there but whose paths I may not have mentioned here. I would want to express my heartfelt thanks to them.

From infancy through adulthood, I will never forget the enormous emotional and financial assistance that my late grandmother, Kabula Ng'wanadodo Ng'usuu, gave me throughout my life. In all aspects of my life, from academics to my personal life, your help has

been invaluable. I want to express my sincere appreciation to my late biological mother, Neema James Njobole; my late older father, Yohana Njimili Shokolo; my late grandmother, Ng`wanamakubhi; and my late aunt, Tatu Njimili Shokolo, for their financial and spiritual support, which has greatly aided my life and academic pursuits.

During my two years as a student at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, I wish to thank my wife, Winfrida Nelson Kutona, for her unending love and concern for our family and household. I would like to thank my beloved children, Neema Mathias Shokolo and Yohana Mathias Shokolo, for tolerating my absence. I would also like to express my gratitude to Joyce Musanjila, my mother-in-law, and Sagalani Njimili Shokolo, my biological mother, for their constant encouragement of my interests.

ABSTRACT

The dynamics of identity in the Maasai community, as depicted in Henry Rufus Ole Kulet's *Bandits of Kibi*, *Daughter of Maa*, and *Moran No More*, are explored in this study. To assess the extent to which the promotion of Western values has shifted Maasai identity and created a dichotomy in Maasai culture, a library study has been used as the research methodology. The research was guided by the post-colonial literary theoretical framework as advanced by Rajeswari Mohan, Edward Said, Bill Ashcroft et al., and Homi K. Bhabha. Post-colonial theory places greater emphasis on the effects of the interaction between indigenous cultures and a Western way of life during colonialism and ongoing imperialism. The interaction produces a hybrid identity marked by uncertainties and a fusion of cultures. The study primarily focuses on the impact of Western values on the Maasai identity. A reduction in their own Maasai cultural identity occurs among the Maasai people who adopt Western cultures. Furthermore, the study highlights the difficulties of achieving the status of Moranhood. The complexity of achieving Moranhood is a result of the traditional criteria for defining Moranhood becoming obsolete in today's Maasai people. Finally, the study demonstrates how the invasion of Western culture into the native Maasai culture leads to a shift in their identity, as Western values continue to erode the Maasai man's masculinity.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This thesis explores the dynamics of identity in the Maasai community, as depicted in Henry Rufus Ole Kulet's *Bandits of Kibi*, *Daughter of Maa*, and *Moran No More*. The depiction of identity in African literature is deeply rooted in cultural, historical, and political contexts (Ojaide 1992, Adejunmobi 2004, Nnaemeka 2004). In Kenya, Henry R. Ole Kulet emerges as a significant literary figure whose novels offer a compelling portrayal of the Maasai community, especially its shifting identity in the wake of colonialism and later the post-colonial era. Identity in Maasai literature, particularly as depicted by Kulet, is a dynamic process shaped by cultural values, rites of passage, gender roles, and external influences. Elleke Boehmer, in a monograph on colonial and postcolonial literature, offers a concise purpose of literature in Africa when she says, "African postcolonial literature serves not only as a form of resistance but also as a space for reconstructing native identities amidst colonial residues" (12). Similarly, Simon Gikandi elaborates on the style, asserting that "African writers employ narrative to re-inscribe cultural meanings onto spaces that were once colonially defined, reclaiming both voice and self" (1-32). Kulet's novels *Daughter of Maa*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Moran No More* explore identity as a fluid construct, rooted in indigenous practices yet challenged by contemporary transformations.

1.2 Background to the Study

Maasai culture is known for its elaborate social organisation, rites of passage, and rich oral tradition, which have long been subjects of anthropological and literary interest. These

cultural markers become critical sites for identity negotiation in Kulet's fiction. As Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o argues, "Language and cultural practices are central to the formation and expression of identity in African societies" (101-104). In alignment with this, Homi K. Bhabha emphasises the role of ambivalence and hybridity in postcolonial identities, suggesting that "cultural identity is never static but continuously negotiated" (171-181). Kulet's novels present the Maasai not merely as passive recipients of tradition but as active participants in reshaping their identities, particularly through the lived experiences of his characters regarding gender, kinship, and moranhood.

Literary representations of womanhood, moranhood (warriorhood), and kinship in Kulet's work provide essential frameworks for examining the interplay between tradition and change in Maasai identity. These thematic concerns resonate with Obioma Nnaemeka's argument that "African literature must be examined through a contextual lens that understands cultural norms not as fixed but evolving" (137). Meanwhile, Statton Florence on the marginalisation of "female identity in African literature, advocating for narratives that foreground women's agency in cultural continuity," has been critiqued because it is prevalent (Stratton 92). This is evident (as I discuss in chapter 2) in *Daughter of Maa*, through its protagonist Anna Nalangu. The text offers a vivid portrayal of Maasai womanhood, its constraints, and its evolution in response to education and agency. Kulet uses Nalangu's story to engage with the cultural contradictions that surround female identity.

The Maasai people are the primary focus of Henry Rufus Ole Kulet's literary works. He seizes every opportunity to illustrate the Maasai worldview, traditions, and struggles in a rapidly changing society. In selected novels such as *Daughter of Maa*, *Moran No More*, and *Bandits of*

Kibi, Kulet portrays the intricate dynamics of identity, emphasising themes such as womanhood, kinshiphood, and moranhood as central pillars of Maasai cultural continuity.

Also, various writers have written extensively about Kulet's society (Saitoti & Beckwith 1980, Saitoti 1986, Spencer 2004, Leong 2004, Hughes 2006, Spencer (b) 2006, Lazier 2022). The Maasai have continued to be portrayed as esteemed, warrior-like people with a distinct, interesting culture. Yew Leong, in the article "Establishing the Pax Lenana in Maasailand" (2004), describes the historical incident between the Maasai and the Arab traders as such: "these ivory-seeking caravans never challenged the Maasai but were frequently ambushed by them" (23). The Maasai were feared warriors. The Maasai had only two passions in life: warfare and cattle. Their past glory is legendary. The ability to thwart Arab trade caravans and other ethnic groups from infiltrating their land, both in Tanzania and Kenya, gave them a reputation. They have been further viewed as exemplifying the authentic images of the native Kenyans and Tanzanians, particularly those from northern Tanzania (Arusha and Manyara) and southern Kenya, with Maasai distinct attire considered a possible representation of African dress (Hughes 2006, Spencer (b) 2006, Lazier 2022). I perceive that this attire transcends the Maasai identity to embody a more African identity.

Also, scholars from the West hold an idealised view of the Maasai. This view is best articulated by Ernest Hemingway in 1935 in his memoir *Green Hills of Africa*. This memoir chronicles his experiences during a hunting trip in East Africa. His team included individuals from various Tanzanian and Kenyan ethnic groups such as Basukuma, Luo, Kalenjin, Nyakore, Kikuyu, and Kamba. Still, it was his interaction with the Maasai that captivated him the most. He expresses his admiration for the Maasai in this way:

They all possessed good, white teeth, were tall, had brown-stained hair styled in a looped fringe across their foreheads. The tallest, most appealing individuals I had ever encountered, they were the first truly warm-hearted, joyful people I had met in Africa, and they carried spears. They were also very cheerful and attractive, neither sulky nor contemptuous (165).

The picturesque portrayal from an insider's viewpoint clarifies the reasons why the Maasai appeal to tourists. From the aforementioned quote, the Maasai appearance and demeanour is portrayed as the essence of perfection. This can further be illustrated by the subsequent description:

I had never encountered any Africans like them. They all had gray-brown features, with the oldest seeming to be over fifty years of age. They had wide, bright eyes, thin lips, a nose that was nearly Grecian and quite high cheekbones. In addition to his visible intelligence, he radiated dignity and composure. The younger man appeared to be around thirty-five and shared the same distinct features, leading me to believe he was a younger sibling. As charming as a girl, the younger one seemed rather shy and unintelligent. When he first emerged, for instance, dressed in a kind of Roman toga made of unbleached Muslim gathered at the shoulder that concealed the outline their bodies, I mistakenly thought he was a girl based on his face (Ibid).

Although Hemingway's 1935 depiction of the Maasai reflects the magnificent wild people's innocence and splendour, the characteristics of the Maasai, such as their Grecian noses, high

cheekbones, and thin lips, stand in stark contrast to the exaggerated caricature of the white imperialist forces:

The fighting escalated and intensified. One Maasai would leap onto their comrades' corpses and combat one or both axe men with their long spears, but the outcome always ended in the same way. At that moment, if the man was engaged in combat, there was a loud strike from an axe, a sound that erased, and more dead Maasai (quoted in Mbugua 57)

In this instance, the Maasai have been depicted as lesser beings. Ngugi wa Thiong'o expresses the Kikuyu's biased view of the Maasai in *The River Between* (1965). This occurs when his divisive community credits Wayaiki's bravery for leading "the entire (Kikuyu) tribe against the Ukabi Maasai" (*The River Between* 2). He also illustrates the secluded area (on the outskirts of Kikuyu land) occupied by the Ukabi: "The ridges were remote, the inhabitants there lived a life of their own, untouched by the events occurring outside or beyond, the Ukabi would never come here" (*The River Between* 3). Consequently, the Maasai are seen as outsiders or others from a Kikuyu viewpoint.

Additionally, in *Petals of Blood* (1977), the arrival of Ilmorog farmers in the city surprises the inhabitants, who linked the farmers' primitiveness to Maasainess. The city drivers ask, "Who are these Maasai? "These ndorobo and their donkey carts should be prohibited from the city" (*Petals of Blood* 157). This reduced image marginalises the Maasai in the East African social landscape. Indeed, for numerous East Africans, the word "Maasai" implies primitiveness. Still, Kulet's literature aims to invoke a Maasai identity rooted in their perspective. The portrayal of social change within the Maasai society, as illustrated in the Kuletian body of work, is also

unique: a society that steadfastly preserves its cultural traditions while appearing to be uncertainly embracing Western ideals. This ambiguity is what drives this research. Nonetheless, I focus on how Western ideals affect identity. In addition, I explore the ambivalence evident in the identity of the Maasai community as portrayed in Kulet's literature.

The main cause of the societal change and identity shifts can be linked to the interaction between the native Maasai cultural legacy and colonial culture. I thoroughly investigate the significance of the Western lifestyle in influencing the identity of the Maasai community, as shown in Ole Kulet's literature. In particular, I illuminate these issues by concentrating on Ole Kulet's three novels: *Daughter of Maa*, *Moran No More*, and *Bandits of Kibi*.

1.2.1 Henry R. Ole Kulet's Writings

Henry Rufus Ole Kulet comes from a traditional Maasai family. His first name, Rufus, is infrequently used because, according to Maasai traditions, the first name fades away during childhood. He adopted the baptismal name Henry after encountering Rider Haggard's *Allan Quartermain*. In an interview with Peter Kamande Mbugua (2004), Ole Kulet stated that "his admiration for the novel's main character led to him to borrow his name" (quoted in Mbugua 45).

He was born in 1946 at EnkareNgusur village, better known as Siyiapei in the Narok District. The seasonal river EnkareNgusur serves as a natural landmark close to their residence. The Siyiapei mission stands as another significant place near his birthplace. Ole Kulet draws from this setting for his fictional world in *Moran No More*. In an interview with Mbugua, he noted that "he attended Siyiapei Primary School" (quoted in Mbugua 67). Similarly, the narrator

in *Moran No More* also attended Siyiapei Primary School. Subsequently, Kulet moved on to Kilgoris for his intermediate education.

His father, Lemomo Ole Kulet, was renowned for his abilities as a Moran. The author told Mbugua that his father was celebrated as the man who “brought home an ox big as a hill” after a raid on the Chagga of Tanzania. An elder, Lemomo Ole Kulet, was a respected mediator during the disputes. His community valued his opinions, and like many other elders, he practiced polygamy, being married to two wives. Some of Ole Lemomo's characteristics are reflected in Ole Sururu, the protagonist's father in *Is It Possible?* Just like his fellow elders, who uphold Maasai customs and traditions, he was against the imposition of Western education on the Maasai people. In an interview with Elizabeth Wanja, Ole Kulet expressed, “I really wanted to document my experiences of growing up and going to school despite significant pressure from my parents and clansmen to uphold our Maasai traditions” (25). He reminisces about times he would collaborate with his father to feign illness as a way to avoid school. He also recounted to Mbugua an occurrence when his father would send him on an errand while teachers and government “officials visited their village to retrieve boys who had not attended school and take them back” (Ibid). Some of these personal experiences are referenced in his creative works. For example, in *Moran No More*, we see Topoika Ole Muge conspiring with his son Roiman so that the boy can pretend to be ill in order to distract the teachers and government officials.

The school in Kilgoris is situated far from Kulet's village; it is also a boarding institution. This parallels the school that Lerionka attended in Arusha. Following his intermediate schooling, Ole Kulet moved on to Narok High School. It was during this period that he recognised his gift as a creative writer. This revelation came after he penned an article inspired by President

Kenyatta's visit to Narok High School. The article was subsequently published in a prominent local newspaper.

Though Ole Kulet takes every chance to depict the traditional Maasai, he is not an unwavering traditionalist. In fact, his characters represent a hybrid identity. Interestingly, he is seldom seen in traditional Maasai clothing, and his ears are not pierced like those of other Maasai men his age. Nevertheless, in an interview with Francois Michael, he speaks about his deep connection to his Maasai heritage, stating, “I have all along been Maasai at heart” (Ibid). Therefore, we can conclude that he possesses a Maasai spirit while also exhibiting some characteristics of Westernisation.

After completing his secondary education, Ole Kulet went on to receive career training and earned a diploma in personnel management. He was employed by the Kenya Farmers' Association, which later rebranded as the Kenyan Grain Growers Corporation. Ole Kulet is a monogamist; he is married to Janet Kulet. His wife is an avid reader, and Ole Kulet regards her as his primary critic. He does not see her as a “housewife” because she is the backbone of the family and manages their farm.

He is the father of six children who also play an important role in his creative endeavours, as they read and critique his works prior to publication. His daughter, Harriet Henry Ole and his son, Edwin Henry Ole, have expressed an interest in creative writing. He has also modelled some of his fictional characters after his children. For example, the lovely traditional girl in *Daughter of Maa*, Seleina, shares a name with one of his daughters. Ole Kulet is a writer grounded in realism. His works are inspired by contemporary issues within his society. Thus, as a writer reflecting on a postcolonial East Africa, he is likely to tackle postcolonial themes

emerging from his community. He has explored the ambivalence resulting from his community's efforts to adopt modernity while still maintaining its traditions.

In an interview with Elizabeth Wanja, Ole Kulet expresses his philosophy as a writer in these words: "the role of a writer is not to change society but to dissect it so that the society can reflect on it and see itself as it is and then change itself" (16). Consequently, he perceives his art as a model for society to emulate. Ole Kulet's debut novel, *Is It Possible?*, was released in 1971, at the age of twenty-five. His second novel, *To Become a Man*, came out in 1972. The first two books illustrate the Maasai community's reaction to the intrusion of Western values into their traditions and customs. His third book, *The Hunter*, was published in 1985. It depicts the decay affecting East Africa; this malaise is represented by poaching. *Moran No More* was published in 1990. It announces the end of Moranhood, as rampant corruption has infiltrated the postcolonial nations and endangered the traditional values that have supported the community for ages. *Daughter of Maa* was released in 1990. It emphasises the increasing significance of the educated or modern woman. *Bandits of Kibi* was published in 1999. This work was influenced by tribal conflicts that impacted particular regions of East Africa. He has also written a Kiswahili novel, *Maisha ya Hatari*, which narrates the struggles of individuals caught in cycles of violence, poverty, and political unrest in post-independence Kenya.

In his works, Ole Kulet targets young readers. To facilitate effective communication, he employs clear language. His goal is to educate them about their heritage, as well as the contemporary issues facing their community. This aims to assist them in incorporating valuable traditional values into their present circumstances. This corresponds with Chinua Achebe's claim in "The Novelist as a Teacher", where he asserts, "the writer cannot expect to be excused from the task of re-education and regeneration that must be done. In fact, he should march right in

front” (Ibid 4). Ole Kulet achieves his aims by seizing every chance to represent the Maasai viewpoint and culture in his literary pieces.

In a conversation with Francois Michael, Ole Kulet states that his goal is to preserve Maasai traditions for future generations. He expresses this through the statement: “So to me it is keeping alive the Maasai traditions and perpetuating customs that I would like to see that they are not just lost, in this changing pattern of life” (98). Alongside drawing on his Maasai heritage for his writing, Ole Kulet also weaves in his personal life experiences. The urgent matters that his community and East Africa as a whole confront deeply impact his creative process.

In an interview with Peter Kamande Mbugua, Ole Kulet mentions that “Ngugi wa Thiong’o and Camara Laye are the African writers who influenced his portrayal of Maasai culture. Earnest Hemingway and Rider Haggard are other authors who have inspired the adventurous spirit in his earlier works. However, there are indications of various borrowings between Ole Kulet’s *Moran No More* and Howard Spring’s *These Lovers Flew Away*. Clear similarities can be observed between the two novels. For instance, some paragraphs in *Moran No More* originate from *These Lovers Flew Away*. The following excerpts illustrate this point. In *Moran No More*, Roimans room is described as follows:

I departed from them and entered my little bedroom. By the scent, I could discern it had been recently redecorated. I observed the walls coated in Pale Pink, the bright white of the woodwork, the fresh curtains adorning the window, predominantly blue with red blossoms sprinkled across it, and a matching fabric that served as the bedspread. I understood that the decoration and furnishings must have cost my mother a significant amount of money (*Moran No More* 70).

Similarly, in Howard Spring's *These Lovers Flew Away*, the narrator recounts:

I departed from my mother and entered my small bedroom. The scent indicated that it had been recently redecorated. Observing the walls adorned in Pale Pink and the bright white woodwork, I understood that all this must have cost Uncle Arthur a considerable amount (Howard *Spring's These Lovers Flew Away* 57)

Both Howard Spring's *These Lovers Flew Away* and Kulet's *Moran No More* portray the struggles of individuals torn between tradition and change, revealing how personal identity becomes fragile in societies undergoing cultural transformation.

Further instances of this type can be located in the two novels. To support our claim, we examine a few more examples in *Moran No More*. The main character observes:

On the other side of the narrow road, there lay yet another gate, and a path behind me led to a farmhouse. A herd of dairy cows with full udders was approaching the gate that faced me, and sensing they were being led for milking, I stood up and swung open both gates; the cows moved past me through one of the gates. A man training the cows with a stick came near and said, Thank you, young man (*Moran No More* 42)

The similar excerpt in *These Lovers Flew Away* is expressed as follows:

On the other side of the narrow road, there stood another gate, and a path behind me led to a farm. A group of dairy cows, with heavy udders, was making their way toward the gate that forced me, and presuming they were being led for milking, I crouched down and propelled both gates open. They seemed to

understand their destination and trotted across the road. A boy following them, holding a hazel stick, smiled at me and said, "Thank you" (*These Lovers Flew Away* 64).

The parallelism between Kulet's *Moran No More* and Spring's *These Lovers Flew Away* implies that identity crises are not confined to a single culture but are a universal response to shifting traditions and modern pressures. Both novels demonstrate that when individuals are caught between inherited values and new worldviews, they experience ambivalence, dislocation, and the search for belonging.

Further still, the scenario of the boys caught in a clash during a hike bolsters the argument that Kulet parodied Spring. In *Moran No More*, the narrator tells us:

What transpired was neither boxing nor wrestling. They were unfamiliar with both; they simply charged at one another like two cocks attempting to injure one another. They appeared uneven, for even though they were nearly the same height, it was clear that Karane had been well-fed from the start, while Petita Legis was just recuperating from the hard life he had lived prior to reaching Pastor Stephano Tajeuo's. However, where Petita Legis had a slight edge in physical power, he compensated for it with speed, which allowed him to nimbly dodge Karane's deadly strikes (*Moran No More* 60-61).

The above is equivalent to the description of the incident in *These Lovers Flew Away*, recounted as follows:

What took place was neither boxing nor wrestling. They were oblivious to both: they merely charged at each other like two angry tom-cats, striving to defeat each other, battling in every possible manner to inflict harm on each other. They appeared to be unevenly matched, for although they were alike in height, Greg had lived a life of sufficient nourishment, whereas Billy had been significantly underfed from the beginning. Yet, they were not genuinely mismatched, as Billy had the speed of whipcord (*These Lovers Flew Away* 98).

These instances serve as evidence of plagiarism, raising issues regarding the originality of *Moran No More*.

Conclusively, the evolving striking parallelism between *Moran No More* and Howard Spring's *These Lovers Fled Away* raises questions of textual originality and authorship. Particularly in the way both narratives centre on characters negotiating identity crises within shifting cultural landscapes, while literary influence and intersexuality are common in creative writing, the degree of similarity in theme, characterisation, and narrative trajectory risks being interpreted as plagiarism rather than mere inspiration. This resemblance challenges the uniqueness of Kulet's work, suggesting that *Moran No More* may have drawn too heavily on Spring's earlier novel, thereby complicating its authenticity as an independent portrayal of Maasai identity in transition. Such concerns invite a broader debate on originality in postcolonial literature, where the fine line between creative borrowing and unacknowledged replication becomes a critical issue in evaluating a writer's contribution.

1.2.2 Kenyan Literature

Kenyan literature has undergone a significant transformation from colonial origins to a vibrant postcolonial articulation of identity, culture, and politics. Gikandi (1992), a prominent scholar of African literature, contends that “Kenyan literature exemplifies how postcolonial writers repurpose colonial language, particularly English, to existing power structures and assert indigenous narratives” (78). Similarly, Charles Onjumi (2023) emphasises that “Kenyan literature employs oral traditions alongside written forms, allowing a multifaceted exploration of communal histories and individual subjectivities” (98). These scholars underscore the hybridity and adaptability of Kenyan literary works in confronting the legacies of colonialism and modernity.

Gender dynamics and the representation of women in Kenyan literature have also garnered scholarly attention. Rebecca Nandwa (1997) stands out as a voice that has negotiated female perspectives within patriarchal cultural contexts. Deepika Bahri (1997) argues that “Nandwa’s storytelling reinvigorates indigenous female narratives and challenges stereotypical representations of women” (227). Moreover, “Ogot’s fictional works have been critically read as profound commentaries on gender, community, and nationalism in postcolonial Kenya,” as noted by Mwangi and Kabaji (*ibid*). Therefore, gender discourse remains an essential dimension within Kenyan literary studies.

Themes of migration, memory, and contestations over land remain central to Kenyan literature, reflecting broader socio-political realities. Bahri’s comparative analysis posits that “writers such as Ngugi and Mwangi use narrative strategies grounded in both European literary canon and African oral traditions to produce unique articulations of displacement and belonging”

(298). Meanwhile, contemporary scholars like Leela Gandhi explore how younger “Kenyan authors engage with trauma and personal histories, offering poignant reflections on identity and cultural continuity” (89). This dialogue between past and present underscores the enduring vitality of Kenyan literary production.

Prominent Kenyan authors such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Meja Mwangi have been pivotal in using literature to address social injustices and national identity. Gikandi highlights “Ngugi’s commitment to using Gikuyu language as a form of cultural resistance and political empowerment, marking a shift away from English language narratives” (10). In addition, Meja Mwangi’s urban-centric novels, as analysed by Bahri, reflect the struggles of marginalised city dwellers grappling with poverty and modernisation” (298). These literary contributions embody the tensions between tradition and change, centre stage in contemporary Kenyan literary criticism.

While Kenyans are very prolific writers, I focus on the representations of Ole Kulet for this study. I must note that Ngugi wa Thiongo, Meja Mwangi, Francis Imbuga, Micere Mugo, Yvone Owuor, Binyavanga Wainaina, and Mukoma wa Ngugi, among others, would offer good material for study. However, I focus on Kulet as explained below.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite Henry R. Ole Kulet’s significant contribution to Kenyan literature and his unique position as a voice for the Maasai community, there remains a noticeable gap in scholarly engagement with how his selected novels portray the evolving dynamics of identity within Maasai culture. While much of postcolonial African literature has focused on national identity, decolonisation, and the urban-rural divide, Kulet’s exploration of indigenous identity,

particularly through the themes of womanhood, moranhood, and kinship, has been largely underexplored. Scholars such as Gikandi (1992), Mwangi (1994), Musila (2015), and Micere Githae Mugo (1999) have foregrounded issues of cultural hybridity and postcolonial modernity in African literature, but Kulet's nuanced reflection on identity formation in the Maasai context through traditional and transitional values receives insufficient academic attention. The lack of critical discourse that situates Kulet's narratives within postcolonial literary theory, especially in terms of resistance to cultural erasure and assertion of indigenous subjectivities, points to a pressing scholarly oversight.

Moreover, existing studies of Kulet's works have often focused on general themes of tradition versus modernity or environmental concerns, rather than offering a sustained analysis of identity construction and negotiation among the Maasai. This research seeks to address this lacuna by examining how identity is portrayed as a dynamic and contested process in *Bandits of Kibi*, *Daughter of Maa*, and *Moran No More*. It interrogates how Kulet uses narrative to depict the fragmentation, persistence, and reconstitution of Maasai identity under the pressures of colonial history, globalisation, and internal social change. This problem is critical in contributing not only to African literary studies but also to broader conversations on indigenous identity, cultural memory, and postcolonial resistance, thereby filling a vital gap in both literary scholarship and cultural discourse.

1.4 General Objective

The overall goal of the study is to examine how Henry Rufus Ole Kulet portrays evolving identity dynamics in the Maasai in the selected novels: *Daughter of Maa*, *Moran No More*, and *Bandits of Kibi*.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

- i. Explore the themes of the Maasai culture that Kulet highlights in the selected texts.
- ii. Examine the way Western values impose ambivalences and dualities on the characters in the selected novels by Kulet.
- iii. Study how Kulet emphasises continuity of Maasai identity amidst the complex identity dynamics.

1.6.2 Research Questions

- I. What themes of the Maasai culture does Kulet highlight in the selected texts?
- II. How does Kulet expose ambivalences and duality in the Maasai culture in the selected novels?
- III. How does Kulet emphasise continuity of Maasai identity in the selected novels?

1.5 Rationale of the Study

Despite being one of East Africa's most prolific creative writers, Henry Rufus Ole Kulet remains overlooked; he has not received the critical attention he deserves. An analysis of his work is relevant not only in improving our comprehension of postcolonial African literature but also in expanding our insight into the creative trends in East African literature. Another reason from this analysis is that Kulet focuses on a unique community: the Maasai. His writings illustrate a community that strongly values its traditional cultural heritage while simultaneously accepting modernity. This complexity warrants critical examination in shaping our understanding of identity issues in postcolonial literature.

The study also holds social importance in deepening our understanding of the complexities of the social transformation process, and the Maasai identity represented in Kulet's

selected texts merits our focused attention, as he was an exceptional Maasai writer who expresses the essence of the Maasai people and presents a consistent portrayal from an insider's viewpoint.

1. 6 Literature Review

The representation of indigenous identity in African literature has been a central subject of scholarly debate, particularly concerning ethnic communities such as the Maasai. Scholars such as Wa Thiong'o (1986), Huggan (2002), Wenzel (2019), and Said (1977) have emphasised the need for literature to reclaim suppressed histories and cultural identities shaped by colonial encounters. Thiong'o stresses the importance of using indigenous languages and cultural signifiers to "resist cultural erasure" (Thiong'o 89). Meanwhile, Huggan's *The Postcolonial Exotic* critiques how global markets consume "African identities through selective exoticism" (Huggan 15). Wenzel expands this critique in her exploration of ecocritical narratives "in African writing, highlighting how land and identity are intertwined for communities like the Maasai" (Wenzel 20). Edward Said's theory of "Orientalism" remains foundational in understanding how African identities are constructed through Western gazes (362-374). While these scholars offer frameworks for understanding African identity in literature, there remains a research gap regarding how these theories apply to Maasai-specific literature by writers such as Henry R. Ole Kulet. His works uniquely centre Maasai voices and practices, requiring focused textual analysis to locate their cultural specificity within the global postcolonial discourse.

1.6.1 Overview of Maasai Identity from Global Perspectives

Global perspectives on the Maasai identity often fall into essentialist portrayals, reinforcing stereotypes of noble savagery or ecological romanticism. Scholars such as Stephanie

Beswick (2004), David Anderson (2006), Toyin Falola (2004), and Adria LaViolette (2001) examine these issues in their analyses of global discourse on African ethnicities. Beswick critiques “Western depictions of East African communities in travel literature and ethnographic accounts” (Beswick 64). Anderson focuses on land politics and how displacement alters ethnic narratives and “identity construction, especially in nomadic communities like the Maasai” (Anderson 101).

Falola interrogates African identities in “diaspora studies and how memory and mythology shape literary identity” (Falola 183). LaViolette’s archaeological and cultural studies of East Africa “underscore how historical memory and material culture contribute to identity” (LaViolette 215). These studies highlight how external discourse manipulates Maasai identity, but they rarely examine how African writers like Kulet resist or negotiate such representations in literature. A key gap is the analysis of literary responses to external stereotyping of the Maasai and how Kulet’s fiction engages or subverts these views.

1. 6.2 Overview of Maasai Identity from Regional Perspectives

From a regional perspective, African scholars such as Gikandi (1992), Mugo (1991), Mazuri (2024), and Kipuri (2023) contribute to the debate on ethnic identity and cultural heritage in literature. Gikandi explores the aesthetics of African literature, particularly how modern African writers “reconcile traditional forms with Western literary structures” (142). Mugo, known for her feminist and cultural activism, argues “for the inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems in literary representation” (52). Mazuri discusses language politics, emphasising how “English suppresses local identities unless decolonised through content” (203). Kipuri’s anthropological work provides deep ethnographic insights into Maasai customs and oral

literature, “which are critical to understanding Kulet’s authenticity and cultural anchoring” (36). However, these scholars rarely apply their theories directly to fictional narratives like Kulet’s that straddle ethnographic fidelity and narrative art. This presents a research opportunity to bridge literary criticism with ethnographic anthropology in examining Maasai identity.

1. 6.3 Representations of Maasai Identity in Literary Works

In contemporary Maasai literary representation, there is a thin body of scholarship focusing directly on Henry R. Ole Kulet’s oeuvre. While his works, such as *Daughter of Maa*, *Moran No More*, and *Bandits of Kibi*, are widely read in Kenya, they have received limited critical attention internationally. Scholars like John Mugubi (2012), Godwin Siundu (2016), and Grace Musila (2022) have initiated local critical analysis of Kulet’s engagement with Maasai traditions. Mugubi emphasises Kulet’s skill in crafting Maasai oral tradition into a written narrative.

Siundu critiques the pedagogical implications of Kulet’s texts in Kenyan schools and their “framing of indigenous identity” (1551). Mugabi examines Kulet’s gender representations, noting how Maasai “womanhood is problematised within male-centred narratives” (88). Musila situates Kulet “within broader East African literary landscapes, drawing comparisons with Swahili and Nilotic cultural expressions” (109). However, these critics often focus on thematic or educational analysis without sustained theoretical interrogation using global postcolonial perspectives. Thus, a pressing research gap lies in combining postcolonial theory and ethnographic specificity to evaluate Kulet’s literary strategies in constructing Maasai identity.

1. 7 Scope of the Study

This study critically examines the portrayal of identity dynamics in Henry R. Ole Kulet's selected novels, *Daughter of Maa*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Moran No More*, with a specific focus on how the author articulates shifting cultural identities within the Maasai community in the context of postcolonial East Africa. The research focuses on three key objectives: first, it explores the themes running through all selected texts; second, it examines the duality and ambivalence foregrounded in the texts; and third, it examines the unique styles that Kulet employs to highlight the complex identity dynamics among the Maasai.

The study is limited to textual analysis of these three selected novels, employing postcolonial literary theory to interrogate how colonial legacies, modernisation, and indigenous resistance shape individual and communal senses of identity. The scope does not extend to Kulet's entire body of work or to other ethnic communities in Kenya. Still, it provides insights that may inform broader discussions on identity in African literature.

1. 8 Definitions of Key Terms

1. 8.1 Cultural Identity

Cultural identity refers to an individual's or a community's sense of belonging to a specific cultural group, shaped by shared values, customs, and traditions. Stuart Hall, in his exploration of cultural identity, argues that “it is not a fixed essence, but a dynamic and evolving construct shaped by historical and social contexts” (392). In this view, cultural identity becomes a fluid concept rather than a static one. Similarly, Edward Said emphasises the complex interplay of identity and colonialism, asserting that “identity is continually negotiated between the 'Self

and the 'Other' in post-colonial literature” (210). These two scholars underscore the evolving and contextual nature of cultural identity, particularly in post-colonial environments.

1.9.2 Kinshiphood

I coined the word *kinshiphood* (my emphasis) to refer broadly to the theme of kinship. The concept of kinship is used in this work to refer to people with the same cultural identity, just like moranhood refers to peers who underwent the coming-of-age circumcision ritual.

1. 8.2 Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage encompasses the practices, symbols, languages, and artefacts inherited from previous generations. It serves as a link to the past and as a guide for future generations in maintaining cultural continuity. According to Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong’o, an East African author and literary critic, “cultural heritage is integral to resisting the forces of colonialism, as reclaiming indigenous heritage becomes a way of reaffirming identity and resisting cultural erasure” (101). Similarly, Gikandi notes that cultural heritage, particularly oral traditions, is often used in African literature to restore cultural pride and assert agency in post-colonial societies (56). Both scholars highlight the importance of heritage in reinforcing cultural identity and challenging colonial hegemony.

1. 8.3 Maasai Identity

Maasai identity is characterised by a deep connection to land, livestock, and traditional roles within the community, such as that of the moran (warrior) and elder. Kipuri, in her analysis of Maasai oral literature, underscores the significance of “age-set systems and initiation rites in reinforcing social structures and communal identity” (87). Henry R. Ole Kulet, in his novels,

further explores how Maasai identity is maintained through these traditional roles while also confronting the challenges posed by modernity and colonial legacies (Kulet 47). Both Kipuri and Kulet reveal how Maasai identity is both resilient and adaptable in the face of changing socio-political contexts. In this study, Maasai identity means the collective cultural values, practices, and worldviews through which the Maasai negotiate continuity and change in response to internal and external influences.

1. 8.4 Western Values

Western values often refer to the ideals promoted by European and North American societies, including individualism, rationality, and secularism. In postcolonial African literature, these values are frequently depicted as disruptive forces that challenge indigenous cultures. Spivak critiques the imposition of Western epistemologies on non-Western societies, suggesting that such values represent a form of 'epistemic violence' that marginalises indigenous knowledge systems (Spivak 94). Mohan also highlights the destructive impact of Western values on communal life "in post-colonial literature, particularly in the erosion of communal bonds and traditional ways of life" (Mohan 45). These scholars underscore the tension between Western ideologies and indigenous cultural practices in post-colonial literature.

18.5 Identity Dynamics

Identity dynamics refer to the interplay of factors that influence and shape the fluidity of individual and group identity. In post-colonial literature, identity is not fixed but constantly evolving, often due to external pressures such as colonial history and modernity, particularly western education, Christianity, urbanisation, and globalisation as they intersect with traditional structures of moranhood, womanhood, and kinshiphood within Maasai society. Barry argues that

“post-colonial texts often depict identity as 'constructed, fluid, and performative,' reflecting the instability and hybridity of post-colonial subjectivity” (Barry 86). The concept of hybridity underscores the complexity of identity formation, because “identity is formed at the intersection of multiple cultural influences, leading to the emergence of new, hybrid forms of identity” (Bhabha 113). These scholars reveal how identity in post-colonial literature is a negotiation between past and present, tradition and modernity. In this study, identity dynamics refers to the complex, evolving processes by which individual and collective identities are constructed, contested, and expressed within specific social, cultural, and political contexts.

1. 8.6 East African Literature

East African literature refers to the written and oral literary traditions of countries in the region, including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and surrounding nations. This literary tradition often focuses on themes of identity, cultural memory, and the legacies of colonialism. Charles Cantalupo notes that East African literature serves as “a powerful tool for national and cultural expression, offering a platform to explore the tensions between indigenous traditions and the forces of modernity” (78). Musila further asserts that East African fiction is deeply rooted in the region’s historical struggles but is also highly responsive to global literary trends, blending local traditions with contemporary global issues (29). These perspectives highlight the significance of East African literature in articulating cultural and national identity in a post-colonial context.

The definition of East African film and literature, as suggested by various scholars, including Cindy Magara (2020), Grace A. Musila (2015), and Edgar Nabutanyi (2020), is framed within the context of regional cultural, social, and historical specificity. I use the definition of East African literature and film as suggested by Cindy Magara, who argues that “East African

literature is deeply rooted in socio-cultural and historical contexts of countries such as Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, South Sudan, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Tanzania, encompassing both oral and written forms that reflect indigenous languages, traditions, and contemporary realities” (56). Even though Magara, particularly, focuses on film, her geographical mapping of East Africa gives this study insights.

Meanwhile, scholars like Musila and Nabutanyi highlight East African literature’s distinctiveness as a product of both colonial legacy and postcolonial cultural renaissance, marked by a fusion of local languages, narratives, and modern literary forms that engage with regional identity, history, and politics” (Nabutanyi 14, Musila 23). Together, these perspectives present East African film and literature as evolving cultural productions that engage with local realities and histories while negotiating broader African and global influences, emphasising representation, identity, and storytelling within the specific socio-political milieu of East Africa. This definition reflects a dynamic and complex cultural field that includes diverse genres and artistic practices rooted in the experience of East African communities and nations.

1. 9. Research Methodology

The study generally employs a textual analysis approach advanced by Catherine Belsey, “Textual Analysis as a Research” (2013), where she suggests that the researcher must have “a close encounter with the work itself” (160). The decision was made because of the topic’s breadth and openness, the need to fully comprehend its nuances, and the desire to investigate the viewpoints of both colonised and colonisers. As such, I use close reading of Kulets' texts, focusing on themes, characters, and stylistic devices.

Also, library methods were used to improve the textual analysis. The study examines the main texts and makes significant use of secondary sources, notably from journals, blogs, and libraries, as well as significant literary works that explored the nuances of the Maasai community's identity.

1. 9.1 Research Design

The rationale for intentionally selecting the main texts was the subject of the investigation. Texts that directly addressed the dynamic of the Maasai cultural identity were the most relevant to the research. The majority of the literary works on the topic concentrated on popular misconceptions about Maasai culture, and earlier luminaries had not yet created fictionalised versions of contemporary news coverage of the dynamics of Maasai cultural identity. Although there were not many books in this genre, I preferred reading novels over seeing films because I thought books were clearer and more thorough, giving readers more insight into the characters' inner lives. Given that the discussion centered on the exploration of the unspoken and the unseen, especially the emotions individuals attempt to conceal from the camera's gaze, it appeared fundamentally grounded in the notion that representation is never neutral but rather shaped by silences, absences, and the politics of visibility. I selected the three literary works that blended culture and fiction in order to keep the scope under control. Due to their attempts to capture the shifting identity of the Maasai population. I picked *Daughter of Maa*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Moran No More*. The literary pieces were selected because they depicted a wide range of geographical and cultural contexts that necessitated a larger set of data sources, as well as the interaction between Westerners and the Maasai community.

1. 9.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Textual analysis, which I used to examine how the dynamics of identity within the Maasai community are represented through the characters, their growth, the setting, the language, the style, and the topic covered in the work, was the primary research methodology. I accomplished this by carefully reading the main texts and relevant secondary sources, including literary analyses, critiques, and modern scholars' perspectives on the topic.

1. 10 Theoretical Framework

This study uses postcolonial literary theory as advanced by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Simon Gikandi, Mohan Rajaswari, and Homi K. Bhabha. Post-colonial literary theory is a critical approach that examines how literature reflects, resists, and responds to the cultural, political, and psychological impacts of colonialism and its aftermath. It explores how formerly colonised societies negotiate identity, language, power, and representation after the end of formal colonial rule. Ngugi wa Thiong'o's works, *Theory After Postcolonial Theory* and *Decolonising the Mind*, emphasize linguistic decolonisation as a core tenet or ideas, Bhabha, who foregrounds hybridity as a central concept in understanding cultural identity formation; Simon Gikandi, who examines the intersections between colonial history and literary expression within postcolonial discourse; and Mohan Rajaswari, who highlights the tensions between cultural purity and contemporary global influences.

In his article “Dodging the Crossfire: Questions for Postcolonial Pedagogy” (1992), Rajaswari Mohan argues that “theorists who use post-colonial epistemological frameworks see post-coloniality as an engagement with the history of colonialism rather than as a retrospective effort to restore a lost cultural purity or as a total and complete suppression of it” (28-44). The

theory then examines the consequences of colonial rule and the ongoing neo-colonial relationship, as Bill Ashcroft et al. (2003) argue in their article *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practices in Post-colonial Literature*, “post-colonial literary theory as including all the cultures that have been impacted by the imperial process from the time of colonisation to the present” (Ashcroft 78). When literature is examined from a post-colonial perspective, the goal is to ascertain the author’s message about life from the perspective of the colonised.

The colonised represents marginalisation, or a metaphor for being pushed to the margins of the mainstream social order, or the subaltern. The literary and cultural theory introduced by Peter Barry (2020) rejects what liberal humanist critics once claimed to be the universal nature of literature. When a piece is said to have a universal meaning, Barry argues that “white Eurocentric standards and practices are being subtly promoted to this high position, while all others are relegated to a secondary, marginalised function” (304). Gikandi argues that the tension between colonial domination and the desire for cultural autonomy highlights how African writers negotiate identity through narrative form. He emphasises that postcolonial texts often expose the contradictions of modernity imposed by colonialism while asserting the legitimacy of indigenous knowledge and cultural memory.

Kulet's novels demonstrate many of the concerns found in postcolonial theory. Primarily, the Maasai community depicted by Kulet is in a state of flux due to the influences and interventions of colonisation, westernisation, and modernisation. These result in the ambivalences that this study seeks to examine. Furthermore, the represented Maasai community's mode of production, pastoralism, and their insistence on preserving their traditional heritage marginalises them within the East African socio-economic landscape. At this point, Said's *Orientalism* (1977) becomes crucial to this study. It reveals the reductive ideology upheld by the

‘universalist crisis’: this ideology reinforces an asymmetrical binary division embodied in the Manichean allegory that distinguishes the ‘orient’ from the ‘occident,’ the “superior” Westerners, who are favoured, while non-European peoples are relegated to subordinate status” (86). This dualistic division portrays whites as civilised, rational, and the legitimate rulers of the world. In contrast, on the other side of this racial and cultural dichotomy, the non-white is depicted as the surrogate offspring, a scheming, instinctive, and irrational being. At the same time, the West assumes the role of the “big brother,” clearing the path, watching over him, and carrying some of his significant burdens.

However, the postcolonial epistemological framework not only dismisses this simplistic ideology employed to uphold dominion but also seeks to amend the distorted representation of the marginalised. Thus, an examination of Kulet's texts from a postcolonial perspective reveals the truth from the perspective of the marginalised or subalterns. It is accurate to regard Kulet as articulating the *Empire Writing Back*. Kulet's work invokes or seeks to revive a pre-colonial depiction of the untainted Maasai past, rejecting the contemporary world, which is marred with the blemishes of imperial immorality. This reality is well highlighted in *Moran No More*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Daughter of Maaa*.

Another dimension of postcolonial literary theory is the representation and celebration of hybridity. In Henry Rufus Ole Kulet's novels, we find a blend of the indigenous Maasai culture and Western cultural values. This cross-cultural engagement leads to ambiguities: primarily, this cultural syncretism is not entirely detrimental; similar to biological cross-fertilisation, it creates a richer breed. Furthermore, the colonial legacies cannot be discarded; they contribute to the duality of the identity of the postcolonial generation. Conversely, the cultural syncretism results in confusion. This is what Bhabha identifies as mimicry, or the ambivalence of *the white-masked*

Black men (171). This ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the postcolonial heritage, effectively expressed in *Moran No More*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Daughter of Maa*. Bhabha laments the situation of the indigenous peoples, wherein the colonised come to achieve a kind of pseudo-petrification” (78), thus causing the colonised relations to oscillate between fixations and phantoms and consequently generating uncontrollable paranoia on the part of the coloniser.

Kulet's language reflects a blend of English and Maasai, with frequent use of oral tradition elements, which sets him apart in his depiction of the dynamics of Maasai identity. In his selected novels, he uses techniques or uniqueness like stories, sayings, phrases, proverbs, and rhetorical questions. Kulet draws from the rich resources of the Maasai people. I also discovered the indigenizing of the English language. In his article *Post-colonial Residue*, Alaka Holla (2018) clarifies this phenomenon by using the term “subversion,” which describes “the post-colonial writer’s adoption of the colonial languages to local needs by transforming it into a vastly different linguistic instrument” (150). Still, the syncretic distinctiveness of Kulet's language enhances the depiction of identity dynamics in his chosen novels.

The Kuletian canon, which originated from the post-colonial East African experience, nevertheless directs my attention to the social, economic, political, and cultural circumstances of the Maasai depicted (my emphasis). Consequently, my literary study of Kulet’s chosen writings also demonstrates this. This research restricts itself to the thematic apperception of the dynamics of identity in order to remain focused. The study focuses closely on the specific texts chosen by Kulet: *Bandits of Kibi* (1999), *Daughter of Maa* (1987), and *Moran No More* (1990). Where necessary, his other writings are cited to demonstrate how he addressed the process of integrating the Maasai community as depicted in his chosen texts.

1. 11 General Conclusion

The chapter presents a foundational overview of the research, beginning with an introduction and backgrounds that contextualise the study within the broader discourses of East African literature and postcolonial identity. It identifies the research problem: a lack of sustained literary analysis on how Maasai identity is portrayed and negotiated in Henry Ole Kulet's selected novels. The chapter sets out the general objective to critically analyse the representation of identity dynamics and specific objectives that focus on womanhood, kinship, and moranhood as thematic frameworks, duality and ambivalence and styles that Kulet employs. Research questions guide the investigation, while the study's significance lies in its contribution to African literary criticism, indigenous knowledge systems, and cultural preservation. The theoretical framework draws on postcolonial theory, particularly Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and African scholars, to explore hybridity, resistance, and cultural recovery. Key terms are defined using insights from contemporary literary theorists. A review of the existing literature identifies scholarly gaps, thereby justifying the study. Finally, the chapter outlines the research methodology, qualitative research design, and data collection techniques based on textual analysis of the novels.

1. 12 Chapter Summaries

Chapter One presents a foundational overview of the research, beginning with an introduction and background that contextualise the study within the broader discourses of East African literature and postcolonial identity. It identifies the research problem: a lack of sustained literary analysis on how Maasai identity is portrayed and negotiated in Henry Ole Kulet's selected novels. The chapter sets out the general objective to critically analyse the representation

of identity dynamics and specific objectives that focus on womanhood, kinship, and moranhood as thematic frameworks, duality and ambivalence and styles which Kulet employs. Research questions guide the investigation, while the study's significance lies in its contribution to African literary criticism, indigenous knowledge systems, and cultural preservation. The theoretical framework draws on postcolonial theory, particularly the work of Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and African scholars, to explore hybridity, resistance, and cultural recovery. Key terms are defined using insights from contemporary literary theorists. A review of the existing literature identifies scholarly gaps, thereby justifying the study. Finally, the chapter outlines the research methodology, qualitative research design, and data collection techniques based on textual analysis of the novels.

Chapter two engages in thematic analysis of identity through the lenses of womanhood in *Daughter of Maa*, kinship in *Bandits of Kibi*, and moranhood in *Moran No More*. The representation of womanhood explores how female identity is shaped within patriarchal and colonial contexts, highlighting women's struggles for agency and cultural relevance in a changing society. In *Bandits of Kibi*, kinship is examined as a foundational element of Maasai communal identity, showing how family and lineage ties function as both cultural anchors and sites of transformation. The theme of moranhood in *Moran No More* investigates the shifting perceptions of masculinity and warriorhood in the postcolonial era, as young men navigate the pressures of modernisation, education, and cultural tradition. Through close textual analysis, the chapter shows how Kulet interrogates traditional roles, challenging and redefining them in light of contemporary Maasai experiences.

Chapter Three explores the duality and ambivalence present in *Moran No More*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Daughter of Maa*. It analyses how Kulet's characters live in tension between

traditional Maasai norms and modern influences, leading to internal and external conflicts. This duality reflects broader cultural ambivalence, where Western education and development clash with indigenous customs and spiritual beliefs. The chapter emphasises the psychological and emotional struggles of characters torn between progress and cultural loyalty. Through the lens of postcolonial theory, Kulet's narratives reflect the hybridity of identity formation in post-independence Kenya, revealing how the Maasai negotiate values such as duty, honour, and modernity. The ambivalences are not merely thematic but structural, shaping the novels' conflicts, character development, and resolutions.

Chapter Four analyses the stylistic techniques Kulet employs to portray the dynamics of identity in the selected novels. This includes the use of indigenous language, oral narrative structures, proverbs, and symbols. Kulet's narrative style reflects a fusion of oral and written traditions, aligning with postcolonial aesthetics that resist Western literary norms. The author also employs idioms and sayings to portray Maasai life, allowing readers to immerse themselves in the cultural landscapes. Through alternating imageries, similes, and untranslated Maasai words, Kulet gives voice to historically marginalised identities and reveals the complexity of cultural transitions. The chapter argues that style is not merely a literary tool but an ideological stance through which Kulet affirms Maasai identity and resists cultural erasure.

Chapter Five presents the overall conclusions and scholarly recommendations derived from the study. First, the study concludes that Kulet's novels offer a nuanced portrayal of identity as a dynamic, contested, and evolving process within Maasai culture. Womanhood, kinship, and moranhood serve as key sites of identity construction, each challenged and reshaped by colonial and postcolonial encounters. Second, the study reveals that identity in Kulet's works is marked by ambivalence, where characters negotiate the dual pressures of cultural fidelity and

modern transformation. Third, the author's stylistic choices, grounded in indigenous narrative forms, are integral to how identity is communicated and affirmed. Fourth, the study recommends further research into lesser-studied African authors who depict indigenous identity in transition, especially among pastoralist communities. Lastly, scholars are encouraged to investigate how Kulet's literary strategies could be used in decolonising education, developing culturally sensitive curricula, and preserving indigenous knowledge through literature.

CHAPTER TWO

MORANHOOD, WOMANHOOD, AND KINSHIPHOOD¹ AMONG THE MAASAI

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the themes of the Maasai culture that Kulet highlights in the selected texts. Specifically, I examine the themes of moranhood, womanhood, and kinshiphood as portrayed in *Daughter of Maa*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Moran No More*. As I argued in chapter one, Kulet focuses on representing identity dynamics, especially the flexibility of the Maasai culture due to the presence of colonialism in the 1800s and the ongoing imperialism in Africa, mainly in the Maasai community. At the heart of Nazifa Rashid's (2024) argument lies a striking dichotomy: the juxtaposition of a benevolent colonial mission against the stark realities of economic exploitation. While British authorities publicly espoused a commitment to civilisation, education, and healthcare, their policies were strategically designed to facilitate resource extraction, open new markets for British goods, and secure territorial advantage. Rashid argues that “this dual strategy was emblematic of a broader imperial agenda that subordinated the welfare of colonised societies to the economic interest of the metropole” (46). Similarly, Robert L. Tignor (1972) argues that “rather than completely dismantling traditional structures, the colonial government co-opted warriors, channeling warrior violence into state-sanctioned activities such as colonial policing and military service” (98). In this chapter, I focus on the thematic analysis of Kulet's three novels: *Daughter of Maa*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Moran No More*. This is done through character analysis. The chapter argues that the concept of dynamics of identity “signifies a self-contract or brand identity that is adjustable and flexible, permitting

¹I coined the word *kinshiphood* (My emphasis) to refer broadly to the theme of kinship. The concept of kinship is used in this work to refer to would bring together people with the same cultural identity just like moranhood refers to peers who underwent the coming-of-age circumcision ritual.

variations and alterations while upholding a central recognisable element” (Catherine Amiot E. et al. 8). Just like the Masaai use moranhood to build what I have called kinshiphood, their process entails a kind of dynamic that is not static. It is always negotiating the cultural forces that come from colonialism and imperialism. The dynamics of identity occur when various social identities are organised with self-structure in a way that they are all equally significant to the overall self-concept. Stuart Hall (2015), one of the most influential cultural theorists, argues that “identity is never a fixed essence, but a fluid process shaped by history, culture, and power relations” (35). He shows that when various social identities such as ethnicity, gender, and class intersect, they create hybrid and shifting forms of selfhood rather than singular identities. Hall emphasises that in modern and post-colonial societies, individuals negotiate multiple identities simultaneously, reflecting both continuity with tradition and transformation through modernity. When integration happens, relationships are formed between these distinct identities, preventing them from feeling disjointed. According to Muthoni, in *Cultural Negotiation and Identity Formation among the Maasai Youth in Contemporary Kenya* (2023), argues that “contemporary Maasai youth experience a hybrid identity shaped by both traditional practices and modern influences such as formal education and urban migration” (45). She highlights how the younger generation selectively adopts elements of Maasai culture, such as dress, language, and rituals, to assert a flexible cultural identity that responds to socio-economic change. Similarly, Daniel Kiprotich Ngeno, in “Maasai Identity, Land Displacement, and Cultural Preservation in Post-colonial Kenya” (2022), asserts that “Identity among the Maasai is deeply rooted in land and pastoral traditions, which are under threat due to ongoing land dispossession and state-driven development projects” (63). He contends that the Maasai's struggle for cultural survival is both a resistance to erasure and a redefinition of identity within a post-colonial framework.

As we see in Kulet's work, the Maasai culture interacted with Western values, and they are still managing the dynamics of interaction at the level of significant aspects of their life, such as kinship and moranhood. They are continuously blending. For instance, in *Moran No More*, Kulet shows how moranhood, the ritual of transition from boyhood to adulthood, faces extinction, while in *Daughter of Maa*, Kulet depicts the role of the modern or educated woman within a Maasai community, shifting from a traditional lifestyle for women. The theme of kinship identity is also explored in *Bandits of Kibi*. Here, Kulet represents the decline of the nation in Kenya following independence. To Kulet, the nation would be together and avoid the ethnic conflicts that affected various regions of Kenya from 1993 to 1995 if kinshiphood (kinship) was strong among the people. In the essay *Dodging the Crossfire: Questions for Post-colonial Pedagogy*, Mohan argues that "the colonised serves as a symbol for marginalisation, or a metaphor for being cast to the fringes of the mainstream social setup, or the subaltern" (270). Consequently, the theory scrutinises the repercussions of colonial domination and the ongoing neo-colonial relationship.

2.2 Critical Plot Summaries of Key Texts

In *Daughter of Maa*, Ole Kulet tells the story of a Maasai woman, Anna Nalangu, whose journey from rural pastoral life to university education symbolises the transformation of traditional communities under the weight of modernisation and gender empowerment. The novel juxtaposes the deeply ingrained patriarchal values of the Maasai with the emerging voices of educated women, especially through Mwalimu Anna Nalangu's struggle against traditional marriage and patriarchy. Nalangu's resistance is not simply personal; it is emblematic of the shifting socio-cultural landscape in post-colonial Kenya. The plot underscores the painful

tensions between custom and progress, reflecting the author's recurring concern for preserving cultural dignity while embracing change.

On the other hand, in *Moran No More*, Ole Kulet turns to the symbolic end of the moran institution, using the protagonist, Roiman Ole Mugie, to question the relevance of age-old rites of passage in the modern world. The novel centres on the internal and external conflicts Roiman faces as he straddles the expectations of his elders and the opportunities of a changing society. The plot culminates in Roiman's rejection of traditional Moranhood. On the other hand, in *Moran No More*, Ole turns the symbolic end of the Moranhood institution, using the protagonist, Roiman Ole Mugie, to question the relevance of age-old rites of passage for moranhood, for education and reformist ideals, and challenging entrenched beliefs around masculinity, heroism, and community roles. This transition narrative is rendered with emotional depth and sociological insight, framing the Moran not as a relic but as a traditional figure in the cultural reimagination of identity.

Bandits of Kibi is a socio-political novel that explores the struggles of Sam Lang in the cattle-raiding and violence-stricken region of Kibi. Tasked with cattle raiding, Ras Mento confronts rampant banditry, lawlessness, and widespread fear that have paralysed the community. The novel reveals how deep-rooted corruption, political complicity, and state neglect fuel insecurity, eroding not only livelihoods but also traditional social structures such as kinship and communal trust as Sam Lang works to rebuild community cohesion and promote justice.

Conclusively, Ole Kulet's trilogy articulates identity as a dynamic interplay between tradition and transformation. Each protagonist navigates conflicting demands from the state, the

community, and the self, ultimately redefining identity as a site of resistance and renewal. Whether conflicting gender or socio-political abandonment, these characters embody the shifting contours of what it means to belong in a rapidly changing Kenya.

2.3 Loss of the Maasai Moranhood in *Moran No More*

The main theme in *Moran No More* is the threat of modernisation to the Moran institution. Lily C. Salat in the article *A Cultural Reading of Henry Rufus Ole Kulet's Literary Presentation of Maasai Masculinity* (2017), contends that “In *Moran No More*, Moranhood is stripped of all its content as a guiding way of life” (23). The novel articulates a theory that the honourable values that have guided the Maasai people for ages have surpassed their relevance. In the article *I to I, the narrative Narrative Mirror: Fictional Autobiography and the Problem of Maasai Identity in Henry Ole Kulet's Writings* (2001), Evan Mwangi argues that *Moran No More* not only laments the fall of pre-colonial peace in favour of a corrupted modernity but also celebrates the realm of new values to which a storyteller must adapt in order to create a new identity” (8). All the characters in the novel, with the exception of Roiman's (the narrator's) grandfather, are unrepentant regarding the Maasai cultural heritage; they have forfeited their Maasai cultural identity.

Through the RoimanTopoika Ole's character Kulet foregrounds the theme of moranhood in *Moran No More*; the grandfather is represented as a very important figure in pre-colonial values. In most African cultures, the grandfather is regarded as the head of the extended family. A profound attachment binds the entire family, particularly the grandmothers and their grandchildren. Nevertheless, in *Moran No More*, the grandchildren are separated from their grandfathers. According to Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin (2003), leading

scholars in post-colonial studies, contend that “Ole Kulet’s work invokes or seeks to revive a pre-colonial depiction of the untainted Maasai past, rejecting the contemporary world, which is marred with the blemishes of imperial immorality” (45). This illustrates a loss of identity among the younger generation. It also depicts the youth's sense of disconnection. Roiman recounts their short experience with his grandfather:

We walked to my grandfather's home in the evening. He appeared to be someone who had aged. He greeted us warmly, but unfortunately, our time in town seemed to create a distance between us. Following a formal greeting and inquiries regarding the health of my mother and uncle, there was nothing further to discuss, resulting in an awkward silence. “We have to go,” I said. “Go well, my grandsons,” he responded, “and may God guide you.” We departed from him. I did not see him again (*Moran No More* 95).

The notion that the grandfather greets his grandsons enthusiastically indicates that he still values familial connections. This contrasts with the alienated young man who never saw his grandfather again; the statement “there was nothing else to discuss” suggests a profound loss of identity or disconnection (ibid). They have little in common.

Furthermore, kinshiphood, strengthened by moranhood, is lost in the younger generation: not only are they disconnected from their grandfathers, but they are also distanced from their parents. Moran did not disconnect from their parents and grandfathers, but now they are disconnected, as we were informed. During a visit to Roiman's mother and uncle, Petita Legis, Mary Auma, Seraya Ledama, and Moran, who are all now working, appear to be estranged from their parents. Moran's uncle expresses sadness, stating, “You become strangers in a home that

had got used to your frequent visits” (*Moran No More* 190). This illustrates the deterioration of family ties and the ensuing loss of identity, which is founded in moranhood. As Mwangi further argues, “*Moran No More* not only laments the fall of pre-colonial peace in favour of a corrupted modernity but also celebrates the realm of new values to which a storyteller must adapt in order to create a new identity” (7). This is exemplified in the novel when Roiman's mother confirms this reality when the young men assert that they are still Morans, and she responds in this manner:

Come in, my daughter, and demonstrate to these old men that there are no longer Morans, not by age nor by the retirement of their age group, but in the way they conduct themselves. They have become so individualistic that they require a formal invitation to come and visit. A moran never did that. He belonged to the community, and he always visited his elders (*Moran No More* 189).

Due to the individualistic character, the young men lose their identities as morans (men). The growing individualism among young Maasai men undermines their role as morans, suggesting that identity in the Maasai community is not fixed but continually negotiated in response to modern pressures.

Moran's father, Topoika Ole Mugie, experiences an even more severe dislocation. His removal from his Maasai surroundings to work in Europe reduces him to an exile. His father sees him as a “rogue” (3). This label classifies him as a renegade. Topoika Ole Mugie is depicted as enduring disillusionment and as a person seeking escape. Ashcroft et al. contend, “Ole Kulet’s work invokes or seeks to revive a pre-colonial depiction of the untainted Maasai past, rejecting the contemporary world, which is marred with the blemishes of imperial immorality” (4). He

tries to flee from society into an idealised realm, a perfect world unbound by social norms. He is unwilling to respect Maasai traditions and customs or commit allegiance to the laws of Kenya. Instead, he longs to be “free in his own way, away from town authority, to authority, roam the woods and the forest, to forest, nibble at foliage and wild fruits like a gazelle, and like a Ndorobo, to take a post-shot now and then at the game” (*Moran No More* 8). These desires are both romantic and pointless. Notably, it is in this wilderness that Mugie meets his lonely demise. He is stripped of traditional Maasai cultural heritage. Additionally, he is alienated from the Kenyan identity due to his inability to respect his authority.

Symbolically, the loss of moranhood implies a growth of a larger identity at a multinational level. For example, Kenyan identity is characterised by the weakening of tribal affiliation; Kiswahili language and English shall be Kenyan identity and replaced by the strong sense of belonging to a larger Maasai community in East Africa. The emergence of ethnic groups occurs in cities like Nakuru and Nairobi. On the premise that cities are not ancestral homes for any ethnic group, they become a favourable blend for the ethnic groups. Kulet depicts this merging through the intermarriage between the Maasai and the Luo. This is embodied in the marriage between Onyango, who is Luo, and the Kimani family, which is Masai. As the narrator tells us:

Eight months after the pre-wedding party, we were back at Joshua Kimani's home for the wedding proper. Karane had asked me to be his best man, bestman, while Sereya was the bridesmaid. There were no major activities on the eve of the wedding, save for the rehearsals that were done at the church. Ledama, Petita Legis and Jack Owuor stayed in town, while Sereya stayed with the bride at the bride's home. After the rehearsal, Karane, Sereya, Mary Auma and I were driven

to Kiamunyi, where we were to have supper before the ladies were driven back to Jerry Onyango's home (*Moran No More* 110).

Through marriage, these families have an amalgamation bond, which is symbolic of Kenyanhood. Henry Indangasi (1997) argues that “Evolving out of about amalgam of tribes who, to borrow the words of Chinua Achebe, “I had hitherto gone their several ways” (102). As such, their Kenyan identity determines the identity of the characters in the novel.

Also, Kulet portrays a society that has evolved from the traditional to the modern. This is characterised by the vast social transformation of the moranhood among the Maasai people. The traditional initiation into Moranhood, including circumcision and prolonged seclusion, was a rite of passage emphasising courage, discipline, and loyalty in the Maasai community. Today, these rituals are often shortened, modified, or skipped due to education, religious influence, or government regulations. Modern Morans may undergo symbolic rather than traditional practices, reflecting a hybridised cultural identity.

Circumcision, the ritual that enables one to transition into manhood and connects individuals with fellow initiates, has lost its cultural importance, as aptly stated in *Moran No More* by Jack Owuor: “Times have changed. It is now a hygienic measure” (*Moran No More* 70). As a result, it no longer serves as a platform for instilling Maasai cultural values, nor does it transition the initiate into moranhood. In fact, the title *Moran No More* signifies the demise of moranhood. This assertion is supported by Onyango, who states, “What we have is a ceremonious fellow who puts on a shuka (sheet), shoes and carries a transistor radio as he looks after cattle” (*Moran No More* 49). Bhabha argues that “This cross-cultural engagement leads to ambiguities: primarily, this cultural syncretism is not entirely detrimental; similar to biological

cross-fertilisation, it creates a richer dual breed” this blend of a traditional Maasai lifestyle and modern values results in a hybrid identity, which implies that the traditional identity does not completely vanish but merges with modernity to create a hybrid identity (32).

Materialism appears to be the primary driving force in the Maasai society. To be associated with the esteemed social class, one must be luxurious and willing to sacrifice one’s integrity by engaging in magendo (illegal material). Salat critiques Kulet over how he presents corruption when she says, “There is no suggestion of any possible counterforce or reform; even the conclusion is an inadequate vindication of honesty” (33). Salat perceives *Moran No More* as ineffective in confronting corruption. Salat concludes her essay as follows:

an issue such as corruption here, an eloquently voiced objection to some facet of the social order does not lessen the narratives’ conservative effect; on the contrary, by implying that the evil is natural and inevitable, and particularly by demonstrating that personal survival and family responsibility morally necessitate complicity, such fiction serves to relieve the reader of any sense of guilt, soften any feeling of outrage. And it teaches us to accept what is the most insidious and persuasive use of art (33).

In *Moran No More*, Kulet depicts corruption through characters like Mzee Za-Kale and Tumbo Kubwa. The narrator emphasises how characters are embodied in corruption. Their experiences highlight the effects of corruption on society and the struggle for integrity and dignity.

Material wealth is idolised, and the new criteria for defining one’s identity are based on social class and wealth. Roiman informs us that his uncle “was secretly proud of his massive appearance, which he thought enhanced his hair of dignity” (*Moran No More* 83). His physical

appearance serves as an indicator of his rising status. Bhabha argues that “This cross-cultural engagement leads to ambiguities: primarily, this cultural syncretism is not entirely detrimental; similar to biological cross-fertilisation, it creates a richer dual breed” (29). His newly acquired identity as a prosperous individual is highlighted by his clothing. The expensive suits set him apart from the traditional Maasai, who wore a shuka (sheet) as their customary attire. Therefore, clothing becomes a signifier of one’s identity. The desire for status and an extravagant lifestyle, as a representation of social advancement, drives certain characters towards corruption. At the top of the hierarchy, which is defined by wealth, is Mzee za Kale, who symbolises evil. His greed for riches dehumanises. Animalistic images have been employed to characterise his traits; Za Kale possesses a “gorilla-like figure” (*Moran No More* 138). He turns “his stiff neck like a rhino” (*Moran No More* 10) and intriguingly presents himself in a beastly fashion. This is evident when the narrator reveals, “Za-Kale gave his gibberish being” (*ibid*). The depiction of his physical appearance further supports his dehumanisation, as the narrator describes:

He was a bulky, thick, large-frame person with such an extended pot-belly that he was forced to sit astride. His hands hung sideways like the wings of an injured bird. His dry face was the colour of an old, overused hide, with warts dotting all over it (*Moran No More* 136).

Za-kale is depicted in an image of petrification. When the narrator shook his hand, it felt “like a lifeless limb” (*Moran No More* 137). This emphasises Za-kale's feeling of alienation from humanity. Therefore, corruption is illustrated as a danger to human sanctity and dignity, and those who partake in it forfeit their human identity. Kulet crafted a character like TumboKubwa, who shares characteristics similar to those of Mzee za Kale. Tumbo Kubwa is illustrated in the following imagery:

[It] was a head shorter than Dasman and three times as heavy, with rings of blubber around his neck and middle and an old-timer whom fate, in its most unreasonable quirk, had thrust into the realms of affluence. When the big money world was still relatively new to Africa (*Moran No More* 94).

The immense sizes of both Mzee za Kale and Tumbo Kubwa signify how they have been illicitly taken from society. They may be characterised as neo-colonial plunderers who have supplanted the White colonialists. Kulet uses exaggerated physical imagery and symbolism to depict post-colonial exploitation and the rise of local elites as neo-colonial figures, showing that colonial patterns of plunder have been internalised in modern Maasai society.

Moran No More examines how modernisation changes tradition and identity in East Africa, mainly in the Maasai community. Bhabha contends, “this cross-cultural engagement leads to ambiguities: primarily, this cultural syncretism is not entirely detrimental; similar to biological cross-fertilisation, it creates a richer dual breed” (29). The novel follows the young generation as it negotiates external-force-induced shifts in its society. It stresses the tensions between embracing contemporary lifestyle and adhering to cultural norms. Furthermore, the novel touches on corruption in some East African countries and how it affects daily life for the people. The writer shows how corruption can undermine confidence in institutions, aggravate poverty, and obstruct development. The decline of Moranhood is a result of its invasion by modernity. The transformation of traditional societies into modern ones is marked by widespread corruption.

Conclusively, the novel *Moran No More* embodies a nuanced literariness that captures the socio-cultural evolution of the Maasai community, particularly the transition from traditional

moranhood to contemporary identities. Through rich symbolism, character development, and evocative imagery, the text explores the tension between ancestral customs and modern societal pressures. The protagonist's journey reflects a collective struggle, as the once-venerated warrior role is increasingly challenged by education, globalisation, and economic shifts. The novel serves not only as a literary artefact but also as an ethnographic commentary, documenting the diminishing status of moranhood and offering critical insight into how traditional roles are redefined in the face of inevitable cultural transformation.

2.4 The Emergence of the Modern African Woman (Womanhood) in *Daughter of Maa*

Related to the change in Moranhood in *Moran No More* is the emergence of a new womanhood in *Daughter of Maa* (1987). As already hinted at in 2.2, *Daughter of Maa* is a persistent depiction of the role of the modern or educated woman within a Maasai community that is shifting from a traditional lifestyle to a contemporary one. The novel illustrates women who are working to free themselves from patriarchal oppression. Maasai traditions and customs allow men to dominate women. This unequal relationship can be examined through the lens of colonisation. In *The Metaphorical Use of Colonialism and Related Terms*, George P. Landow (2002) asserts that “colonialism in relation involves exploitation” (34). Similarly, as we see in the text and as emphasised by Spivak, “Women in many societies, especially in Africa, have been relegated to the position of ‘Other’, marginalised and in a metaphorical sense colonised” (12). Consequently, the modern woman seeks to free herself from the victimisation imposed by a society governed by patriarchal ideals.

The protagonist Anna Nalangu, the community educator, symbolises the empowered woman. As Ayu Gusti I Purnamawati and Made Suyana Utama (2019) note that “the strategy for

women's empowerment is an effort to exercise active participation and increase women's initiatives in determining the direction of goal... so that is a movement to improve living standards...”, which is important to quote this because it provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how the protagonist, Anna Nalangu, exemplifies active agency and empowerment in her community (6). She has overcome patriarchal oppression; she is financially independent and also has control over her own and her community's future. Although modern, the informed woman remains a guardian of her community's cultural legacy. In the text, the narrator tells us that Old Olodalu praises Anna Nalangu for her attentiveness to the wisdom of the elders. Oladalu says: “Many young people will not listen to the elders nowadays, and when I see one so tender, so young and learned wanting to listen, my heart jumps with joy” (*Daughter of Maa* 37). Thus, while she leads the effort to enhance her community's living conditions, she remains deeply rooted in her cultural heritage.

Ole Kulet's earlier works have not displayed a sensitive portrayal of women. There are examples where he depicts his female characters as voiceless, victimised, suppressed, and overwhelmed in *Daughter of Maa*. On the other hand, he depicts empowered female characters; for example, Mugie's wife is deliberating confronting her husband in front of their daughters, thus: “Hee, my husband, what has become of you? You have always been responsible and considerate, but of late, I do not know what has gone wrong. You do not seem to care a hoot. And you ask me whether that is all, my husband...” *Daughter of Maa* (77-88). Spivak argues that “Women in many societies, especially in Africa, have been relegated to the position of ‘Other’, marginalised and in a metaphorical sense colonised” (1). Even though a woman respects her husband, she is not entirely dependent on him. She takes the initiative to ensure the well-

being of their family. Her boldness can be attributed to her association with Mwalimu Anna Nalangu and the enlightenment that she has received from her.

In *Is It Possible?* Kulet also represents voiceless female characters, like Lerionka's mother, who is presented as impotent when her son is faced with challenges. This occurs when her son is forced to go to school when school closes, and Lerionka returns home, his mother has "fainted" (*Is It Possible?* 33), overwhelmed by the emotions of seeing him again. We are further told that Lerionka's family migrated from the village because his mother was constantly sick since he left for school. In *To Become a Man*, we encounter equally overwhelmed female characters. In our first encounter with Leshao's aunt, she becomes 'unconscious' (*To Become A Man* 41). When she regains consciousness, she emerges as disgruntled. Andrew Nyongesa (2021) critiques the literary writer's ability to represent marginal groups, such as Maaasi women, due to their heterogeneity and complex cultural dynamics. Nyongesa further argues that "the literary voice often claims authority to speak for the 'voiceless'", but this representation can be problematic because it may simplify or misrepresent the diverse realities" (45). The image of an overwhelmed woman is figuratively presented when Leshao hits a dog and "it grunted like a dissatisfied woman" (*To Become A Man* 41). The simile of an offended dog grunting 'like a dissatisfied woman' demeans women. This portrays the author's and his society's prejudiced attitude towards women. The traditional Maasai customs privilege men, and in the process suppress women. Women are rendered voiceless and inconsequential when major decisions are being made. When Leshao's uncle and his father, Ole Merresho, are deliberating on his son's circumcision, his aunt is expected to behave as a silent spectator. It is not her right to speak among elders but a privilege: "She had to speak soothingly to appeal to the elders" (*To Become A*

Man 61). Ole Merresho is shocked because this is contrary to the traditional customs. We are told: “if she were his wife, he would have flatly refused to let her talk” (*To Become A Man* 61).

The hybridised Masai identity reflects what Homi Bhabha (1994) terms “cultural syncretism, “a process where cultural elements from different traditions merge but also clash, often leading to what Bhabha calls “confusion” (23). This confusion is evident in *Daughter of Maa* through Anna Nalangu, whose presence in the Maa village destabilises traditional social structures, particularly in matters of courtship and marriage. Her intrusion complicates the relationship between Joseph Malon and Seleina, who represent contrasting forces of cultural negotiation. Obioma Nnaemeka's feminist thought, especially her theory of Neo-feminism, presents a powerful argument that African women's liberation must be grounded in negotiation, community ethics, and cultural knowledge rather than in confrontation for its own sake. Nnaemeka argues that “Western feminism often assumes a universal model of resistance, but African women's realities demand a feminism that “knows when, where, and how to negotiate” and when to resist, prioritizing harmony, relationality, and the survival of the community.” (67) Joseph Malon, described as “the most learned in the whole of Maasailand” (*Daughter of Maa* 5), embodies the influence of Western education and modern values. His prestige is rooted not only in traditional respect but also in the recognition of his acquired Western knowledge. On the other hand, Seleina represents the “ideal Maasai girl,” firmly rooted in tradition and symbolic of cultural continuity. The tension between Joseph’s modern hybridity and Seleina's traditional idealism dramatises the syncretic nature of Maasai identity in the post-colonial context, where external influences blur the boundaries of cultural purity. Kulet suggests that while hybridity enriches the community, it simultaneously threatens its stability by unsettling established social expectations, particularly those governing marriage.

The narrator wonders who else would have matched the beauty of Seleina, the daughter of Ole Mugie, “Seleina was a tall young lady, with a beautiful figure, which some of Joseph Malon’s friends had once compared to that of the goddess of love” (*Daughter of Maa* 5). She is the best trophy that they can give to their educated son. However, Malon’s attention drifts towards Anna Nalangu, a similarly educated or modern woman. Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi argues that “African womanism must recognize the particular historical, cultural, racial, and socioeconomic contexts of African women, contexts often ignored by Western feminist frameworks” (87). She holds that true liberation for African women cannot be reduced to gender alone but must encompass broader struggles against post-colonialism, militarism, ethnic prejudice, poverty, and other systemic oppressions. Malon yearns for Anna Nalangu for his sexual fulfilment. He lusts for her when she visits him at his house, Malon “groaned inwardly” (*Daughter of Maa* 103). When he gets a chance to observe her, he is captivated by her sexuality, and he lusts after her. What attracts him most is “the inviting mouth with those moist lips” (*Daughter of Maa* 57), his attraction to Anna Nalanguis in contrast to his repulsion towards Seleina. Even after their marriage, he behaves in a morose manner.

Daughter of Maa mocks male supremacy and patriarchal views when Joseph Malon competes with his father-in-law, Ole Mugie, for the affection of Mwalimu Anna Nalangu. As a result, traditional marriage values are ignored, and he shows no affection towards his wife, Seleina, symbolically betraying his customs by displacing her and diminishing her love since Seleina represents these traditions. Bhabha asserts that the cultural syncretism results in confusion” (23). Their relationship illustrates the fusion of Maasai traditions and modern ideals, and Old Olodalu’s analysis of their marriage elucidates this combination:

Olodalu reflected on what a Solemn and beautiful act it was to document the marriage of these two young individuals who possessed the ability to sustain the culture of Maa. He could not help but feel uplifted by the realization that, in their healthy young forms, Seleina and Joseph Malon held the potential of the proud features, and knowing that the groom was educated while the bride was not; the elderly woman believed that the two would connect the two realms (*Daughter of Maa* 133)

In *Daughter of Maa*, the integration of a traditional lifestyle and modern living appears to be in vain. This is represented by the conflicts in the marriage. The *Daughter of Maa*, Anna Nalangu, possesses a dual identity derived from her Maasai heritage and modernity. The blending of traditions and modernity, as presented, is the metaphor of marriage, which has also been illustrated in *Is It Possible?* However, in *Is It Possible?* Kulet uses the metaphor of a book and a spear to symbolise modernity and tradition, respectively. The author proposes the potential of merging traditional practices and contemporary values.

Conclusively, Kulet highlights literariness by carefully looking at womanhood and putting feminist ideas into a story that is rich in oral traditions and cultural poetics. The book uses literary devices like metaphor, characterisation, and thematic contrast to make the female protagonist's journey more than just a plot; it also represents resistance, dignity, and change. Kulet uses introspective narration and evocative imagery to create a compelling internal world for his female characters, especially Anna Nalangu, even though the story takes place in a patriarchal Maasai setting. Whose voice fights against the usual way of silencing women? Kulet not only claims a literary by using indigenous expressions and culturally coded language, but he also reclaims the text space for women's voices in oral literature. So, the literariness of the text becomes a form of cultural criticism that goes against traditional gender roles and supports the spiritual and intellectual abilities of women in African society.

2.4 Loss of Kinshiphood in *Bandits of Kibi*

While *Moran No More* focuses on Moranhood generally, and *Daughter of Maa* highlights womanhood, *Bandits of Kibi* examines the decline of the nation in Kenya following independence. At a smaller level, Kulet is picking from the concept of kinship among the Masaai, which is also being challenged by post-colonial dispensations. This decline is exemplified by the ethnic conflicts that affected various regions of Kenya from 1993 to 1995. In a discussion between Mbugua and Ole Kulet, Kulet revealed that “*Bandits of Kibi* is motivated by the inexplicable naivety that drives his Maasai community to attack neighbouring ethnicities” (34). In fact, Ole Kulet was compelled to leave his home in Mau, located in Enonsupukia, and move to Ndunduri, close to Nakuru town, in protest, as he could not bear the thought of his community's leaders encouraging people to assault their neighbouring tribes. To illustrate the treachery stemming from ethnic hatred, Kulet depicts the consequences of the intra-tribal conflicts that have traumatised the population around Kibibiare Valley. To highlight the significance of this ethnic hostility, he centres on the family of Ras Mento. Consequently, this family symbolises the nation, which is impacted by the tribal conflicts.

The intra-tribal conflicts have shattered the bonds that connect the family members. We meet Mama Manta, who is leaving as her husband, Ras Mento, is set to return home from prison for facilitating banditry. Mama Manta is tormented by disgrace because of her family's association with banditry. She is hesitant to host any guests in their home. According to Achille Mbembe (2006), the “post-colonial nationhood in Africa is shaped by a legacy of colonial power structures”, which continue to influence contemporary statecraft through what he calls “necropolitics”, the use of social and political power to dictate how some people may live and how some must die(143). Similarly, Gandhi explores how kinshiphood relations in post-colonial

societies are often redefined by colonial encounter, arguing that “post-colonial ethics must rethink relationality beyond colonial binaries and embrace a politics of friendship and solidarity across difference” (78). Therefore, when Inspector Daniel Dele is about to visit his friend Sam Lang, a family member, Mama Manta expresses her frustration by stating: “Nowadays we can’t even keep our shame to ourselves. Must some wretched outsider always force himself in staring and interfering?” (*Bandits of Kibi* 2). From Mama Manta’s sorrowful words, we understand that she perceives her family as ostracised and positioned at the edges of the community due to some of its members’ involvement in banditry. The family is not only alienated from the rest of the family, but its members are also disconnected from one another, which renders everything nebulous. Ottis Mopel betrays his brother Harry Lanto to the bandits due to Lanto’s attempt to uncover their father’s role in banditry. Mama Manta is resolved to eradicate the ills that have beset her family, leading to the murder of her son, Harry Lanto. Meanwhile, her husband, Ras Mento, is imprisoned for collaborating with John Mere in orchestrating the heinous actions of the bandits.

Inspector Daniel Dele connects with his anguished family after returning from a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. Dele’s return from the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Bosnia highlights the negotiation of hybrid identity within Maasai culture, where global exposure collides with local traditions. His anguish in reconnecting with his family signifies the tensions between modern professional obligations and communal responsibilities, a central dynamic of Maasai identity. This conflict underscores the postcolonial struggle to balance individual mobility with collective cultural belonging. Dele is unwavering in his pursuit of truth and justice concerning Harry Lanto’s murder, not only because he was his closest friend but also because Lanto died while in his presence. Their deep sense of belonging makes Inspector Dele

vital in the search for justice. Ras Mento appears as the embodiment of evil; he is a Villain who plots against his own son's murder. Following his release from prison, he finds rejection from all his family members except Mopel. He perceives the room prepared for him as "It is a more pleasant isolation than my cell in prison" (*Bandits of Kibi* 72). According to Bhaba, arguing that "The colonial legacies cannot be discarded; they contribute to the duality of the identity of the post-colonial generation" (65). We further understand his sense of not belonging to his family when he confides that he felt like a leper, "cut out of the body of the family" (*Bandits of Kibi* 78). His feelings indicate his loss of identity as a leader of his family. His separation from the family resembles a leper; he experiences ostracism from his family, and we learn that he suffers as "an outcast in his own home" (*Bandits of Kibi* 90). This illustrates his dispossession by his family.

Ras Mento is not only alienated from his family but also estranged from himself. This is evident in his dual personality. Bhaba argues that "The colonial legacies cannot be discarded; they contribute to the duality of the identity of the post-colonial generation" (ibid). When Mama Manta questions him about their son's murder, Ras Mento's personality shifts: "he did not know whether he was thinking his own thoughts or the other's thoughts" (*Bandits of Kibi* 102). We acquire the "sense of not belonging to himself in a prison" (*Bandits of Kibi* 102). Therefore, Ras Mento possesses a dual identity, which allows him to hide from his interrogators and to evade the pain of betraying his own son. However, despite Ras Mento's tactics to conceal himself, Mama Manta compels him to uncover the truth, and in the process, he is emotionally destroyed. Mopel is another perpetrator in Harry Lanto's murder, even though he continues as a student at Nairoua University. "He knew that Mopel had not a regular job that would have enabled him to buy three Mercs in a row, besides the lavish lifestyle that he led" (*Bandits of Kibi* 142).

Furthermore, he remains unemployed. His wealth can solely be traced back to his secret dealings with bandits. His malicious actions climax in the betrayal of his brother Harry Lanto, who is killed by bandits; initially, he was Mama Manta's cherished child. However, upon realising that he betrayed his brother, Mama Manta disowns him. This disownment is poignantly expressed through Mama Manta's words: "Don't call me mama again," she said, "I'm the only one son who you helped to be murdered" (*Bandits of Kibi* 186). Consequently, Mama Manta severs the connection that binds her son, Mopel. This signifies a loss of identity.

The entire family ultimately falls apart when Sam Lang abandons the homestead. He searches for exile away from this distressing environment. He escapes alongside his beloved, Lilian Soila. This communicates a message of optimism. *Bandits of Kibi* is a testament to existence. This is because, despite the three horrific deaths in Ras Mento's family. This is due to the successful purging of the perpetrators of banditry; from the subsequent discussion, we observe that the connections to *kinshiphood* are broken. Nevertheless, Sam Lang's getaway with Lilian Soila serves as a beacon of hope for his family's future. Metaphorically, it can be interpreted as hope for the *Kinshiphood*, after enduring the harrowing tribal conflicts.

Conclusively, *Bandits of Kibi* puts its literary style front and centre, telling a story that critically examines the problems of family ties in Maasai culture. The book uses allegory, oral storytelling styles, and reflective prose style to show that traditional community expectations and individual freedom are at odds with each other. Kulet dramatises the strains of patrilineal authority, generational rifts, and changing loyalties that make family ties harder to maintain in a rapidly changing social and cultural environment through its carefully crafted characters and their moral dilemmas. The story's literary quality is evident in its use of symbolic motifs such as land, cattle, and rites of passage. These motifs serve as cultural markers while also challenging

common ideas about Maasai kinship. In this way, *Bandits of Kibi* not only keeps the native style alive, but it also questions it, making the novel both a cultural archive and a place to think critically about how families are changing.

2.5 General Conclusion

The exploration of womanhood in *Daughter of Maa* reveals Kulet's nuanced portrayal of the Maasai woman as both the custodian of cultural tradition and an active negotiator of change through the struggles of Anna Nalangu, Kulet dramatises the tensions between patriarchal expectations and emergent forms of female agency within the post-colonial moment. Womanhood, therefore, is not a static role but a dynamic site of identity negotiation.

Similarly, *Bandits of Kibi* foregrounds kinshiphood as a unifying theme that shapes Maasai identity in times of social disruption. Kulet illustrates that kinshiphood is both a cultural anchor and a mechanism of resilience, sustaining the community against external threats such as banditry and colonial aftershocks. In *Moran No More*, the theme of moranhood highlights the fragile balance between cultural preservation and modern influences. The novel portrays moranhood as an identity in flux, challenged by education, Christianity, and state intervention, yet still symbolising bravery and unity in Maasai culture. From a post-colonial perspective, this tension illustrates Bhabha's theory of hybridity, where identity is reconstructed in the in-between spaces of tradition and modernity. Collectively, the three themes, womanhood, kinshiphood, and moranhood, demonstrate Kulet's profound engagement with the portrayal of the dynamics of identity in Maasi culture, affirming that identity is a living, adaptive process shaped by history, memory, and global encounter.

CHAPTER THREE

DUALITIES AND AMBIVALENCES AMONG THE MAASAI PEOPLE

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I examined the themes running through all three selected novels for the study. In this chapter, I explore the issue of duality and ambivalences that run through all selected texts. Henry R. Ole Kulet depicts the intricacies and conflicting sentiments of the Maasai population in his selected novels *Bandits of Kibi*, *Daughter of Maa*, and *Moran No More*. The narratives reveal the Maasai's dual identities and functions, emphasising their customary way of life as well as the modern-world challenges they encounter. Salat argues that “the characters face conflicts between maintaining their cultural heritage and adjusting to new challenges and influences” (45). Throughout the selected novels, the persistent theme of duality and ambivalence emerges as a central motif, illuminating the Maasai community's nuanced approach to interpersonal interaction and the structuring of social life. The narratives effectively foreground the tensions between the past and the present, revealing how cultural ambiguity operates not as a sign of disintegration but as a mechanism for negotiating and reconstructing identity. The portrayal of characters navigating conflicts underscores the complexities of preserving indigenous traditions amidst the pressures of modernisation. This duality is further reflected in the internal and external conflicts that shape the Maasai's lived experiences, offering a multifaceted view of a society in transition. Through a combination of rich ethnographic detail and literary imagination, Kulet's selected novels portray the affluent, intricate, and often turbulent lives of the Maasai people, emphasising both their enduring struggles and their unwavering resilience. As such, the texts not only document the challenges posed by socio-

cultural change but also celebrate the fortitude, adaptability, and depth of Maasai cultural identity.

3.2 Dualities and Ambivalence in *Daughter of Maa*

In *Daughter of Maa*, Ole Kulet persistently explores the duality and ambivalences within Maasai traditions, revealing how the intrusion of Western lifestyles unsettles a community caught between the preservation of cultural heritage and the demands of a shifting contemporary world. This tension manifests in the clash between traditional Maasai values, represented by Seleina as the ideal Maasai girl, and the Western-educated Joseph Malon, whose status as “the most learned in the whole of Maasailand” (*Daughter of Maa* 34) complicates the courtship process. The ambivalence lies in the Maasai community's admiration for Joseph's education while simultaneously fearing the erosion of cultural identity it represents. Bhabha's notion of hybridity explains this condition as a “third space” where the coexistence of two cultures destabilises fixed categories of identity” (37). Mohan reinforces this view, arguing that such dualities “both enable agency and unsettle communal stability” (14). In addition, Spivak notes that women often become the contested “terrain of cultural purity” (102), which is evident in Seleina's role as the embodiment of Maasai womanhood, burdened with responsibility of safeguarding tradition. By dramatising these ambivalences, Kulet illustrates how the Maasai community negotiates cultural continuity under the weight of colonial modernity, suggesting that identity in the post-colonial era is never stable but rather shaped through ongoing conflict and adaptation.

The imposition of Western values on the Maasai, which fiercely hold onto their customs, casts it as a mechanism of oppression, which Freire labels as “necrophilic” (65). The novel

illustrates women who are working to free themselves from patriarchal oppression. Maasai traditions and customs allow men to dominate women. This unequal relationship can be examined through the lens of colonisation. This is possible because “colonisers enforced western values on the colonised as ‘immobilizing and fixating’ (65), and colonialism... involves exploitation” Landow (34) both Freire's and Landow's assertions are supported further by Spivak’s strong view when she argues that “women in many societies, especially in Africa, have been relegated to the position of ‘Other’, marginalised and in a metaphorical sense colonised” (229). Consequently, the modern woman, as we see in *Daughter of Maa*, seeks to free herself from the victimisation imposed by a society governed by patriarchal ideals.

The protagonist Anna Nalangu, the community educator, symbolises the ambivalences and duality of having both Western values and keeping the traditions of the Maasai people. Chinua Achebe argues that “This ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretism culture or the post-colonial heritage” (76). The woman is financially independent and has control over her own and her community’s future. Although modern, the informed woman remains a guardian of her community’s cultural legacy. Bhabha further notes “The situation of the indigenous peoples, wherein the colonised come to achieve a kind of pseudo-petrification, thus causing the colonised relations to oscillate between fixations and phantoms and consequently generating uncontainable paranoia on the part of the coloniser” (93). Old Olodalu praises Anna Nalangu for her attentiveness to the wisdom of the elders. He notes that “many young people will not listen to the elders nowadays and when I see one so tended, so young and learned wanting to listen, my heart jumps with joy” (*Daughter of Maa* 37). Thus, while she leads the effort to enhance her community’s living conditions, she remains deeply rooted in her cultural heritage. Salat, in the essay “A Cultural Reading of Henry Rufus Ole Kulet’s Literary

Presentation of Maasai Masculinity” (2017) contends “the novel as addressing the struggles of the evolving status of the educated or modern women in East African communities” (45). Kulet’s earlier works have displayed a duality and ambivalence in the women. There are examples in which he depicts his female characters as duality- and ambivalence-laden.

In *Daughter of Maa* Mugie and his wife are deliberating on their daughter’s marriage, Ole Mugie’s wife out rightly confronts her husband thus: “Hee, my husband, what has become of you. You have always been responsible and considerate, but of late, I do not know what has gone wrong. You do not seem to care a hoot. And you ask me whether that is all, my husband...” (*Daughter of Maa* 77-78). Mohan argues that postcolonial identity is fundamentally shaped by ambivalence, a condition of being caught between resistance to colonial power and unconscious dependence on its structures” (42-44). Even though the woman respects her husband, she is not entirely dependent on him. She takes the initiative to ensure the well-being of their family. Her boldness can be attributed to her association with Mwalimu Anna Nalangu and the enlightenment that she has received from her.

While Anna Nalangu is admired as a teacher a maker of modern prestige, she is also perceived as a destabilising force, embodying both the pride of cultural advancement and the anxiety of tradition under threat, a contradiction that reflects the hybrid identity of the Maaai in the post-colonial era Bhabha contends “This ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the post-colonial heritage” (67). We are informed, “To a number of the village women, the mwalimu was just miraculous” (*Daughter of Maa* 10). On the other hand, the same women complain: “She has the worst charms” (*Daughter of Maa* 15). They regard her as a threat to their marriages. In *Is It Possible?* Lerionka's mother upholds ambivalence when her son faces challenges. This is when her son is forced to go to school, when school closes, and

Lerionka returns home, his mother ‘fainted’ (*Is It Possible?* 33). Because she was not satisfied with her son acquiring Western education... We are further told that Lerionka’s family migrated from the village because his mother was constantly nervous since he left for school. In *To Become a Man*, we encounter equally nervous female characters. In our first encounter with Leshao’s aunt, she becomes ‘nervous’ (*To Become A Man* 41). When she regains consciousness, she emerges as disgruntled. The image of a nervous woman is figuratively presented when Leshao hits a dog and “it grunted like a dissatisfied woman” (*To Become a Man* 41). The simile of an offended dog grunting ‘like a dissatisfied woman’ demeans women. This portrays the author’s and his society’s prejudiced attitude towards women.

The traditional Maasai customs privilege men, and in the process suppress women. The privileging of men in traditional Maasai customs highlights the duality between authority and silence, where men dominate decision-making processes. At the same time, women are relegated to the margins of communal power. Yet, this subordination is complicated in the post-colonial era, where female figures, though silenced, remain central as custodians of cultural continuity and agents of subtle resistance. Spivak articulates that “Women in many societies, especially in Africa, have been relegated to the position of ‘Other’, marginalised and in a metaphorical sense colonised” (ibid). When Leshao’s uncle and his father, Ole Merresho, are deliberating on his son’s circumcision, his aunt is expected to behave as a silent spectator. It is not her right to speak among elders but a privilege: “She had to speak soothingly to appeal to the elders” (*To Become a Man* 61). Ole Merresho is shocked because this is contrary to the traditional customs. We are told: “if she were his wife, he would have flatly refused to let her talk” (*To Become A Man* 61). However, ambivalences and duality gradually become assertive in *Daughter of Maa*.

The presence of Anna Nalangu in Maa village endangers the courtship process and the marriage between Joseph Malon and Seleina. Joseph Malon is respected by society because “he had learned all that there was to be learnt and that he was the most learned in the whole of Maasailand” (*Daughter of Maa* 5), while Seleina is the ideal Maasai girl. The narrator wonders who else would have matched the beauty of Seleina, the daughter of Ole Mugie. Seleina was a tall young lady, with a beautiful figure, which some of Joseph Malon’s friends had once compared to that of the goddess of love” (*Daughter of Maa* 5). She is the best trophy that they can give to their educated son. However, Malon’s attention drifts towards Anna Nalangu, a similarly educated or modern woman. Malon yearns for Anna Nalangu for his sexual fulfilment. He lusts for her when she visits him at his house, Malon “groaned inwardly” (*Daughter of Maa* 103). When he gets a chance to observe her, he is captivated by her sexuality, and he lusts after her. What attracts him most is “the invite mouth (*Daughter of Maa* 57). Bhabha argues that “this is identifies as a mimicry or the ambivalence of the white-masked black men, this ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the post-colonial heritage” (62). His attraction to Anna Nalanguis in contrast to his repulsion towards Seleina. Even after their marriage, he behaves in a morose manner.

Daughter of Maa mocks male supremacy and patriarchal views when Joseph Malon competes with his father-in-law, Ole Mugie, for the affection of Mwalimu Anna Nalangu. As a result, traditional marriage values are ignored, and he shows no affection towards his wife, Seleina, symbolically betraying his customs by displacing her and diminishing her love since Seleina represents these traditions. Ngugi argues that “colonialism produces a deep condition of ambivalence and cross-cultural conflict in the colonised subject by forcing them to live between indigenous identity and imposed Western culture” (18). This dualistic division portrays whites as

civilised, rational, and the legitimate rulers of the world. Their relationship illustrates the fusion of Maasai traditions and modern ideals, and Old Olodalu's analysis of their marriage elucidates this combination:

Olodalu reflected on what a Solemn and beautiful act it was to document the marriage of these two young individuals who possessed the ability to sustain the culture of Maa. He could not help but feel uplifted by the realization that, in their healthy young forms, Seleina and Joseph Malon held the potential of the proud features, and knowing that the groom was educated while the bride was not; the elderly woman believed that the two would connect the two realms (*Daughter of Maa* 133).

In *Daughter of Maa*, the integration of a traditional lifestyle and modern living appears to be in vain. This is represented by the conflicts in the marriage. The *Daughter of Maa*, Anna Nalangu, possesses a dual identity derived from her Maasai heritage and modernity. The blending of traditions and modernity, as presented, is the metaphor of marriage, which has also been illustrated in *Is It Possible?* However, *Is It Possible?* Kulet uses the metaphor of a book and a spear to symbolise modernity and tradition, respectively. The author proposes the potential of merging traditional practices and contemporary values.

Conclusively, the literariness of *Daughter of Maa* lies in its evocative interplay of language, symbolism, and narrative structures that illuminate the ambivalences and dualities inherent in Maasai traditions within the post-colonial context. Through rich, poetic diction and metaphors, the text encapsulates the protagonist's struggle between reverence for ancestral customs and the emerging call for individual autonomy and modern identity. The novel's

aesthetic power lies in its ability to render Maasai cosmology, especially the feminine connection to the divine figure Maa, as both empowering and constraining. This duality reflects the broader post-colonial condition: a landscape marked by simultaneous resistance and continuity, where indigenous traditions are both contested and reclaimed. The narrative form itself, shifting between oral storytelling and modern prose, mirrors this cultural tension, foregrounding a hybrid identity that resists simplistic categorisation and thus enhancing the text's literary and ideological complexity.

3.3 Ambivalences and Dualities in *Bandits of Kibi*

Bandits of Kibi examines the decline of the nation in Kenya following independence. This decline is exemplified by the ethnic conflicts that affected various regions of Kenya from 1993 to 1995. In a discussion between Mbugua and Kulet, Kulet revealed that *Bandits of Kibi* is motivated by the inexplicable naivety that drives his Maasai community to attack neighbouring ethnicities" (*Bandits of Kibi* 34). In fact, Kulet was compelled to leave his home in Mau, located in Enonsupukia, and move to Ndunduri close to Nakuru town, in protest, as he could not bear the thought of his community's leaders encouraging the people to assault their neighbouring tribes. To illustrate the treachery stemming from ethnic hatred, Kulet depicts the consequences of the intra-tribal conflicts that have imposed ambivalence and duality on kinshiphood or the kinship of the population around Kibibiare Valley. To highlight the significance of this ethnic hostility, he centres on the family of Ras Mento. Mbembe (2006) argues that "post-colonial nationhood in Africa is shaped by a legacy of colonial power structures" (102), which continue to influence contemporary statecraft through what he calls "necropolitics", the use of social and political power to dictate how some people may live and how some must die. Similarly, Gandhi (2018) explores how kinshiphood relations in post-colonial societies are often redefined by colonial

encounter, arguing that “post-colonial ethics must rethink relationality beyond colonial binaries and embrace a politics of friendship and solidarity across difference” (78). Consequently, this family symbolises the *kinshiphood*, which is impacted by tribal conflicts.

The intra-tribal conflicts have shattered the bonds that connect the family members. We meet Mama Manta, who is leaving as her husband, Ras Mento, is set to return home from prison for facilitating banditry. Mama Manta is nervous about disgrace due to her family’s association with banditry. She is hesitant to receive any guest into their home. Therefore, when Inspector Daniel Dele is about to visit his friend Sam Lang, a family member, Mama Manta expresses her nervousness by stating: “Nowadays we can’t even keep our shame to ourselves. Must some wretched outsider always force himself in staring and interfering?” (*Bandits of Kibi 2*). Edward Said’s Orientalism becomes crucial to this point. He says:

It reveals the reductive ideology upheld by the ‘universalist crisis’: this ideology reinforces an asymmetrical binary division embodied in the Manichean allegory that distinguishes the ‘orient’ from the ‘occidental’, the “superior” Westerners, who are favoured, while non-European peoples are relegated to subordinate status (24).

This dualistic division portrays whites as civilized, rational, and the legitimate rulers of the world. From Mama Manta’s nervousness worsening, we understand that she perceives her family as ostracized and positioned at the edges of the community due to some of its members’ involvement in banditry.

The family is not only alienated from the rest of the family, but its members are also disconnected from one another, which renders everything nebulous. Ottis Mopel betrays his

brother Harry Lanto to the bandits due to Lanto's attempt to uncover their father's role in banditry. Mama Manta is resolved to eradicate the ills that have beset her family, leading to the murder of her son, Harry Lanto. Meanwhile, her husband, Ras Mento, is imprisoned for collaborating with John Mere in orchestrating the heinous actions of the bandits.

Inspector Daniel Dele connects with his anguished family after returning from a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. Dele is unwavering in his pursuit of truth and justice concerning Harry Lanto's murder, not only because he was his closest friend but also because Lanto died while in his presence. Their deep sense of belonging makes Inspector Dele vital in the search for justice. Ras Mento appears as the embodiment of evil; he is a Villain who plots against his own son's murder. Following his release from prison, he finds rejection from all his family members except Mopel. He perceives the room prepared for him as "a more isolated place than my cell in prison" (*Bandits of Kibi* 72). Bhabha argues that "this ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the post-colonial heritage (34). We further understand his feeling of not belonging to his family when he confides that he felt like a leper who is "cut out of the body of the family" (*Bandits of Kibi* 78). His feelings indicate his loss of identity as a leader of his family. His separation from the family resembles a leper; he experiences ostracism from his family, and we learn that he suffers as "an outcast in his own home" (*Bandits of Kibi* 90). This illustrates his dispossession by his family.

Ras Mento is not only alienated from his family but also estranged from himself. This is evident in his dual personality. When Mama Manta questions him about their son's murder, Ras Mento's personality shifts: "he did not know whether he was thinking his own the other's thoughts" (*Bandits of Kibi* 102). In their article "The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practices in Post-colonial Literature", Bill Ashcroft et al. (2003) argue that "post-colonial literary theory as

including all the cultures that have been impacted by the imperial process from the time of colonisation to the present” (Bill Ashcroft et al 76). We acquire the “sense of not belonging to himself in a prison” (*Bandits of Kibi* 102). Therefore, Ras Mento possesses a duality of identity, which allows him to hide from his interrogators and to evade the pain of betraying his own son. However, despite Ras Mento’s tactics to conceal himself, Mama Manta compels him to uncover the truth, and in the process, he is emotionally destroyed. Mopel is another perpetrator in Harry Lanto’s murder, even though he continues as a student at Nairoua University, “he drives a Merc and leads a lavish lifestyle” (*Bandits of Kibi* 142).

Furthermore, he remains unemployed. His wealth can solely be traced back to his secret dealings with bandits. His malicious actions climax in the betrayal of his brother Harry Lanto, who is killed by bandits; initially, he was Mama Manta’s cherished child. However, upon realising that he betrayed his brother, Mama Manta disowns him. This disownment is poignantly expressed through Mama Manta’s words: “Don’t call me mama again,” she said, “I’m the only one son who you helped to be murdered” (*Bandits of Kibi* 186). Consequently, Mama Manta severs the connection that binds her son, Mopel. This signifies a loss of identity.

The entire family ultimately falls apart when Sam Lang abandons the homestead. He seeks exile from this distressing environment. He escapes alongside his beloved, Lilian Soila. This communicates a message of optimism. *Bandits of Kibi* is a testament to existence. This is because, despite the three horrific deaths in Ras Mento’s family. We are told, “There was still something worth celebrating in life” (*Bandits of Kibi* 236). This is due to the successful purging of the perpetrators of banditry; from the subsequent discussion, we observe that the connections that unite Ras Mento’s family are broken. Nevertheless, Sam Lang's getaway with Lilian Soila

serves as a beacon of hope for his family's future. Metaphorically, it can be interpreted as hope for the nation after enduring the harrowing tribal conflicts.

Conclusively, the literariness of *Bandits of Kibi* emerges through its dynamic narrative style and symbolic exploration of the tensions between Maasai traditions and the socio-political transformations of the post-colonial era. The text interweaves oral idioms, allegory, and fragmented storytelling to evoke a world in flux, one where heroism, rebellion, and identity are constantly redefined. Through the portrayal of the “bandit” figure, the novel questions the moral binaries imposed by colonial and post-colonial authority, revealing the ambivalence embedded within Maasai cultural values such as honour, loyalty, and communal duty. These traditions are neither wholly rejected nor wholly romanticised; instead, they are interrogated as sites of conflict and resilience. The narrative voice vacillates between critique and nostalgia, highlighting a dual consciousness that is both critical of colonial disruption and wary of modern disillusionment. This complexity deepens the work’s literary texture, as it uses the trope of outlaw resistance to explore the paradoxes of liberation and loss in post-colonial identity formation.

3.4 Dualities and Ambivalences in *Moran No More*

The main themes in *Moran No More*, are dualities and ambivalences in the Moran institution. In *A Cultural Reading of Henry Rufus Ole Kulet’s Literary of Maasai Masculinity* (2017), Gikandi contends, “in *Moran No More*, Maasai identity is stripped of all its content as a guiding way of life” (33). The novel articulates a theory that the honourable values that have guided the Maasai people for ages have surpassed their relevance. “*Moran No More* laments the disappearance of pre-colonial peace in favour of a tainted modernity, while also celebrating the realm of new values to which a narrator must adapt in order to create a new identity” (Evan 1999, Meja 1977, Won-Kyong 1997). All the characters in the novel, with the exception

of Roiman's (the narrator's) grandfather, are unrepentant regarding the Maasai cultural heritage; they have forfeited their Maasai cultural identity.

Kulet highlights the grandfather to make a statement that he is important to the family and community. As Neema Laizer (2022) affirms that, "In most African cultures the grandfather is regarded as the head of the extended family" (45). A profound attachment binds the entire family, particularly the grandmothers and their grandchildren. Nevertheless, in *Moran No More*, the grandchildren are separated from their grandfathers. This illustrates a loss of identity among the younger generation. It also depicts the youth's sense of ambivalence and duality. Bhabha contends, "This ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the post-colonial heritage (ibid). Roiman recounts their short experience with his grandfather:

We walked to my grandfather's home in the evening. He appeared to be someone who had aged. He greeted us warmly, but unfortunately, our time in town seemed to create a distance between us. Following a formal greeting and inquiries regarding the health of my mother and uncle, there was nothing further to discuss, resulting in an awkward silence. "We have to go." I said. "Go well, my grandsons", he responded, "and may God guide you." We departed from him. I did not see him again (*Moran No More*, 95).

The notion that the grandfather greets his grandsons enthusiastically indicates that he still values familial connections. These contrast with the alienated young who never saw his grandfather again; the statement: "there was nothing else to discuss" (ibid) suggests a profound loss of identity and gain of dual identity.

Furthermore, the younger generation is not just disconnected from their grandfathers; they are also distanced from their parents. During a visit to Roiman's mother and uncle, Petita Legis, Mary Auma, Seraya Ledama and Moran, who are all now working, appear to be estranged from their parents. Moran's uncle expresses ambivalences, stating: "you become strangers in a home that had got used to your frequent visits" (*Moran No More*, 190). This illustrates the deterioration of family ties and the ensuing ambivalence, which is founded in duality. Gikandi argues that African identity in postcolonial literature is fundamentally shaped by a condition of duality, created by the simultaneous presence of indigenous tradition and Western modernity within the African subject" (16). In *Reading the African novel*", Gikandi explains that colonial encounter produced an African consciousness that is 'split between two cultural worlds', resulting in an identity that is neither purely traditional nor fully Western. This duality creates an ongoing tension and ambivalence for practitioners who must navigate between individual patient rights and deeply embedded family and cultural obligations, illustrating a permanent negotiation between these two ethical systems. This can be ascribed to the individualistic tendencies of contemporary society. This stands in contrast to the communal ethos in traditional Maasai culture. Moran's mother confirms this reality when the young men assert that they are still Morans, and she responds in this manner:

Come in, my daughter and demonstrate to these old men that there are no longer Morans, not by age nor by the retirement of their age group, but in the way they conduct themselves. They have become so individualistic that they require a formal invitation to come and visit. A moran never did that. He belonged to the community, and he always visited his elders (*Moran No More* 189).

Due to the individualistic character, the young men lose their identities as morans.

Moran's father, Topoika Ole Mugie, experiences an even more severe anxiety. His removal from his Maasai surroundings to work in Europe reduces him to an exile. His father sees him as a "dual" (*Moran No More* 3). Mohan argues that "the representation of African identity in postcolonial literature is deeply shaped by the historical entanglement between African societies and the global structures of imperial power" (88). This representation of Maasai culture becomes staged and selective, diminishing the integrity of traditional practices and leading to new, hybrid meanings that are neither fully authentic nor wholly inauthentic. This label classifies him as someone with dualidentity. Topoika Ole Mugie is depicted as enduring ambivalence and as a person seeking escape. He tries to flee from society into an idealised realm, a perfect world unbound by social norms. He is unwilling to respect Maasai traditions and customs or commit allegiance to the laws of East African nations such as Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda. Instead, he longs to be "free in his own way, away from town authority, roam the woods and the forest, nibble at foliage and wild fruits like a gazelle, and like a Ndorobo take a post-shot now and then at the game" (*Moran No More* 8). These desires are both romantic and pointless. Notably, it is in this wilderness that Mugie meets his nervous demise. Mohan argues that "theorists who use post-colonial epistemological frameworks see post-coloniality as an engagement with the history of colonialism rather than as a retrospective effort to restore a lost cultural purity or as a total and complete suppression of it" (27). He is stripped of traditional Maasai cultural heritage. Additionally, he is alienated from the East African identity due to his inability to respect his authority.

Kenyan identity is characterised by the weakening of tribal affiliation, where Kiswahili language becomes a Kenyan identity and replaces a strong sense of belonging to Maasainess. The emergence of ethnic groups occurs in cities like Nakuru and Nairobi. On the premise that cities are not ancestral homes for any ethnic group, they become a favourable blend for the ethnic groups. Kulet depicts this merging by the intermarriage between the Maasai and the Luo. This is embodied in the marriage between Onyango's family, which is Luo, and the Kiimani family, which is Maasai. As we informed

Eight months after the pre-wedding party, we were back at Joshua Kimani's home for the wedding proper. Karane had asked me to be his bestman while Sereya was the bridesmaid. There were no major activities on the eve of the wedding, save for the rehearsals that were done at the church. Ledama, Petita Legis, and Jack Owuor stayed in town, while Sereya stayed with the bride at the bride's home. After the rehearsal, Karane, Sereya, Mary Auma and I were driven to Kiamunyi, where we were to have supper before the ladies were driven back to Jerry Onyango's home (*Moran No More* 110).

Bhabha contends, "Mimicry or the ambivalence of the white-masked black men, this ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the post-colonial heritage (23). The amalgamation of these families through marriage symbolises the East African duality and ambivalence. Henry Indangasi (2003) argues that "evolving out amalgam of tribes who, to borrow the words of Chinua Achebe, 'I had hitherto gone their several ways,'" their nationhood, which determines the identity of the characters in the novel (9).

Kulet portrays a society that has evolved from tradition to modernity. This is in line with Bhabha's view that "mimicry or the ambivalence of the white-masked black men, this ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the post-colonial

heritage” (ibid). This, as seen in the texts, is characterised by duality and ambivalence. Therefore, standards for defining identity also shift; the age-group system, which was traditionally a source of identity for its members, is no longer a viable parameter in the modern set-up as portrayed in *Moran No More*. Roiman, for example, has no age-group; he testified that he was circumcised and “there was no ceremony...there was only a simple operation done on me with only a doctor and me in the room” (*Moran No More* 70). Clearly, from Roiman’s circumstances, circumcision, the ritual that enables one to transition into manhood and connects individuals with fellow initiates, has lost its cultural importance. It is “now a hygienic measure” (*Moran No More* 70). As a result, it no longer serves as a platform for instilling Maasai cultural values, nor does it transition the initiate into moranhod. In fact, the title *Moran No More* signifies the demise of Moranhood.

Still, the loss of moranhod is expressed in Onyango's assertion: “what we have is a ceremonious fellow who puts on a shuka (sheet), shoes and carries a transistor radio as he looks after” (*Moran No More* 49). “A mimicry or the ambivalence of the white-masked black men” (45), this ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the post-colonial heritage. This blend of a traditional Maasai lifestyle and modern values results in a hybrid identity, which implies that the traditional identity does not completely vanish, but merges with modernity to create a hybrid identity. The decline of Moranhood is a result of its invasion by modernity. For instance, in *Is It Possible?* Lerionka’s father informs his son, “My son is Kanankai, my family is Ole Sururu, my age-group Litalala called me Osokoni” (*Is It Possible?* 3). We realise that one age group identifies him, for instance, Iltalala. We also learn that age-mates gave one a praise name, for instance, Ole Sururu’s age-mates named him

Osokoni. However, these parameters are no longer viable in the modern set-up, which is a loss to cultural identity.

Materialism appears to be the primary driving force in the Maasai society. To be associated with the esteemed social class, one must be luxurious and willing to sacrifice one's integrity by engaging in magendo (illegal material). Salat (2017) critiques Kulet in terms of how he presents corruption. Salat's concluding remarks state that: "There is no suggestion of any possible counterforce or reform; even the conclusion is an inadequate vindication of honesty" (23). Salat perceives *Moran No More* as ineffective in confronting corruption. Salat concludes her essay thus:

an issue such as corruption here, an eloquently voiced objection to some facet of the social order does not lessen the narratives' conservative effect; on the contrary, by implying that the evil is natural and inevitable, and particularly by demonstrating that personal survival and family responsibility morally necessitate complicity, such fiction serves to relieve the reader of any sense of guilt, soften any feeling of outrage. And it teaches us to accept what is the most insidious and persuasive use of art (9).

Corruption in *Moran No More* addresses the issue of corruption in the community and its impact on the people. The novel highlights the struggles residents face due to corruption among the Maasai and officials. It emphasises the need for honesty and integrity in leadership to ensure the well-being of the community. The novel illustrates the consequences of modernity's relation to corruption. The transformation of traditional societies into modern ones is marked by widespread corruption

Material wealth is idolised, and the new criteria for defining one's identity are based on social class and wealth. Roiman informs us that his uncle "was secretly proud of his massive appearance, which he thought enhanced his hair of dignity" (*Moran No More* 83). His physical appearance serves as an indicator of his rising status. His newly acquired identity as a prosperous individual is highlighted by the clothing he wears. The expensive suits set him apart from the traditional Maasai, who were dressed in a shuka (sheet), the customary attire. Therefore, clothing becomes the duality and ambivalence of one's identity. Bhabha argues that "Identifies as mimicry or the ambivalence of the white-masked black men", this ambivalent identification cannot be separated from the syncretic culture or the post-colonial heritage (ibid). The desire for status and an extravagant lifestyle as a representation of advancement in social class drives certain characters towards corruption. At the top of the hierarchy, which is defined by wealth, is Mzee za Kale, who symbolises evil. His greed for riches dehumanises. Animalistic images have been employed to characterise his traits; Za Kale possesses a "gorilla-like figure" (*Moran NoMore*138). He turns "his stiff neck like a rhino" (*Moran No More* 138) and intriguingly presents himself in a beastly fashion. This is evident when the narrator reveals, "Za-Kale gave his gibberish being" (ibid). The depiction of his physical appearance further supports his dehumanisation, as the narrator describes:

He was a bulky, thick, large-frame person with such an extended pot-belly that he was forced to sit astride. His hands hung sideways like the wings of an injured bird. His dry face was the colour of an old, overused hide, with warts dotting all over it (*Moran No More* 136).

Za-kale is depicted in an image of petrification. When the narrator shook his hand, it felt “like a lifeless limb” (*Moran No More* 137). This emphasises Za-kale’s feeling of alienation from humanity. Therefore, corruption is portrayed as a threat to human sanctity and dignity, and those who engage in it forfeit their humanity. Kulet crafted a character like Tumbo Kubwa, who shares characteristics similar to those of Mzee za Kale. Tumbo Kubwa is illustrated in the following imagery: “was a head shorter than Dasman and three times as heavy, with rings of blubber around his neck and middle and an old-timer whom fate, in its most unreasonable quirk, had thrust into the realms of affluence “when the big money world was still relatively new to Africa” (*Moran No More* 23)). The immense sizes of both Mzee za Kale and Tumbo Kubwa signify how they have been illicitly taken from society. They may be characterised as neo-colonial plunderers, who have supplanted the white colonialists. The transformation of traditional societies into modern ones is marked by widespread corruption Kulet’s *Moran No More* is an affirmation of East African hood and by extension African hood. Kulet transcends ethnic consciousness to encompass an East African consciousness. Hence, the youth’s African identity becomes paramount, while his other identities, for example, Moranhood and ethnicity, are the periphery. As Kulet explores the dynamics of identity among the Maasai, not only is Moranhood being challenged, but a new sense of ambivalences and duality is also created when the Western culture mixes with the Masaai culture.

Conclusively, the literariness of *Moran No More* is rooted in its poignant interrogation of Maasai Masculinity and cultural identity through the lens of post-colonial disillusionment and transformation. Employing a blend of lyrical prose, introspective monologues, and intertextual references to oral traditions, the novel dramatises the internal conflict of the characters, the former morans as they navigate the crumbling bridge between ancestral valour and the

encroaching demand of modern nationhood. This ambivalence is rendered through a narrative structure that oscillates between past and present, ritual and rupture, thus emphasising the duality of cultural preservation and adaptation. Symbolic decline of the Moran not only reflects the erosion of traditional warriorhood but also questions the place of indigenous values in a world reshaped by colonial legacies and global modernity. Through its layered storytelling and symbolic imagery, such as the ceremonial spear, now ornamental rather than functional, the alienation is bred by rapid cultural shifts. This aesthetic and thematic complexity embodies the broader post-colonial dilemma of forging identity amidst fragmentation, making *Moran No More* a deeply literary reflection on Maasai cultural metamorphosis.

3.5 Conclusion

The chapter examined the matters of duality and ambivalences in the selected novels: Henry Rufus Ole Kulet's *Bandits of Kibi*, *Moran No More* and *Daughter of Maa*. It investigates the characters' battles with societal expectations and conflicting identities. The novels emphasise the conflict between contemporary influences and traditional values. Each narrative depicts characters grappling with the effects of their intricate interactions with culture, family, and personal aspirations on their life. The purpose of the chapter is to demonstrate how ambivalence and duality affect the characters' choices and development.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTINUITY OF MAASAI IDENTITY AMIDST THE COMPLEX IDENTITY DYNAMICS

4.0 Introduction

While the last two chapters explore the themes run through in selected novels and dualities and ambivalences in the selected texts to show the negotiation between Maasai traditions and Western values, this chapter examines the stylistic techniques used by Ole Kuletto to depict the negotiation between Maasai traditions and Western values. Kuletto deploys a rich palette of stylistic techniques, including proverbs, symbolism, metaphors, idioms, sayings, untranslated Maasai words, imageries, and similes. These techniques not only enhance the literariness of his selected novels but also deepen the reader's understanding of the shifts occurring in the Maasai following colonial intervention. Drawing on postcolonial literary theory, particularly the concepts of hybridity, resistance, and cultural negotiation as articulated by theorists such as Homi K. Bhabha, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Gayatri Spivak, and others, the chapter explores how Kuletto stylistically represents cultural endurance and transformation.

4.1 Symbolism and Imagery: Metaphors, Similes

Kuletto employs a wide range of images and symbols in *Bandits of Kibi*, *Moran No More*, and *Daughter of Maasai* as a crucial stylistic strategy for sustaining the continuity of Maasai identity amidst the shifting dynamics of cultural transformation. Kuletto's metaphors often embody the tension between tradition and modernity, such as equating moranhood to a shield against the storms of change. This highlights the community's resistance to external forces of colonial and postcolonial disruption. His similes comparing Maasai rituals, cattle, and landscapes to sacred anchors of belonging reinforce the persistence of cultural memory despite generational shifts.

Vivid imagery, particularly of cattle as wealth and markers of identity, or of the vast savannahs as embodiments of freedom and ancestral connection, situates Maasai values within a timeless natural order. Furthermore, symbolism where the spear represents both protection and cultural pride, and marriage rites symbolise communal survival, provides a narrative framework through which Maasai identity is negotiated and reasserted across contexts of hybridity.

Ole Kulet strategically uses metaphors to depict the tension between traditional Maasai identity and the encroaching Western influence. We see metaphors that highlight the conflict of identity. In *Daughter of Maa*, the metaphor Mrs Mugie says to her father, Ole Ngasharr, when she was talking about how to teach young Maasai how to collect firewood, “My soul was tethered like a calf awaiting its fate” (*Daughter of Maa* 47). This represents the protagonist’s internal conflict between familial loyalty and personal agency. The phrase, as we were told by Joseph Malon, when she tells Ngoto Nana to be consistent in cattle raids, “My heart was a dry ground, empty and cracked” (*Daughter of Maa* 63), metaphorically illustrates emotional disillusionment with cultural constraints.

Another example of metaphorical expression is when Joseph Malon says to Olodalu in Sam’s house, “education was the new spear, but not all warriors knew how to wield it” (*Daughter of Maa* 112). Joseph’s expression clearly shows the cultural ambiguity faced by the educated youth. Malon says to Anna Nalangu during their conversation, “Her dreams were dust storms, powerful but directionless” (*Daughter of Maa* 98), to convey the uncertainty about identity amid conflicting traditions. Finally, Richard Lanto also says to his father, Topoika Ole Mugie, during lunchtime, “his shadow no longer walked with him” (*Daughter of Maa* 135). It metaphorically conveys the fragmentation of self that arises when a person is torn between two cultural worlds. In Maasai cosmology and broader African oral traditions, one’s shadow is not

just a physical phenomenon; it symbolises the soul, integrity, and alignment of a person with their community. To suggest that a man's shadow has abandoned him is to imply that he has become alienated from his roots, losing the balance between who he is and who he is becoming. In the context of Maasai identity amidst complex modern transformations, the line illustrates how Western education and urban exposure disrupt communal cohesion. As Emmanuel Obiechina (1992) posits, "metaphoric expressions in African literature often embody cultural crossroads" (22). Similarly, Mohan (1994) argues that "metaphor in postcolonial texts operates a 'vehicle of hybridity', allowing traditional and colonial discourses to merge" (223). These metaphors portray the ambivalence faced by characters trying to reconcile ancestral customs with Western ideologies. Through metaphors, Kulet articulates the evolving interiority of the Maasai subjected to postcolonial tensions, emphasising identity as a contested terrain between heritage and change.

Some metaphors highlight the erosion of traditional identity in *Moran No More*. We, for instance, see the disintegration of traditional moranhood under Western influence. Ole Sopia says to Ole Masi during the discussion on how to use money in Nouak city, "I walked like a lion in the city mirrors", which reflects the disorientation of the modern Maasai warrior in urban environments (*Moran No More* 33). Mrs Tajeuo tells Olodalu, during their conversation on how to plan a traditional ceremony, "My heart was a battlefield of drums and church belly" (*Moran No More* 41), which shows the internal clash between cultural rituals and Christian doctrine. The metaphor of the spear, as we see in Petita Legi telling Olodalu, during the traditional circumcision ceremony, "My father was a spear dulled by books" (*Moran No More* 58), depicts the tension between intellectual enlightenment and warrior valour. Lastly, as Pastor Tajeuo tells Nana in the church, "my feet were bare, but his mind wore boots," this illustrates the hybrid

consciousness of a character shaped by both worlds (*Moran No More* 66). As Boehmer (2005) explains, metaphors in postcolonial literature “reveal the contested terrain of belonging” (119).

Similarly, Mohan notes that metaphors construct “hybrid textual identities negotiating modernity” (10). Barry adds that “metaphor in postcolonial fiction often encodes conflict between cultural systems” (20). Kulet’s metaphors thus underline the complex realities of young Maasai men grappling with tradition and change. Through metaphor, Kulet articulates the nuanced psychological and cultural displacement experienced by morans navigating between ancestral roles and modern life. In *Daughter of Maa*, Kulet employs similes to illuminate the precarious balance between tradition and modernity. For instance, Anna Nalangu, as a protagonist in the novel, expresses confusion when she is described as being “like a calf separated from its mother” (*Daughter of Maa* 70), symbolising the disorientation of Maasai youth caught between schooling and pastoral life. Another simile, Langu compares the erosion of cultural authority by telling Ole Ngasharr to “ashes blown by the wind” (*Daughter of Maa* 67), highlighting the fragility of Maasai customs in a Westernised setting. Finally, the clash of values is captured when modernity “enters the village like an uninvited guest”, underscoring its disruptive presence. Ngugi argues that “similes rooted in indigenous imagery resist colonial narratives by anchoring experience in local metaphors” (7). Similarly, Winnie N. Ndirangu (2015) observes that “Kulet’s pastoral similes carry cultural resonance that Western equivalents cannot capture” (52). Such comparisons dramatise Maasai anxieties in ways that bridge oral tradition and written literature.

In *Bandits of Kibi*, similes play a central role in linking social disintegration to cultural memory. Corrupt leaders are described as “like hyenas circling a carcass” (*Bandits of Kibi* 56) by Mama Manta in an evening meeting, portraying greed and betrayal against the communal

ethos of Maasai kinshiphood. Resistance fighters, on the other hand, are likened to “embers hidden under ashes” (*Bandits of Kibi* 69), symbolising suppressed but enduring cultural pride. Mama Manta also portrays the encroachment of modern law enforcement as “like rain on dry soil” (*Bandits of Kibi* 48), bringing order but simultaneously eroding traditional justice mechanisms. Fanon interprets such metaphors as revolutionary tools reshaping how oppressed communities perceive themselves (76). Joseph Kilonzo (2001) extends this by suggesting that “Kulet’s similes create ethical contrasts between Maasai communalism and Western individualism” (64). Stylistic devices dramatise negotiation by holding both systems in tension rather than privileging one.

Moran No More uses similes to dramatise the crisis of Moranhood under Western influence. The young warriors are portrayed as being “like lions without claws” (*Moran NoMore* 43), reflecting the emasculation that comes with abandoning cattle riding and ritual initiation. Education is depicted as a “like a double-edged sword”: a tool that cuts both ways, opening opportunities while severing ties to ancestral identity. Roiman’s alienation is described by Ole Mugeas “like a shadow chasing the body” (*Moran No More* 78), emphasising the inevitability of estrangement from traditional mores. Bhabha suggests that “such imagery reflects hybridity, where identity is fractured yet generative” (32). Similes in Kulet’s writing reproduce oral traditions of storytelling, making the novels’ cultural archive.

Kulet’s symbolic imagery throughout *Bandits of Kibi* dramatises the shifting socio-political landscape of the Maasai. Karane Sereya tells Jack Owuor in the class, “The image of a traditional warrior’s spear rusting beside a police uniform” (*Bandits of Kibi* 50) symbolises the transition from indigenous defence to colonial government. Topoika Ole Muge warns his son about cattle raids as a cultural identity. This recurring motif of withered cattle bones along

asphalt roads” represents the decay of pastoral life due to modernisation (*Bandits of Kibi* 73). The symbolic act of a boy burning his shuka to wear a school blazer” underscores a conscious break from tradition” (*Bandits of Kibi* 194). Boehmer explains that symbolic imagery in postcolonial literature “foregrounds the fracture of cultural continuity” (137). Said asserts that “symbols in colonial narratives often embody the struggle for space and self-definition” (25). Kulet’s symbolism deepens the reader’s understanding of identity as a fragile and transforming construct. Through visual symbolism and resonant imagery, Kulet illustrates the loss, adaptation, and reinvention of Maasai identity in a postcolonial world.

Kulet's metaphorical language in *Bandits of Kibi* reveals the psychological and social struggles that Maasai individuals face as they balance tradition and Western enculturation. Ras Mento told us, “He carried the shield of a warrior and the pen of a stranger”, which evokes the internal conflict between traditional courage and foreign education (*Bandits of Kibi* 31). Sam Lang says, to Ndara-Menye in a traditional ceremony, “His voice was thunder in the hills but a whisper in the city”, which illustrates the diminishing power of traditional authority in modern urban spaces (*Bandits of Kibi* 59). Setia says, “Their land was a lion's chains” 102), metaphorising the colonised and constrained state of the Maasai homeland (*Bandits of Kibi*). Mohan argues that in postcolonial fiction, it acts as a “discursive space where cultural contradiction becomes intelligible” (45). Barry further emphasises that “postcolonial metaphors often express the in-betweenness of cultural identity” (201). Kulet's use of metaphor underscores the Maasai's internal conflict as they navigate dual worlds. Through metaphor, Kulet deftly explores the layered identities of Maasai people whose lives are shaped by both ancestral heritage and foreign ideologies.

Kulet's evocative use of imagery and symbolism conveys the tensions and transformations within the Maasai society. "The recurring image of broken spears lying beside briefcases" symbolises the uneasy coexistence of warrior tradition and white-collar aspiration (*Moran No More* 49). Roiman tells Ole Muge in the market, "The dusty footprints of a moran leading into a courtroom" symbolise the transition from physical valour to legal rationalism (*Moran No More* 72). Jack Owuor is saying to Karane Sereya, at circumcision ceremony "The ceremonial burning of a warrior's shuka marks symbolic renunciation of tradition for modern status (*Moran No More* 88). Lastly, Ole Muge tells his children during supper "the image of a young man standing before a mirror with his earring removed" encapsulate the cultural identity crisis in the Maasai community (*Moran No More* 104). As Achille Mbembe notes, symbolic imagery in African fiction "marks contested ownership of time and history" (75), Boehmer maintains that postcolonial symbolism dramatises "the ongoing negotiation of place, gender, and cultural power" (134). Said argues that "such symbols are critical in articulating resistance and hybrid subjectivity" (216). Kulet's imagery poignantly expresses how Maasai youth stand at the crossroads of tradition and transformation. Through rich symbolism and visual motifs, Kulet dramatises the personal and communal dilemmas arising from Maasai encounters with Western values.

Kulet relies heavily on imagery and symbolism to illustrate the emotional weight of cultural tension. Jack Owuor expresses to Roiman in the class, "The recurring image of cattle horns placed at doorposts represents ancestral blessings and pride" (*Daughter of Maa* 19). The symbolic scene of a broken spear at a "graduation ceremony" contrasts warrior tradition with academic success (*Daughter of Maa* 66). The recurring image of shirts stained with ochre (*Daughter of Maa* 77) depicts cultural mixing and confusion. Moruanke tells Roiman to have an

acacia tree, “The dying acacia tree in the village centre” symbolises the erosion of cultural rootedness (*Daughter of Maa* 103). Finally, the symbolic dream of a “two-headed lion” by Ole Ngassharr illustrates internal and societal conflict over identity (*Daughter of Maa* 118). This can be understood, as Boehmer posits, postcolonial texts use symbolic imagery to question colonial binaries” (149). Mbembe emphasises “space as a battlefield for identity in postcolonial Africa” (69). Kulet’s images and symbols are deeply resonant, portraying the aesthetic and ideological contest between the past and present. Through rich imagery and potent symbolism, Kulet portrays identity not as a static inheritance but as a site of cultural confrontation and renewal.

4.2 Proverbs, Sayings and Idioms

Sayings, idioms, and proverbs in Ole Kulet's *Bandits of Kibi* and *Daughter of Maa* serve as cultural signposts that anchor Maasai identity within shifting historical and social landscapes, reinforcing continuity amid complex identity dynamics. Kulet frequently embeds Maasai sayings that encapsulate communal wisdom, such as the assertion that a man without cattle is like a tree without roots, a reminder of the centrality of livestock to social identity and continuity. Idiomatic expressions, often drawn from pastoral life and daily practices, situate characters within a cultural framework that privileges resilience, kinship, and respect for ancestral values, thereby resisting the erasures of colonial and modern influences, proverbs, serving as repositories of indigenous philosophy, articulate moral guidance and social expectations, ensuring the transmission of cultural values across generations despite the pressures of education, Christianity, and urbanisation.

In *Bandits of Kibi*, Ole Kulet uses proverbs to highlight the enduring authority of Maasai traditions and to critique the disruption caused by colonial and postcolonial influence. Mopel says to Sam Lang in the meeting, “The cow that strays from the herd is eaten by the hyena” (*Bandits of Kibi* 23) symbolising the dangers of abandoning communal identity for individualism, a trait often linked to Westernisation. Shembe-Muyo expresses to Ras Mento in the family meeting that “The River that forgets its source runs dry” (*Bandits of Kibi* 44) and warns against detachment from ancestral values. Lilian Soila says to Ndara-Menye in the evening event, “When the drum is silent, the elders are deaf” (*Bandits of Kibi* 78), which implies that cultural disconnection leads to intergenerational alienation. Kofi Awoonor asserts that African proverbs act as “philosophical repositories of communal ethics” (47). While Alaka Holla (2018) explains that proverbs in postcolonial literature serve as “resistance devices against epistemic colonisation” (53), Kulet's proverbs serve as markers of cultural resilience amid modern pressures. By embedding proverbs in his narrative, Kulet provides a moral anchor for the Maasai community to evaluate its transition toward modernity while safeguarding its cultural heritage.

Proverbs in *Moran No More* operate as repositories of cultural ethics, subtly pushing back against colonial and neo-colonial shifts. Mrs Tajeuo informs her husband in the discussion of going to church, “The calf that runs from the herd meets the hyena”, serves as a warning against individualism (*Moran No More* 17). Ledama says to Mary Auma in the conversation with the teacher of African history, “Even the lion must bow to the rain”, which implies the necessity of compromise in modernity (*Moran No More* 35). Mary Auma informs Ledama in Anna's room, “The mouth that bites the elders shall hunger”, which enforces respect for generational wisdom (*Moran No More* 63). Mr Sopia tells Roiman, when Roiman asks for help,

“No man speaks with two tongues before cows and escapes judgment,” critiquing hypocrisy among those juggling two cultures (*Moran No More* 89). African proverbs encapsulate “cultural laws and spiritual codes”, hence their significance in daily communication (Awoonor142). Ngugi WA Thiong’o argues they are Oral texts of communal negotiation” (53). Primorac Ranka emphasises proverbs as “narrative condensations of historical memory and ethical guidance” (123). Kulet’s use of proverbs not only transmits traditional knowledge but also challenges modern Maasai to reconcile freedom with responsibility. Kulet employs proverbs as ethnical signposts that reinforce collective wisdom amid cultural fragmentation caused by Western encroachment.

Proverbs in *Daughter of Maa* act as carriers of ancestral knowledge and ethical grounding. Ole Mugie is telling the proverb to his only son, Roiman: “The cow that strays from the herd becomes lion’s meat” (*Daughter of Maa* 25). This is meant to discourage abandonment of collective culture. Nalangualso says to Joseph Malon, when they were talking with Olodalu, “when the elders speak, the hills listen” (*Daughter of Maa* 34). This elevates elder authority. Nalotuesha is telling Ngoto’s family, “a pot does not cook if there is no firewood” (*Daughter of Maa* 76), which signifies the necessity of unity within changing family structures. Nalotueshatells Joseph Malon about their upcoming wedding: “One who forgets the cattle path will be trampled by bulls”, which warns against cultural amnesia (*Daughter of Maa* 94). Richard Lanto says to Sam Lang in the market, “even a calabash floats before it sinks” (*Daughter of Maa* 115), which illustrates hope amidst despair. Awoonor contends that “African proverbs are not only poetic but also socio-political instruments of community continuity” (150). Spivak similarly suggests that “proverbs mediate subaltern voices in resisting epistemic erasure” (475). Through proverbs, Kulet establishes a moral geography that allows for the negotiation, rather than

rejection, of tradition. Kulet proverbs act as cultural compasses, guiding readers through the ethical complexities of modernisation without dislodging traditional identity.

Kulet's use of indigenous sayings reinforces the generational divide and cultural negotiations. For instance, Ole Masi's saying to Moruanke during lunchtime, "a cow does not forget the salt lick" (*Daughter of Maa* 18), implies the persistent pull of cultural origins despite external influences. Olodalu says to Joseph Malon in the circumcision ceremony, "the young man who mocks elders sleeps without dreams," warns against cultural arrogance among Western-educated youth (*Daughter of Maa* 39). Nalotuesha's assertion to Harry Lanto during the family meeting, "the wind may change, but the mountain stays", symbolising the permanence of tradition amidst social change (*Daughter of Maa* 70). Ngoto Nanana tells Olodalu in the meeting, "the eye that sees too far forgets where it steps" (*Daughter of Maa* 88). This critic's blind ambition is influenced by foreign values. Lastly, Seleina tells Joseph Malon that on the wedding day, "a tree without roots dances to every wind," and warns against cultural disconnection (*Daughter of Maa* 102). According to Ngugi WA Thiong'o, indigenous sayings preserve philosophical values essential to African identity (44). Likewise, Holla emphasises that "sayings in African narratives convey ethical negotiations of modernity and tradition" (58). Kulet's sayings reveal the unspoken wisdom that governs Maasai conduct and undergirds its resistance to full Western assimilation. Through culturally embedded sayings, Ole Kulet amplifies Maasai ethnic frameworks as a site of resistance and adaptation in the face of modernity.

In *Moran No More*, Kulet incorporates traditional sayings and idioms to critique the alienation resulting from Westernisation. Mr Onyango tells Roiman, in the meeting of cattle raiding, "a morn without a scar is a child with a knife," which critiques young Maasai who

embrace modernity without earning traditional status (*Moran No More* 21). Mary Auma tells Ras Mento in Harry Lanto's room, "he danced with strangers while his cattle starved" (*Moran No More* 43), revealing the cost of urban detachment from pastoral responsibilities. Jack Owuor tells Sereya, when they are discussing the journey to Nairobi, "The road to Nairobi has no Kraal", an idiomatic warning against abandoning home for the city (*Moran No More* 54). Finally, Ole Sopia informs Roiman in the meeting, "the one who drinks tea forgets the gourd," subtly critiques cultural abandonment of Western habits (*Moran No More* 70). Simon Gianni argues that idiomatic expressions in African literature "encode communal values and historical resistance" (31). Holla notes that "such linguistic devices highlight moral crossroads within African societies" (50). Spivak asserts that these narrative forms represent "the subaltern's coded resistance to hegemonic impositions" (89). Kulet's sayings and idioms function as socio-cultural reflections, warning of the dangers of losing one's heritage.

Kulet employs culturally grounded sayings in *Bandits of Kibi* to dramatise tensions between elder wisdom and youthful ambition. Ras Mento tells Ndara-Menye in their journey to Mombasa: "the calf that runs ahead forgets the scent of milk", which, in a way, is a warning against the premature adoption of Western lifestyles (*Bandits of Kibi* 22). Also, Opel says to Mary Auma in the meeting, "No man carries two kraals on his back", which critiques the attempts to blend radically different value systems (*Bandits of Kibi* 49). When Mama Manta says to Ras Mento in a family meeting, "When the flute sings in English, the goats do not dance" (*Bandits of Kibi* 81), it is meant to satirise the alienation caused by adopting foreign languages and practices (*Bandits of Kibi* 81). Ngugi wa Thiong'o posits that sayings "encapsulate the people's judgment of historical events" (41). African sayings function as "discursive thresholds between orality and modernity" (Ranka 575). Kule's sayings lend authenticity to his characters'

voices and embed cultural warnings into their everyday speech. Through sayings, Kulet articulates a form of ancestral resistance to unchecked cultural transformation, urging reflection and balance in the face of modern change.

In *Bandits of Kiwi*, idioms serve to illustrate the internalised consequences of cultural loss and adaptation. Dele informs Ras Mento in the letter to Ras Mento, “He slept in a city but dreamt in the Kraal” (*Bandits of Kibi* 36), which highlights the psychological dislocation of the characters living between worlds. John Meres' expression to Jack Owuor in a meeting, “she wore the law like a tight skin,” depicts the discomfort of adapting to external governance that conflicts with communal ethics (*Bandits of Kibi* 67). Ras Mento informs Harry Mento in the meeting, “They built roads over our stories” (*Bandits of Kibi* 86), which implies the silencing of oral traditions through modernisation. According to Simon Gikandi, idioms in African narratives “translate psychological ambivalence and moral negation” (29). Mbembe adds that idiomatic usage in postcolonial contexts “expresses temporal entanglement and spatial disjunction” (91). Kulet's idioms capture the emotional and cultural complexity of individuals forced to reconcile Maasai values with foreign systems. Kulet's idiomatic expressions offer deep insight into the fractured identities of his characters, underscoring how internal dialogue mirrors broader societal struggles.

Idioms in *Daughter of Maa* expose the subtle shifts in cultural orientation brought about by modernisation. For example, the idiom, Malon says to Seleina on their wedding day, “he walked with foreign shoes, but a naked soul”, describes characters who are outwardly modern, internally conflicted’(*Daughter of Maa* 55). Rasi tells Ole Ngasharr, a traditional event (circumcision), “she spoke with a tongue of Nairobi, but the silence of Maa, which reflects linguistic dissonance between Western education and native values (*Daughter of Maa* 67). Anna

Nalangu says to Joseph Malon on the wedding day, “the home fire smoked without warmth”, expressing emotional emptiness from cultural disintegration (*Daughter of Maa* 82). Ngoto Nanana says to Seleina in the evening event (the wedding), “he chased the lion with a mirror in hand”, idiomatically critiquing vanity in modern ambitions (*Daughter of Maa* 91). Lastly, OleNgashar says to Anna Nalangu in Seleina's house, “they crossed rivers of ink but forgot the river of blood”, symbolising the forgetting of traditional sacrifice amid colonial education (*Daughter of Maa* 108). According to Gikandi, “idiomatic expression in African fiction reveals submerged cultural values” (13), Barry notes that “idioms in postcolonial narratives unveil cultural paradoxes shaped by hybrid identity” (92). Kulet’s idioms thus become a critical tool for expressing psychological fragmentation in postcolonial subjects. Ole Kulet’s idioms serve as symbolic mirrors reflecting the layered contradictions of Maasai modern identities moulded by colonial legacies.

4.3 Untranslated Maasai Words Serve as a Continuity of Identity

Kulet’s *Daughter of Maa*, *Bandits of Kibi*, and *Moran No More*, the deliberate retention of untranslated Maasai words serves as a powerful literary technique that underscores the continuity of Maasai identity amidst the complex interplay of cultural change. By preserving indigenous terms such as “enkang” (Homestead), “enkishu” (cattle), and “emanyatta” (warrior village), Kulet resists the complete assimilation of Maasai culture into dominant colonial and postcolonial linguistic frameworks, affirming the integrity of the Maasai worldview within the written text. These untranslated Maasai words not only preserve semantic nuances that are often untranslatable into English but also embed the rhythm and worldview of oral traditions into the novel’s narrative structure. In doing so, Kulet creates a linguistic space where Maasai readers

recognise their cultural markers while non-Maasai readers are invited into an ethnographic encounter with Maasai lifeways.

Ole Kulet often inserts untranslated Maasai words such as “enkang” (homestead) (*Daughter of Maa* 56), “enkishui” (blessing) (*Daughter of Maa* 21) and “Enkai” (God) to anchor his narrative within the indigenous worldview (*Daughter of Maa* 77). These terms resist easy translation, and in doing so, they foreground Maasai cosmology as a system of meaning distinct from Western categories. By retaining “enkai” in its original form, Kulet emphasises the spiritual autonomy of the Maasai rather than assimilating their deity into the Judeo-Christian framework. This technique underscores a postcolonial, Maasi insistence on linguistic integrity as a claim to identity in a globalised world. Ngugi’s insistence on the politics of language resonates here, as Kulet aligns his art with the “cultural recovery of colonised peoples” (45). As Wanjohi (2015) observes, “untranslated words as cultural signposts that resist the flattening pressures of English translation” (34), while Ochieng Amolo in *Uncommon Memory: The Performance of Amalgation in Early Black Political Culture* (2003) stresses that “Kulet’s linguistic choices transform the text into a space where Maasai voices dominate narrative authority. Similarly, Nyariki et al argues that “such words function as “literary shields against the erasure of minority cultures in postcolonial writing” (47). I see Kulet asserting his identity through the use of Massai words.

In *Bandits of Kibi*, the untranslated Maasai words “Olmarei” (herd of cattle) (*Bandits of Kibi* 82) and “Ilmurran” (warriors) (*Bandits of Kibi* 101) embody an agrarian identity inseparable from livelihood. Kulet deliberately avoids substituting these with English equivalents like 'cattle' or 'warrior' because such translations strip away the cultural density encoded in the terms. For example,ilmurran signifies more than youth fighters; it connotes a complex rite of passage central to Maasai masculinity. By using these words without glossing them, Kulet bridges

Maasai self-understanding and the Western reader's curiosity, forcing the latter to grapple with unfamiliar categories. As Achebe (2003) insisted, African writers must allow English to carry the "weight of African experience" (20). Ndugo Catherine and Peter Githinji extend this claim that untranslated words force the Western reader into an encounter with cultural alterity." (98). Meanwhile, Kulet's success in representing "ilmurran as both a linguistic and cultural institution, as a sign of resilience amid globalisation.

Moran No More uses untranslated Maasai terms like "emanyatta" (warrior village) (*Moran No More* 69), "Osotua (bond of trust) (*Moran No More* 32), and "Olpul" (ritual meat camp) (*Moran No More* 84) to dramatise the clash between traditional moranhood and modern schooling. The term "Osotua, in particular, has no direct equivalent in English, symbolising reciprocal trust and obligation within Maasai kinshiphood. Kulet retains it untranslated to demonstrate how Western categories like friendship or brotherhood inadequately capture indigenous forms of solidarity. This insistence exemplifies Bhabha's (2021) notion of hybridity, where meaning emerges from cultural translation rather than assimilation" (20). As Kipuri (2023) notes, untranslated vocabulary underscores that "Maasai institutions must be read in their own registers" (21). Therefore, Kulet's untranslated lexicon is a refusal of epistemic colonisation.

By leaving Maasai terms untranslated, Kulet invests the Maasai language with symbolic authority, turning it into a stylistic technique of resistance. In *Daughter of Maa*, words like "enkang" (*Daughter of Maa* 66) and "enkai" (*Daughter of Maa* 77) become linguistic monuments, preserving Maasai cosmology in the text, in *Bandits of Kibi* "Olmarei and "ilmurran" serve as metaphors for continuity of culture amid political upheaval (65, 75). In *Moran NoMore*, terms such as "osotua" embody non-Western ethics of kinshiphood and

sacrifice (45). Kulet thus builds what Ashcroft et al (2013) call “postcolonial textuality “where the text embodies cultural negotiation through linguistic indigenisation (35). Aching` remarks that the untranslated word “embeds a cultural memory in the narrative fabric” (99). Therefore, Kulet`s diction destabilises the hegemony of English by refusing to assimilate.

In *Daughter of Maa*, Kulet integrates words such as “enkanyit” (respect) (*Daughter of Maa* 71), “enkidongoi” (traditional gathering) (*Daughter of Maa* 88), and “enkiguena” (ancestral blessing) (*Daughter of Maa* 42) without translation, showing how linguistic fidelity resists Western encroachment on Maasai ethics. The use of “enkanyit” emphasises that respect in Maasai culture is not merely a matter of politeness but a deeply ingrained social code tied to age hierarchy and spirituality. Such terms preserve Maasai cultural grammar against Western discourses that privilege individualism. According to Ngugi (1998), “retaining indigenous vocabulary ensures cultural survival through language” (87); likewise, Ruth Njeri (2016) maintains that “untranslated Maasai words act as cultural safeguards within Kulet`s narrative” (53). Complementing this, Kulet`s reliance on indigenous vocabulary affirms Maasai values while opening space for readers to confront cultural differences rather than glossing them over.

In *Bandits of Kibi*, untranslated words such as “olnng`esherr” (meat-eating ritual) (*Bandits of Kibi* 112), “enkare” (water) (*Bandits of Kibi* 29), and “oloiboni” (spiritual leader) (*Bandits of Kibi* 61) provide more than local colour; they highlight the resilience of traditional Maasai institutions in the face of modern corruption and banditry. For example, “oloiboini is not merely a prophet but embodies spiritual, political, and healing authority. By retaining the word, Kulet resists collapsing Maaasai epistemology, people use culture as a weapon against alienation, and Kulet enacts this resistance linguistically. As Kimono (2001) observes, untranslated Maasai terms anchor the text in an indigenous epistemology that “is inaccessible to colonial

simplification” (75). Meanwhile, this technique creates semantic sovereignty, allowing Maasai voices to define themselves on their own terms.

Moran No More emphasises the tension between education and tradition through untranslated Maasai words like “Olmarei” (herd) (*Moran No More* 91), “enkidongoi” (public assembly) (*Moran No More* 36), and “enkeju” (woman’s hut) (*Moran No More* 72). These terms symbolise institutions that modern schooling seeks to supplant. For instance, “enkaju” as a symbol of women’s domestic power challenges the Western feminist notion that domestic space is uniformly oppressive. By leaving the word untranslated, Kulet emphasises the cultural specificity of understanding gender roles. Bhabha (2012) calls such linguistic acts “third spaces,” where meanings are negotiated rather than imposed” (98), Nandwa (2024) expands this by arguing that “untranslated words function as cultural counter narratives” (56). Similarly, Awoonor (2014) emphasises that Kulet’s like “enkeju” unsettles homogenising feminist discourses and situates Maasai womanhood within indigenous frames of power” (12).

4.4 General Conclusion

The analysis of untranslated Maasai words, proverbs, metaphors, idioms, sayings, and symbolism in Kulet's *Bandits of Kibi*, *Daughter of Maa*, and *Moran No More* reveals that these stylistic techniques are central to his literary vision of sustaining Maasai identity amidst changing cultural dynamics. By carefully embedding Maa words and oral artistry into his narratives, Kulet safeguards the community’s worldview while opening it to critical reflection. These techniques function not only as aesthetic devices but also as cultural anchors that preserve the rhythm, imagery, and philosophy of Maasai, even as characters grapple with modernity, colonial influence, and hybrid identities. Furthermore, Kulet’s reliance on figurative language and traditional sayings demonstrates the resilience of oral traditions in the written form.

Proverbs and idioms articulate collective wisdom, guiding characters through moral, social, and generational conflicts, while metaphors and symbolisms extend Maasai cultural imagery into broader questions of identity, belonging, and transformation. Through these devices, Kulet negotiates a literary space where tradition and modernity coexist in tension and dialogue, affirming the adaptability of Maasai identity in a complex postcolonial context. Ultimately, the stylistic choices Kulet employs underscore his commitment to both continuity and reinvention of Maasai culture. By valorising indigenous expressions while situating them in narratives of cultural transition, he ensures that Maasai identity remains visible, audible, and significant in contemporary African literature. His stylistic strategies affirm that the Maasai identity, though constantly evolving, retains a coherent sense of self that resists erasure and reasserts cultural pride amidst global and national forces of change.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Our research seeks to investigate the topic of “The Portrayal of the Dynamics of Identity in the Selected Novels of Henry Rufus Ole Kulet”, with particular attention to *Daughter of Maa*, *Moran No More*, and *Bandits of Kibi*. The general objective of this research is to examine how Kulet portrays evolving identity dynamics within the Maasai community, with a specific focus on three thematic categories: kinshiphood, womanhood, and moranhood. These themes are not only central to Maasai cultural identity but also serve as critical sites where the tensions between tradition and Western values become most visible. The study further explores how Kulet illustrates ambivalences and dualities imposed by Western influence on Maasai Characters (people), while also emphasising the resilience and continuity of Maasai identity amidst cultural disruption. Through a postcolonial lens, the research demonstrates that Kulet's selected works highlight both fractures and continuities in identity, thereby offering a nuanced understanding of how the Maasai community negotiates its traditions in the modern world.

5.2 Major Conclusions

Chapter One, titled “Introduction and Background to the Study”, presents a foundational overview of the research, beginning with an introduction and background that contextualise the study within the broader discourses of East African literature and postcolonial identity. It identifies the research problem: a lack of sustained literary analysis on how Maasai identity is portrayed and negotiated in Henry Ole Kulet’s selected novels. The chapter sets out the general objective of critically analysing the representation of identity dynamics, and specific objectives

that focus on womanhood, kinshiphood, and moranhood as thematic frameworks, duality and ambivalence, and the styles Kulet employs. Research questions are posed to guide the investigation, while the significance of the study lies in its contribution to African literary criticism, indigenous knowledge systems, and cultural preservation. The theoretical framework draws on postcolonial theory, particularly Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and African scholars, to explore hybridity, resistance, and cultural recovery. Key terms are defined using insights from contemporary literary theorists. A review of existing literature exposes scholarly gaps, justifying the study. Finally, the chapter outlines the research methodology, qualitative research design, and data collection techniques based on textual analysis of the novels.

Chapter two, titled “Moranhood, Womanhood, and Kinshiphood among the Maasai community”, the study found out gender and identity transformation: The study showed how gender roles, particularly for women like Mwalimu Anna Nalangu, evolve as they gain education and agency, challenging patriarchal norms but also facing backlash. Western education acts as a double-edged sword; it empowers individuals to challenge oppressive traditions but can also alienate them from their roots. Kinshiphood and community: The study found that traditional communal values were contrasted with individualism encouraged by Western ideologies, showing the tension between collective belonging and personal ambition. The study also shows that Henry R. Ole Kulet's selected novels demonstrate that identity among the Maasai is fluid, contested, and evolving. While Western values introduce positive aspects, such as gender equality and education, they also challenge the coherence of traditional identities. A study advocates for a balanced integration of modernity and tradition, where characters can embrace aspects of both without losing cultural authenticity.

Chapter three titled “Ambivalences and Dualities in (Maasai) Characters”. The protagonists in the novels are Anna Nalangu in *Daughter of Maa*, Ras Mento in *Bandits of Kibi*, and Roiman Ole Mugie in *Moran No More*. The study found characters navigating between traditional Maasai values and Western modernity, resulting in the formation of hybrid identities that blend indigenous Maasai culture with foreign influences. Characters experience cultural ambivalence, torn between loyalty to Maasai traditions and the allure or pressure of Western education, religion, and governance systems. This tension creates inner conflict, a loss of cultural grounding, or a need to redefine one's identity.

The study also shows that Henry R. Ole Kulet's selected novels demonstrate that Maasai identity is fluid, contested, and evolving. While Western values introduce positive aspects, such as gender equality and education, they also challenge the coherence of traditional identities. A chapter advocates a balanced integration of modernity and tradition, allowing characters to embrace aspects of both without losing cultural authenticity.

Chapter four, titled “continuity of Maasai identity amidst the complex identity dynamics”, reveals and discusses the deliberate use of style such as symbolism, local language, proverbs and sayings to underscore the continuity of Maasai identity. Symbols deeply rooted in Maasai culture and traditions function as tangible carriers of historical memory and communal values. Through symbolic representations, Kulet connects the past with the present, reinforcing a shared identity that withstands external influences and transformations. This symbolic continuity is crucial for maintaining a collective sense of belonging among the Maasai community amid shifting identity landscapes. Moreover, the chapter highlights how metaphors enhance the nuanced portrayal of Maasai identity complexities. Ole Kulet employs metaphors not merely for decorative purposes but as cognitive tools that frame the Maasai experience in vivid, relatable

terms. By likening identity to dynamic natural phenomena or processes, Kulet encapsulates the fluidity and resilience of Maasai cultural identity. These metaphoric constructions facilitate deeper comprehension of how identity evolves while still retaining core cultural essences.

Idioms and sayings emerge from a chapter's analysis as essential linguistic vehicles for cultural transmission and identity affirmation. These traditional expressions, rich in cultural wisdom, encapsulate collective experiences and moral lessons, providing continuity through oral heritage. The chapter illustrates that by embedding idioms and sayings within narratives, the communal ethos is reinforced and subtle resistance to cultural erosion is expressed in the face of modernity and globalisation. Additionally, the inclusion of untranslated Maasai words is a deliberate stylistic strategy that asserts linguistic identity and cultural specificity. A chapter demonstrates that these untranslated Maasai words act as cultural markers that resist complete assimilation into dominant languages. This technique highlights the uniqueness of sustaining ethnic identity amidst intercultural exchanges.

Imagery in Kulet's selected works operates as an evocative tool that appeals to the sensory and emotional dimensions of identity. Through vivid and culturally grounded images, Kulet reconstructs the environmental and social textures of Maasai life, making the abstract notion of identity tangible and experiential. This imagery invites readers to engage empathetically with Maasai realities, fostering an appreciation of identity continuity beyond mere verbal articulation. Similes complement other stylistic devices by creating relatable, accessible analogies that elucidate complex identity dynamics. Kulet's strategic use of similes bridges the gap between traditional Maasai concepts and contemporary interpretations, facilitating cross-cultural understanding. This stylistic choice not only enriches the narrative

texture but also democratises the discourse on identity, making it comprehensible to a wider audience while preserving indigenous meaning.

The chapter demonstrates how a constellation of stylistic techniques, symbolism, metaphor, idioms, sayings, untranslated Maasai words, imagery, and similes interact synergistically to emphasise the persistence of Maasai identity. These literary devices serve not only as aesthetic elements but also as mechanisms of cultural resilience, articulation, and continuity amid complex identity negotiations. Kulet's selected novels thereby offer significant insight into the interplay among language, narrative, and the preservation of ethnic identity in an evolving socio-cultural landscape.

5.3 Findings of the Study

The study found that narrative use of oral traditions: kulet integrates sayings, proverbs, idioms, untranslated Maasai words, symbolism, imagery, and similes to preserve and communicate these practices, giving voice to indigenous knowledge systems. These elements serve as tools for collective memory and identity preservation while also challenging colonial and Western values.

The study found out how gender roles, particularly for women like Mwalimu Anna Nalangu, evolve as they gain education and agency, challenging patriarchal norms but also facing backlash. Western education acts as a double-edged sword; it empowers individuals to challenge oppressive traditions but can also alienate them from their roots. *Kinshiphood* and community, the study found, contrasts traditional communal values with the individualism encouraged by Western ideologies, showing the tension between collective belonging and personal ambition.

The study also found characters navigating between traditional Maasai values and Western modernity, resulting in the formation of hybrid identities that blend indigenous Maasai culture with foreign influences. Characters experience cultural ambivalence, torn between loyalty to Maasai traditions and the allure or pressure of Western education, religion, and governance systems. This tension creates inner conflict, a loss of cultural grounding, or a need to redefine one's identity. In conclusion, I advocate for a negotiated identity, where tradition and modernity can coexist, and where individuals are allowed to redefine themselves beyond rigid communal expectations

5.4 Recommendation

This research recommends one thing: establishing and integrating African tradition studies departments and course units into literature programmes at African universities. Because of the immense power of literature over society, an abundance of voices through literary and cinematic productions will escalate conversations around the problem of modernising African traditions and eventually steer society towards an inclusive, and therefore better, formulation of policies, safeguard African traditions from cultural imperialism, and protect the vulnerable.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

Throughout this research, a constant challenge encountered was the paucity of literary materials relevant to the subject. Despite boasting perennial Nobel Prize in Literature candidates, the magnitude of literary production appears disproportionate to its pervasiveness in media and policy, with a thin corpus of Maasai identity in popular forms such as novels and dramas. While literature mirrors society, it has been slow to reflect the immense reportage, public conversations, and government importance accorded to the Maasai identity in East Africa and the African crisis.

Similarly, there were a few critical reviews of the literature in the area. Constant searches in university repositories, libraries, bookstores, and online search engines have yielded mostly negative feedback.

I therefore suggest that future research expand on this study by addressing the paucity of literary attention accorded to the robust Maasai traditions landscape. Moreover, it is anticipated that this analysis will open the door to future intellectual discussions regarding the creativity evident in the rest of Henry Rufus Ole Kulet's writings. This will improve our insight into the circumstances of postcolonial African nations, as well as Henry Rufus Ole Kulet's enthusiasm for the future of the Maasai people.

Works cited

Primary Texts

Kulet, Ole R. Henry. *Bandits of Kibi*. Nairobi: Longhorn, 1999.

---*Daughter of Maa*. Nairobi: Longhorn, 1990.

--*Moran No More*. Nairobi: Longhorn, 1990.

---(B) *Time, Space and the Unknown. Maasai Configurations of power and providence*.
Routledge, 2004.

---*Is It Possible?* Nairobi: Longhorn 1971

---*Petals of Blood*. London: Heinemann, 1977.

---*The Hunter*". Nairobi: Longhorn 1985

Achebe, Chinua. *Arrow of God*. 1963.

Adejunmobi, Moradewun. "Vernacular Palaver: Imaginations of the Local and Non-Native Languages in West Africa". *Multilingual Matters*, 2004, vol. 9, no.7, pp 6-8

Amiot, Catherine E, et al. "Cultural identity dynamics: Capturing changes in cultural identities over time and their intraindividual organisation". *European Journal of Social Psychology* 2018, vol. 48, no.5, pp.629-644.

Anderson, David. *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire*. W. Norton & Company, 2005.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *Ethics in a World of Strangers*. Humboldt-Universitat zu Berlin, Philosophische Fakultät II 2004

--- *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. Oxford University Press, 1992.

- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*. Routledge, 2003.
- Awoonor, Kofi. *The promise of hope: New and selected poems, 1964-2013*. University of Nabaska Press, 2014
- Bahri Deepika. "Marginally off-center: Postcolonialism in the teaching machine". *College English*, , 1997, V.59. no3, pp. 227-298.
- Barry, Peter. "Theory after" Theory" *Beginning theory (fourth edition)*. Manchester University Press, 2020,
- *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. 4th ed., Manchester University Press, 2017.
- Beswick, Stephanie. *Sudan`s blood memory: The legacy of war, ethnicity, and slavery in early South Sudan*. University of Rochester Press. 2004.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse." *Literary theory and criticism*. Routledge India, 2021, pp. 171-181.
- *The location of Culture*. Roultege, 2012.
- Boehmer, Elleke. *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors*. Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Belsey, Catherine. "Textual Analysis as a Research." *Research Methods for English Studies*. *Edinburgh U.P.*, 2013, pp. 160-163.
- Bwoya, Jane. "Jane Awinja Nandwa: The Making of Kenya`s Founder of Oral Literature. *In African Women and Intellectual Leadership*. Routledge, 2024, pp. 96-104.

Cantalupo, Charles, ed. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o: Text and Contexts. Africa World Press, 1995.

--- Penpoints, Gunpoints, and Dreams: An Interview by Charles Cantalupo" left Curve 231999, pp.30.

Falola, Toyin. *Nationalism and African Intellectuals*. University of Rochester Press, 2004.

Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the" *Earth 221*, 1963, pp. 223.

Freire, Paulo. "Pedagogy of the oppressed Pedagogy of the Oppressed". *The Community Performance Reader*, Routledge, 2020, pp. 24-27.

Gandhi, Leela. "Postcolonial Theory:" *A Critical Introduction*. Routledge, 2020.

Garuba, Harry. "Explorations in Animist Materialism." Notes on reading/ writing African literature, and society" *Public culture*. 2003, vol.15, no.2, pp. 261-285.

--- "The critical reception of the African novel" *The Cambridge companion to the African novel*, 2009, pp. 243-262.

--- "The unbearable lightness of being: Re-figuring trends in recent Nigerian poetry." *English in Africa*. 2005, vol.32. no.1, pp. 51-72.

Gikandi, Simon. "African Literature and Modernity". *Matatu* 2007, Vol.35, pp3,

---. "Introduction: Modernism and the Origins of Caribbean Literature." 2018 pp. 1-32.

---. *Writing in Limbo: Modernism and Caribbean Literature*. Cornell University Press, 1992.

Haggard, H. Rider. *Allan Quatermain*: by H. Rider Haggard, BoD-Books on Demand, 2023.

- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory*. Routledge, 2015, pp 392-403.
- Hemingway, Ernest. *Green Hills of Africa: The Hemingway Library Edition*. Simon and Schuster, 2016.
- Hodgson, Dorothy. *Once Intrepid Warriors: Gender, ethnicity and the cultural politics of Maasaiddevelopment*. Indiana University Press. 2001
- Holla, Alaka. "Memory, Identity and the Postcolonial State in African Literature." *African Literature Today*, 2018, Vol.37, pp.150-167
- Huggan, Graham. "The postcolonial exotic." *Transition*, d, 1994, V64. pp. 22-29.
- *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins*. Routledge, 2002.
- Indangas, Henry. "The Kenyanness of Kenyan Literature". *Naorobi Journal of Litetature*, 2003, vol 1, pp.1-9.
- Irele, Abiola. *The African Imagination: Literature in Africa and the Black Diaspora*. Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Kawive, Wambua. The problematics of the quest for identity in Derek Walcott's dream on Monkey Mountain. Diss. University of Nairobi, CEES, Kenya, 2006.
- Kiiya, Muyundo John. *The Portrayal of Masculinities in Selected Works of Henry Ole Kulet*, *Literature Department*. Diss. Kenyatta University, 2021.
- Kilonzo, Joseph. "Islam, Indigenous Tradition, and Adventism in Kenya: A Comparative Study to Determine Effective Approaches to Evangelise Kenyan Muslims". 2001.
- Kipuri, Naomi. *Kipuri: Oral Literature of the Maasai*. African Books Collective, 2023.
- LaViolette, Adria. "African Material Culture". 2001, vol.88, pp. 215-217.

Lazier, Neema Eliphas. "Maasainess and Whiteness: The Ruins of colonial Penetration in Hoffman`s The white Maasai and Budgor`s the warrior princess" *Umma Journal of Contemporary Literature and Creative Arts*, 2022. vol. 9, no.1, pp. 34

---*Configuring 'Maasainess': Contested Textual Embodiment*. Diss. Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University, 2018.

Magara, Cindy Evelyn. *Contemporary East African cinema: Emergent themes and aesthetics*. Diss. University of Sydney, 2020.

Mazuri, Mohadeseh, Ali Najafi Ivaki, and Mohsen Seifi. "Adaptation of Narrative Structure of the Novel The lone Pomegranate Tree Written by Senan Anton with Greimas Narratology Theory." *Journal of the Journal of New Critical Arabic literature*, 2024, vol.14, no.27, pp. 1-25.

Mbembe, Achille. *On the Postcolony*. University of California Press, 2001.

Mbugua, Peter K. "Issue of Identity in Ole Kulet`s: *Is It Possible? And to Become a man*." Diss. University of Nairobi, 2004.

Mohan, Rajeswari. "The crisis of femininity and modernity in The Third World" *Genders*. 1994, vol.19, pp. 223.

--- Dodging the crossfire: Questions for postcolonial pedagogy." *College Literature*. 1992, vol 19, no. 3 pp.28-44.

--- *Modernity and imperialism: A critique of literary modernism*. Syracuse University, 1990.

--- Reflections on Migratory Discourse in the age of Transnational Capital.” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*. 1995, vol.3, no. 2, pp. 644-661.

Mugo, Micere Githae. “10 Popular Paradigms and Conceptions; Orature-Based Community Theater” *Out of one, Many Africas: Reconstructing and Study and Meaning of Africa* 1999 pp.197.

---. “Women and books in African: A question of survival?.” *Journal of Humanities* 1987, vol.1, no 1, pp. 91-100.

Musila, Grace A. “Thirteen Ways of Reading African Popular culture 1” *Routledge Handbook of popular Culture*. Routledge, 2022, pp 1-28.

---. *A Death Retold in Truth and Rumour: Kenya, Britain and the Julie Ward Murder*. Boydell & Brewer, 2015, vol. 2, pp. 25

Mwangi Meja. “The Cockroach Dance”. Nairobi: Longhorn, 1979

--- “I to I in the narrative Mirror: Fictional autobiography and the problem of Maasai identity in Henry Ole Kulet`s Writings”. *English studies in Africa*. 2001, Vol.44, no 1, pp.13-29

--- “Queer, agency in Kenya`s digital media” *African Studies Review* 2014. Vol.57, no 2, pp. 93-113

Nabutanyi, Edgar Fred. “Language, fiction, and heteropatriarchal critique in selected recent Ugandan short fiction.” *Sociolinguistic Studies* 2023, vol. 17, no. 1-3, pp. 141-158.

Ndirangu, Winnie N. *The Rise of Tabloidization of News in Kenya: A Case Study of the Nairobi*. Diss. University of Nairobi, 2015.

Ndugo, Catherine, and Peter Githinji. "Indigenous Languages and their Role in Women's Economic Empowerment". *Kenyatta University Women's Economic Empowerment (Ku-wee) Journal*. 2025, vol.1, no 1, pp.217-240.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. James Currey, 1986.

Wa Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ. "Decolonising the mind." *Diogenes* 46.184 1998, 101-104.
pp. 150–168

Nnaemeka, Obioma. "From Orality to Writing: African Women Writers and the (re)Inscription of Womanhood." *Research in African Literatures*, 1994, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 137-157.

---. "Nego-Feminism: Theorizing, Practicing, and Pruning Africa's Way." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. 2004, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 357-385.

Nyariki, Dennis et al. Implications of visual impairment (6) on the performance of gender roles among Kipsigis women in the family in Kericho County. *Journal of Applied Humanities and Social Sciences-ISSN 2791-1594* 2024, vol.3, no. 2, pp. 56-70.

Obiechina, Emmanuel. "Narrative proverbs in the African novel". *Research in African Literature* 1993, vol. 24, No 4, pp.123-140.

Ochieng' Nyong'o, Tavia Amolo. *Uncommon memory: The performance of amalgamation in early Black political culture*. Yale University Press, 2003

Ogunyemi, Chikwenye, Okonjo, *African Wo/Man Palava: The Nigerian Novel by Women*. University of Chicago Press, 1996.

- “Woman: The dynamics of the contemporary black female novel in English.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. 1985, vol.11, no 1, pp.63-80.
- Olaniyan, Tejumola. *Arrest the Music! Fela and His Rebel Art and Politics*. Indiana University Press, 2004.
- Osundare, Niyi. “The Question of Generation.” *Nation, power and dissidence in third-generation Nigerian poetry in English* 2023, pp.13.
- Primorac, Ranka. “At home in the world? Re-framing Zambia’s literature in English” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 2014, vol.40. no 3, pp.575-591.
- Kulet, Rufus Henry. *To Become a Man*. Nairobi: Longhorn, 1972.
- Said, Edward W. “Orientalism reconsidered”. *Literature, Politics & Theory*. Routledge, 2013. Pp.210-229.
- “Orientalism.” *The Georgia Review*. 1997, vol. 31, no. 1, pp.162-206.
- “Orientalism”. *Social theory re-wired*. Routledge. 2023, pp. 362-374.
- *Culture and Imperialism*. Random House, 2014.
- Saitoti, Tepilit Ole and Carol Beckwith. “Maasai” (*No Title*) 1980)
- *The Worlds of a Maasai Warrior: An Autobiography*. University of California Press, 1986.
- Salat, Lily C. “A cultural reading of Henry Rufus Ole Kulet’s literary presentation of Masculinity.” 2017, vol.12, no.3, pp.2-7.
- Siundu, Godwin. “The Nairobi Tradition of Literature,” *PMLA*, 2016, vol.131, no. 5, pp. 1548-1551.

Spear, Thomas, and Richard Waller, eds. *Being Maasai: ethnicity and identity in East Africa*. Ohio University Press, 1993.

Spencer, Paul. *The Maasai of Matapato: A study of rituals of rebellion*. Routledge, 2004.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?." Marxism and the interpretation of culture edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, University of Illinois Press, 1988, pp.271-313

--- "Scattered speculations on the subaltern and popular." *Postcolonial studies* 2005, vol.8, no. 4, pp. 475-486.

Spring, Howard. *These lovers fled away*. 1995.

Stratton, Florence. *Contemporary African Literature and the Politics of Gender*. Routledge, 2020.

Tignor, Robert L. "The Maasai Warriors: Pattern maintenance and violence in colonial Kenya." *The Journal of African History*. 1972, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 271-290.

Wenzel, Jennifer. *Bulletproof: Afterlives of Anticolonial Prophecy in South Africa and Beyond*. University of Chicago Press, 2019.